

# MHRA launches new conflicts of interest code of practice for independent advisors

Press release

The MHRA is introducing a new, single code of practice for all its scientific advisory committees.



The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is introducing a new, single code of practice for all its scientific advisory committees, to ensure that experts providing it with advice are independent and impartial, and that processes in place to manage conflicts of interest are robust, consistent and clear to all.

The launch of the new code of practice follows a six-week [public consultation](#), launched in response to a key recommendation of the [Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review](#) for the MHRA to review the way it identifies and manages potential conflicts of interest from members of expert advisory committees. These include the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM) and its expert advisory groups.

The new proposals will help to ensure that the MHRA is a transparent and inclusive independent regulator. They will also support the Agency's commitment to ensuring that the perspectives of those with lived and personal experiences have greater inclusion in regulatory decisions.

Other steps include:

- Prohibiting members of advisory committees from holding personal interests in industries relevant to the work of that committee, such as the pharmaceutical, medical device and/or biotechnology industry
- Clarifying the way we manage any conflicts of interest that arise as a result of patient involvement in discussions with the advisory committees and working groups.

**Dr Glenn Wells. MHRA Chief Partnerships Officer said:**

The independent committees that advise the MHRA provide an additional layer of expertise and input to our regulatory decision-making so that we can be sure we are delivering the right outcomes for patients and the public.

In recognition of this important role, we are strengthening the code of practice for all independent advisory committees so the public can feel confident that those called upon to give their expert opinions do so in an impartial way.

Part of this means ensuring that those with relevant experience of the topics being discussed as a patient, family member or carer, are invited to committee meetings to inform the discussions that are taking place.

The new proposals will be introduced from 8 September 2022.

1. The new code of practice can be found on the MHRA website alongside the government's response to the [public consultation](#)
2. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK, by ensuring they work and are acceptably safe. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks.
3. The MHRA is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care.
4. The MHRA utilises expert and impartial advice from a number of advisory committees, including:
  - The Commission on Human Medicines (CHM), which advises MHRA on the safety, efficacy and quality of medicinal products,
  - The Devices Expert Advisory Committee (DEAC) and its successors, which provides MHRA with advice on a wide range of aspects relating to the introduction and safe use of medical devices,
  - The British Pharmacopoeia Commission (BPC), which provides official standards for pharmaceutical substances and medicinal products,
  - Herbal Medicines Advisory Committee (HMAC), which advises MHRA on the safety and quality of herbal medicinal products for human use,
  - Advisory Board for Registration of Homeopathic Products (ABRHP), which advises MHRA on safety and quality in relation to any homeopathic medicinal product for human use,
  - UK Stem Cell Bank Steering Committee (UKSCBSC), which oversees the activities of the UK Stem Cell Bank and UK research involving established human embryonic stem cell lines, whether obtained from the bank or from elsewhere.
  - The Review Panel, which carries out statutory and non-statutory reviews of proposals, decisions and provisional decisions taken by MHRA.

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# PM Liz Truss's opening speech on the energy policy debate

Mr Speaker, I beg to move the motion.

Earlier this week I promised I would deal with the soaring energy prices faced by families and businesses across the UK.

And today I am delivering on that promise.

This Government is moving immediately to introduce a new Energy Price Guarantee that will give people certainty on energy bills.

It will curb inflation and boost growth.

This Guarantee – which includes a temporary suspension of green levies – means that from 1st October a typical household will pay no more than £2,500 per year for each of the next two years, while we get the energy market back on track.

This will save a typical household £1,000 a year. It comes in addition to the £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme.

This Guarantee supersedes the Ofgem price cap, and has been agreed with energy retailers.

We will deliver this by securing the wholesale price for energy, while putting in place long-term measures to secure future supplies at more affordable rates.

We are supporting this country through this winter and next, and tackling the root cause of high prices, so we are never in this position again.

For those using heating oil, living in park homes or those on heat networks, we will set up a fund so that all UK consumers can benefit from equivalent support.

We will also support all businesses, charities and public sector organisations with their energy costs this winter – offering an equivalent guarantee for 6 months.

After those 6 months we will provide further support to vulnerable sectors, such as hospitality, including our local pubs.

My Rt Hon Friend the Business Secretary will work with businesses to review where this should be targeted to make sure those most in need get support. This review will be concluded within 3 months, giving businesses certainty.

In the meantime, companies with the wherewithal need to be looking for ways they can improve energy efficiency and increase direct energy generation

We will be bringing forward emergency legislation to deliver this policy. And my Rt Hon Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will set out the expected costs as part of his fiscal statement later this month.

I can tell the House today that we will not be giving in to calls for this to be funded through a windfall tax.

That would undermine the national interest by discouraging the very investment we need to secure home-grown energy supplies. You can't tax your way to growth.

Instead, we are taking an approach which is pro-growth, pro-business and pro the investment we need for energy security.

This is the moment to be bold. We are facing a global energy crisis and there are no 'cost-free' options.

There will be a cost to this intervention. However we are also acting immediately to defray the cost of this intervention in three ways.

Firstly, by ramping up supply.

Following on from the successful vaccine taskforce, we have created a new Energy Supply Taskforce under the leadership of Maddy McTernan.

They are already negotiating new long term energy contracts with domestic and international gas suppliers to immediately bring down the cost of this intervention.

We are also accelerating all sources of domestic energy, including North Sea oil and gas production.

We will be launching a new licensing round, which we expect to lead to over 100 new licences being awarded.

And we will speed up our deployment of all clean and renewable technologies including hydrogen, solar, carbon capture and storage, and wind... where we are already the world leader in offshore generation.

Renewable and nuclear generators will move onto Contracts for Difference to end the situation where electricity prices are set by the marginal price of gas.

This will mean generators are receiving a fair price, reflecting their cost of production, further bringing down the cost of this intervention.

Secondly, today's action will deliver substantial benefits to our economy, boosting growth which increases tax receipts and gives certainty to business.

This intervention is expected to curb inflation by up to 5 percentage points,

bringing a reduction in the cost of servicing government debt.

Thirdly, this morning, together with the Bank of England, we will set up a new scheme, worth up to £40 billion, to ensure that firms operating in wholesale energy markets have the liquidity they need to manage price volatility.

This will stabilise the market and decrease the likelihood that energy retailers need our support, like they did last Winter.

By increasing supply, boosting the economy and increasing liquidity in the market we will significantly reduce the cost to government of this intervention.

As well as dealing with the immediate situation we face, we are also dealing with the root causes.

Energy policy over the past decades has not focused enough on securing supply.

There's no better example than nuclear, where the UK has not built a single new nuclear reactor in 25 years.

It's not just about supply. The regulatory structures have failed, exposing the problems of having a price cap applied to the retail but not the wholesale market.

All of this has left us vulnerable to volatile global markets and malign actors in an increasingly geopolitical world.

That is why Putin is exploiting by weaponising energy supplies as part of his illegal war on Ukraine.

So as well as the action we are taking today on bills, we will use the next 2 years to make sure that the United Kingdom is never in this situation again.

I will be launching two reviews.

Firstly, a review of energy regulation to fix the underlying problems. We want a new approach which will address supply and affordability for the long term.

Secondly, we will conduct a review to ensure we deliver net zero by 2050 in a way that is pro-business and pro-growth. This review will be led by my Rt Hon Friend the member for Kingswood.

We are delivering a stable environment that gives investors the confidence to back gas as part of our transition to net zero.

We will end the moratorium on extracting our huge reserves of shale, which could get gas flowing in as soon as six months, where there is local support.

We will launch Great British Nuclear later this month – putting us on the

path to deliver up to a quarter of our electricity generation with nuclear by 2050.

As a result of these steps on shale and nuclear and the acceleration of renewables, I am today setting a new ambition for our country.

Far from being dependent on the global energy market and the actions of malign actors, we will make sure the UK a net energy exporter by 2040.

And my Rt Hon Friend the Business Secretary will set out a plan in the next two months to make sure we achieve this.

I know businesses and families are very concerned about how they will get through this winter.

That's why I felt it was important to act urgently to provide immediate help and support, as well as setting out our plan about how we are going to secure the UK's future supplies.

This is part of my vision for rebuilding our economy.

Secure energy supply is vital to growth and prosperity. Yet it has been ignored for too long.

I will end the UK's short-termist approach to energy security and supply once and for all.

That is what I promised on the steps of Downing Street.

Today we are acting decisively to deliver that pledge.

This will help us build a stronger, more resilient and more secure United Kingdom.

I commend this motion to the House.

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## **Stuart Lyle: international knowledge exchange on urban warfare**

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) has world-renowned expertise in our specialist areas of defence science and technology. Our staff travel abroad to learn from allies such as the United States, and to share our research on an international stage.

In July 2022 Stuart Lyle, principal analyst, travelled to Los Angeles to attend and help deliver the world's only urban operations planners course, as a guest of the U.S. National Guard.

It's 0800 and in front of me is a room full of military personnel from across six nations and ranks ranging from Sergeant to Brigadier General. I had flown for nearly 12 hours, across eight time zones the day before. To add a final kicker, I was still recovering from a bout of COVID-19... Not the ideal context for presenting to an international military audience, both in the room and virtual, but that's where I was, so... best to make the best of it.

The HQ building of the 40th Infantry Division at Los Alamitos, Los Angeles. (Photo credit: Stuart Lyle)

I found myself in Los Angeles in early July as a guest of the U.S. Army's 40th Infantry Division (ID), an element of the U.S. National Guard. The 40th ID is blazing a trail to establish the U.S. Army's (and the world's) only Urban Operations Planners Course to prepare divisional-level staff for the complexity of planning and coordinating urban warfare, specifically in large-scale combat operations, or LSCO (pronounced Lis-Co in U.S. military parlance). There was a proof-of-concept course in 2021, but this was the first established course.

In December 2021 I helped run a NATO Urban training course and, in the audience was Brigadier General Rob Wooldridge, Deputy Commanding General of the 40th ID and the driving force behind the creation of this course. Following the NATO event he invited me to come out and be part of the teaching team for their course and I leapt at the chance to be a part of it.

The course was seven consecutive days long with roughly ten hours of instruction each day. While this could easily have been the proverbial "death-by-PowerPoint" that we've all experienced before, the schedule of instruction and calibre of presenters (myself included, I hope) ensured this was not the case.

The course was broken down into two distinct phases, best described as; 1. Admiring the Problem and 2. Overcoming the Problem.

"Admiring the problem" focused on providing the context for why urban operations are so different from operations in other environments, and exploring why they can be so complicated. This is where I came in. My subject was the global trends within urbanisation and their likely impact on military operations. This covered the physical environment, demographic shifts, alternative governance and others. It was a condensed version of the [Future Cities study](#) that I led, with the intent to set the scene for why military planners should invest more time into thinking about and preparing for urban operations.

Other topics included subterranean operations, protection of civilians, Civil Affairs operations and employment and coordination of Joint Fires into urban terrain. These were highly complex subjects in their own right, but the instructors did a superb job keeping them accessible and reinforcing the relevancy for higher-formation planners. There were also multiple historical case studies explored throughout to provide tangible context for the lessons being taught. Another fascinating area was the exploration of how different nations approach the same challenges. We had presentations on NATO urban doctrine (past and present), individual nations' urban doctrine and urban operations from our adversaries' perspectives too.

The highlight of the course was, undoubtedly, the third day. It was going to be the longest, the hottest and, hands down, the most fun. We were going to visit the U.S. Army's largest urban training site, known as the City of Razish, out in the Mojave Desert. A complex of over 700 buildings of varying sizes and home to a dedicated opposing force (OPFOR) whose job is to test visiting formations to their limits. But the day wasn't going to be as simple as just a visit.

We arrived at the base at 0600 to receive final briefings for the rest of the day before making our way to the Flight Operations area. There we were divided into our pre-arranged Chalks (groups) and introduced to our transportation methods and crews. I had never been in a UH60 Blackhawk helicopter before, but this was going to be more than just a familiarisation flight or a simple air movement. As a Chalk Lead, I was tasked with running an Urban Terrain Zone appreciation lessons while flying out over LA towards the desert further inland.

Just after take-off and about to begin my UTZ training serial. Definitely the most unusual presentation/teaching experience I've had so far. (Photo credit: Stuart Lyle)

Cities are divided into general urban terrain zones (UTZs) which are familiar to us all, e.g. low-density residential, business centre, light industrial, etc. Each of these have different characteristics in terms of their physical construction, population, diurnal trends and other things which may influence military operations in various ways. The Blackhawks flew us out of LA on a route that overflowed as many different UTZs as possible and it was my job to impart as much pertinent information as I could and lead discussions throughout the flight.

Not my usual commute. Transport inbound for the return flight. (Photo credit:



Stuart Lyle)

When we got to Razish the temperature was already approaching 40°C with the landscape around Razish looking like a moonscape. We were ushered into “the Embassy” where we met the 1\* commander who discussed his personal experience of urban combat as a tank company commander in Iraq and how that shaped his understanding of urban operations at higher formations. We were then given a guided tour around the training facility, getting to meet many of the specialist teams who make up the OPFOR and finding out about their experiences employing specialist areas like Engineering, drone/counter-drone capabilities and Fires in the urban environment to really push the visiting formations.

On completion, we climbed back aboard our Blackhawks and flew back over LA, following a different route to continue the UTZ lessons. This flight was particularly interesting as we flew over some of the critical infrastructure which has not only local, but international significance as economic and transportation hubs; Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and the port of Los Angeles. We were able to see the network of connecting infrastructure that only a bird’s eye view can provide and also see how some of the topics discussed so far on the course manifest themselves in reality.

Flying over the Port of LA, the busiest container port in North America and one of the 10 busiest globally. Over 9 million containers are processed each year into and out of the US through this node. (Photo credit: Stuart Lyle)

Observing the low-level sprawl of wider LA. The city is one of only two megacities (population over 10 million) in the entire United States. (Photo credit: Stuart Lyle)

As an avid student of urban operations, I have lost count of the amount of times I have watched the movie Blackhawk Down, so getting to fly over the rooftops and roadways of the city was as thrilling as it was intellectually fascinating.

The course continued for several more days and I delivered a session on the use of operational and historical analysis techniques to support better understanding of urban operations. I took some of the key lessons drawn from Dstl research and applied them to case studies for context. This was a great discussion (and debate) about some of the misconceptions surrounding urban combat. It also got the students to think more about the role data can play as well as the need to interrogate data to understand where and how best to apply it, something we strive to do here at Dstl.

Staff Sergeant vs. Brigadier General during the urban wargame. (Photo credit: Stuart Lyle)

The course culminated in style with the students getting to play a bespoke divisional-level urban wargame designed by wargame designer Brian Train specifically for this course. The students broke into multiple competing teams and got to put their newly acquired knowledge to the test against one another. I got to assist with introducing the game and facilitating the games, which was a very rewarding experience. We use wargames extensively to support our analytical work at Dstl, with educating the military players being a side benefit. It was great to see it being used solely for education and seeing the students not only put their lessons to good use, but also enjoy the process.

The 40th ID's Urban Operations Planners Course is a unique course, not just in the U.S. military, but anywhere. There is no equivalent course in the British military and there were a great many lessons that I took away from it, even having studied this particular subject for over seven years. This is partly due to the scale and scope of urban operations as well as the unique challenges they pose for military activities, hence the need for the course. However, it was also due to the calibre of the leadership and staff of the 40th ID as well as the incredible instructors they managed to gather to support it.

I got to spend time with long-time urban operations friends and colleagues, like Col. John Spencer of the Modern War Institute and Maj. Jayson Geroux of the Canadian Armed Forces. I also got to make and know some new ones like BG Rob Wooldridge, Sahr Muhammedally from the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) and Dr Jacob Stoil of the School of Advanced Military Studies. It was an honour to be counted amongst them.

The Urban Operations Planners Course, 2022 (Photo credit: 40th Infantry Division)

The course was a huge success and the dates are already set for next year's with the aim being to make this a permanent course available to U.S. and international soldiers to attend. I am grateful for having been offered the opportunity to not only attend, but contribute to this endeavour and represent Dstl and our work.

More information on this unique course:

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# Government announces Energy Price Guarantee for families and businesses while urgently taking action to reform broken energy market

## **Energy Price Guarantee**

From 1st October, a new 'Energy Price Guarantee' will mean a typical UK household will now pay up to an average £2,500 a year on their energy bill for the next two years. This is automatic and applies to all households.

This will save the average household at least £1,000 a year based on current energy prices from October and is in addition to the £400 energy bills discount for all households.

This applies to all households in Great Britain, with the same level of support made available to households in Northern Ireland.

See what [Help for Households is available](#)

- Typical household will save an average of £1,000 a year on their energy bills, under a new two-year Energy Price Guarantee
- Businesses and public sector organisations will see equivalent support over the winter
- New plans will tackle the root causes of problems in the energy market by boosting domestic energy supply
- Package will boost growth and curb inflation rises

Prime Minister Liz Truss sets out decisive action to support people and businesses with their energy bills and tackle the root causes of the issues in the UK energy market through increased supply – ensuring the country is not left in the same position again.

Under new plans, a typical UK household will pay no more than £2,500 a year on their energy bill for the next two years from 1st October, through a new 'Energy Price Guarantee' which limits the price suppliers can charge customers for units of gas. This takes account of temporarily removing green levies, worth around £150, from household bills. The guarantee will supersede the existing energy price cap.

This will save the average household £1,000 a year based on current energy prices from October. It comes in addition to the announced £400 energy bills discount for all households and together they will bring costs close to where the energy price cap stands today.

The new guarantee will apply to households in Great Britain, with the same level of support made available to households in Northern Ireland.

Those households who do not pay direct for mains gas and electricity – such as those living in park homes or on heat networks – will be no worse off and receive support through a new fund.

Today's action will deliver substantial benefits to the economy – boosting growth and curbing inflation by 4-5 points, reducing the cost of servicing the national debt.

The historic intervention comes after a failure to invest in home-grown energy and drive reform in the energy market. Putin's weaponisation of energy supply has exposed the UK's vulnerability to the volatility of global markets, coupled with a regulatory framework which is no longer fit for purpose, which is driving up bills and holding back economic growth.

Prime Minister Liz Truss said:

Decades of short-term thinking on energy has failed to focus enough on securing supply – with Russia's war in Ukraine exposing the flaws in our energy security and driving bills higher. I'm ending this once and for all.

I'm acting immediately so people and businesses are supported over the next two years, with a new Energy Price Guarantee, and tackling the root cause of the issues by boosting domestic energy supply.

Extraordinary challenges call for extraordinary measures, ensuring that the United Kingdom is never in this situation again.

As businesses have not benefited from an energy price cap and are not always able to fix their energy price through fixed deals, many are reporting projected increases in energy costs of more than 500%.

A new six-month scheme for businesses and other non-domestic energy users (including charities and public sector organisations like schools) will offer equivalent support as is being provided for consumers. This will protect them from soaring energy costs and provide them with the certainty they need to plan their business.

After this initial six-month scheme, the Government will provide ongoing, focused support for vulnerable industries. There will be a review in 3 months' time to consider where this should be targeted to make sure those most in need get support.

The Government will provide energy suppliers with the difference between this new lower price, and what energy retailers would charge their customers were this not in place. Schemes previously funded by green levies will also continue to be funded by the Government during this two year period to ensure the UK's investment in home-grown, secure renewable technologies continues.

Whilst the intervention will be funded by the Government, action is being taken to significantly reduce the cost over time, including:

- A new Energy Supply Taskforce – led by Madelaine McTernan who headed up the UK's successful Vaccine Taskforce – has begun negotiations with domestic and international suppliers to agree long-term contracts that reduce the price they charge for energy and increase the security of its supply. The Taskforce and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will negotiate with renewable producers to reduce the prices they charge as well.
- HM Treasury are announcing a joint scheme, working with the Bank of England, to address the extraordinary liquidity requirements faced by energy firms operating in UK wholesale gas and electricity markets. The Energy Markets Financing Scheme will enable stability to both energy and financial markets, and the economy, and reduce the eventual cost for businesses and consumers. The scheme will provide short term financial support and will be designed to be used as a last resort.

Learning from the mistakes of the past, the Government is taking action to accelerate domestic energy supply, increase our energy resilience and achieve our ambition to make the UK an energy exporter by 2040:

- Launch a new oil and gas licensing round as early as next week, expected to lead to over 100 new licences.
- Lift the moratorium on UK shale gas production. This will enable developers to seek planning permission where there is local support, which could get gas flowing in as soon as six months.
- Drive forward the acceleration of new sources of energy supply from North Sea oil and gas to clean energy like nuclear, wind and solar.
- Continue progressing up to 24GW of nuclear by 2050, with Great British Nuclear helping to set direction of getting new nuclear projects online in the UK.
- Undertake fundamental reforms to the structure and regulation of energy market through recommendations from a new review of the UK Energy Regulation.
- Launch a review to ensure we are meeting our Net Zero 2050 target in an economically-efficient way, given the altered economic landscape. Chaired by Chris Skidmore MP and reporting by the end of this year, it will ensure delivering the target is not placing undue burdens on businesses or consumers.

Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Millions of families and businesses across the country can now breathe a massive sigh of relief, safe in the knowledge that the government is standing behind them this winter and the next.

The price of inaction would have been far greater than the cost of this intervention. Not only can we provide urgent support now, but the beauty of our scheme is that it will also bring down inflation, helping tackle wider cost of living pressures.

Business and Energy Secretary Jacob Rees-Mogg said:

The global headwinds caused by Russia's war in Ukraine, Putin's weaponisation of energy and the aftermath of Covid, have exposed the need to strengthen Britain's energy security for the good of the nation and the millions of households and businesses who will struggle to meet the cost of bills this winter.

The action we are taking today will reduce that worrying burden in the short term and will invigorate the long term reforms we need to complete, to resolve the underlying problems in the energy market and ensure the British people enjoy affordable and plentiful energy in future.

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## [Global conference set to tackle urgent challenges facing LGBT people around the world](#)

- UK and Argentina will co-chair the 2022 Equal Rights Coalition conference from Buenos Aires today
- 42 member states and more than 140 civil society organisations will discuss the need to uphold human rights for LGBT persons
- pre-conference report highlights the growing global "backlash" against LGBT rights and freedoms

The Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) will meet in Buenos Aires today (Thursday 8 September) to discuss joint action on urgent issues that LGBT people face globally.

The gathering comes at a pivotal moment as ERC member states have identified a growing global threat to the freedoms and human rights of LGBT persons. It will also provide the opportunity for governments and NGOs to share best practice.

The current ERC co-chairs, Argentina and the UK, will also present a report tracking progress of the [ERC's Strategy](#) and [Five-Year Implementation Plan](#), published in July 2021.

Germany and Mexico will take up their roles as new ERC co-chairs during the closing ceremony of the conference on Friday 9 September. The ERC will commit to strengthening engagement from ERC members and empowering greater representation from the Global South. Germany and Mexico will also be joined by civil society co-chairs and supported by a new Administrative Unit, funded

by member states.

UK Prime Minister's [Special Envoy for LGBT Rights, Nick Herbert](#) (Lord Herbert of South Downs) said:

The UK stands for freedom – and that means freedom for all. We're proud of the Equal Rights Coalition's work to defend these freedoms but more needs to be done, in every part of the world, to achieve our aims.

We look forward to supporting Germany and Mexico in their role as the next ERC co-chairs. Together we can send the clear message that LGBT rights are human rights.

Argentina's Special Representative Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Alba Rueda said:

Argentina is a strong country in human rights and diversity. This is the result of the social and political movement of lesbians, gays, travestis, transgender people, non-binaries, and all activisms that break away from the patriarchal and binary system.

We value the ERC in this same way: as a space in which social organisations can express themselves so that states can listen to them and commit to turning their demands into public policies.

This year's ERC Conference follows previous convenings in Montevideo in 2016, Vancouver in 2018, and a virtual event in 2021. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the UK and Argentina have held an extended tenure as co-chairs since 2019.

The conference will focus on 4 key areas, including:

- developing inclusive national laws and policies
- advancing the [Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- supporting civil society responses to the global anti-gender movement
- mapping the progress towards decriminalisation around the world

Civil society organisations play a vital role in the Equal Rights Coalition. The current civil society co-chairs – Asociación Familias Diversas Argentina, Kaleidoscope Trust, and Stonewall – support more than 140 groups from across the world. The UK, Argentina, Mexico, the USA, Canada, The Netherlands and Belgium have funded some of the in-person participation at this year's conference for civil society organisations and human rights defenders from the Global South.

In July 2021, the ERC agreed a [Strategic Plan](#) and [Five-Year Implementation Plan](#) to help guide and energise the group's work and ensure the organisation can live up to its huge potential. The pre-conference report highlighted this prioritisation process as a "major achievement" of Argentina and the UK's

tenure as co-chairs.

- the ERC will meet in Buenos Aires from 8 to 9 September
- for delegates unable to attend in person, participants will also be able to engage virtually through a hybrid meeting
- journalists wishing to cover elements of the conference either in person or virtually, can [apply for accreditation](#)