

UK Central Europe conference for non-governmental influencers: call for bids



UK Government

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) Central European Network of embassies is seeking a partner to deliver an engaging conference programme of up to one day for a select group of non-governmental influencers across Central Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia).

Objectives

The objective of the conference is to facilitate the exchange of perspectives between attendees from across the region and UK participants from the government, think tanks and academia on the major international challenges facing the region as the UK completes its transition out of the EU.

The exchange of perspectives should result in a series of suggestions for UK policy makers, with a particular focus on how the UK and Central Europe can best work together as a force for good for the benefit of us all.

How to apply

Full details of the call for bids and application process are set out in the attached call for bids document.

Bidding forms

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Last updated 26 November 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 26 November 2020

updated deadlines for bids – 11 December 2020

2. 19 November 2020

First published.

[New and updated guidance for businesses regarding the end of the EU Transition Period](#)

The guidance on the regulatory requirements and obligations that will be in place from 1 January 2021 can be found on GOV.UK.

There will be some differences between the rules for those businesses trading in Great Britain and those trading in Northern Ireland, so OPSS is producing separate but complementary guidance to help businesses navigate what is expected of them.

As new items of guidance are completed these guidance documents will be published at:

[Product Safety and Metrology from 1 January 2021 – Great Britain](#)

[Product Safety and Metrology from 1 January 2021 – Northern Ireland](#)

Young people leading the charge on climate action

It is a pleasure to join you today.

And to participate in the opening of Mock COP.

I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to deliver this event.

And I applaud your dedication and commitment to tackling climate change.

Across the world, young people are leading the charge on climate action.

We see this, in projects like the Resilient40.

Which is amplifying the voices of over 60 youth leaders, from 29 African countries in vital climate change discussions.

Or indeed the Resolution Project, which supports student entrepreneurs with over 300 social ventures in more than 80 countries.

From recycling solutions in Ethiopia.

To water management in Brazil.

And household biogas generation in Nepal.

Young people are on the frontline of global climate action.

And this is absolutely vital.

For the future of our planet.

And for the success of COP26 next November.

The gravity and urgency of the situation we face demands that COP26 marks the moment

when the world unites together behind a fair, resilient and zero emissions future.

And that means governments committing to ambitious emission reduction targets, and adaptation plans.

It means donor countries living up to their obligations.

And fulfilling the commitments that they have made to the global South to put \$100 billion a year into international climate finance.

And it means listening to diverse voices in the negotiations.

So that we are ensuring the interests of young people, as well as Civil Society as a whole, are heard loud and clear.

From both the global South and North.

To achieve this, I have been clear that we want civil society groups to be at the heart of both our preparations for COP, and the summit itself.

That is why I met with young people and civil society organisations on a visit to the UN in New York earlier in the year.

And I commit to meeting groups which comprise young people and civil society in every country that I visit going forward.

It is also why we have established the COP26 Civil Society and Youth advisory council.

Where young activists, NGOs, indigenous peoples and faith groups are very much part of our conversations in planning COP26.

We are also supporting our COP partners, Italy.

Both in their preparations for the Pre-COP and of course the Youth Event next September.

And in the launch of their Youth4Climate series.

Helping to support and amplify the work of young climate activists.

Because such activism plays a really vital role.

Although the commitments required in the Paris Agreement need to be made by national governments, success will belong to each and every one of us.

Reaching net zero will only be achieved through a joint effort.

And for this civil society is absolutely vital.

You are vital in pushing all of us to go further: governments and regions; businesses and cities; schools and universities.

By raising awareness, generating support, and asking us to do more.

That is one of the great benefits of this Mock COP.

It will show governments and organisations around the world the appetite that exists for ambitious climate action from young people.

So I will finish with this ask: keep up that momentum.

Keep showing us what is possible.

And keep advocating for climate action in your home countries.

Because if you do, the job of negotiators, who are urging countries around the world to make more ambitious commitments, becomes much easier.

As does the work of the Race to Zero campaign.

Which is encouraging non-state actors, such as businesses, cities, regions and universities around the world to commit to net zero as soon as possible.

And if we work together in this way, I believe COP26 will mark the moment when the potential of the Paris Agreement is fulfilled.

Thank you.

[Call for evidence on fine particulate matter air quality targets](#)

Press release

Responses from the scientific community will inform government approach to cutting the pollutant most damaging to human health



The government's independent Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) has today launched [a call for evidence](#) on modelling fine particulate matter (PM2.5) concentrations in England.

Advice from scientific experts will be sought on the insights that modelling of PM2.5 concentrations can provide. This includes the range of PM2.5 concentrations that could be expected under different future scenarios, the main drivers of future PM2.5, differences in population exposure and the level of uncertainty in modelling results.

Responses to the call for evidence will inform the modelling process for developing new legally binding air quality targets that will be set through the Environment Bill, which is currently passing through the House of Commons.

The Bill requires the government to set an annual mean PM2.5 concentration target and long-term air quality target, with the two targets working in tandem to drive action to reduce PM2.5 concentrations. In the recently published targets policy paper it was proposed that this long-term target is a PM2.5 population exposure reduction target.

The UK has made significant progress in reducing emissions of PM2.5, which is the pollutant most damaging to human health, with a reduction of 78% since 1970.

The AQEG, together with the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP), are providing independent technical advice to Defra throughout the development of the air quality targets. The fully attributed responses will be published when Defra sets out its proposed targets for public consultation.

These targets will sit alongside our Clean Air Strategy, the most ambitious air quality strategy in a generation which aims to reduce air pollution and save lives. The Strategy includes new and ambitious goals, legislation, investment and policies which will help us to clean up our air more quickly and effectively. It has been praised by the World Health Organization as “an example for the rest of the world to follow”.

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[OSCE project co-ordinator in Ukraine: UK statement](#)

Thank you Mr Chair. I would like to thank Ambassador Villadsen, dear Henrik, for his detailed briefing on the work of the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine (PCU).

The UK welcomes the progress made during this reporting period across its objectives: to support the Government’s reform effort, promote a culture of dialogue and help mitigate the effects of conflict. We fully support its wide range of activity. However, for the purposes of this statement I will focus on three themes: delivering activity despite COVID-19, improvements in gender mainstreaming, and the impact of the Russia-fuelled conflict in eastern Ukraine.

We commend the PCU for its continued efforts to adapt activities and projects in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In light of this, we thank the PCU for its work with Ukraine’s Central Election Commission for October’s local elections. The PCU’s online training

for election commissioners, and its introduction of an online chat-bot which provided information on the elections to 28,000 users, amongst other examples, supported an election which proceeded in a generally calm, well-organised and transparent manner, despite the COVID-19 backdrop.

COVID-19 has resulted in greater risks to cyber security. Increased levels of remote working and use of new technology have raised cyber vulnerability threats. Hostile actors have utilised the pandemic to launch attacks on Ukrainian Ministries and critical infrastructure. The UK is proud to fund the OSCE PCU's project to provide core cyber hygiene training to the Ukrainian civil service, and to identify and address common cybersecurity threats.

We would like to highlight the PCU's concerted efforts since June to ensure gender mainstreaming in all of its projects and activities, including through introducing a gender perspective in newly developed projects and collecting gender disaggregated data for all its events. This is reflected in recent projects such as on constitutional complaints and gender equality in the armed forces.

These efforts build on the success of recent PCU projects where gender has been a key focus. We congratulate the PCU on completing its 3-year efforts in training police hotline call-centre personnel to combat gender stereotypes and properly identify domestic violence cases. This is of particular importance as many States have seen a rise in violence against women and girls during the pandemic.

Regarding the PCU's work to mitigate the impact of the conflict, the UK commends the PCU for its continued work on humanitarian demining, especially in eastern Ukraine. It is a difficult but life-saving area of work. The PCU has been instrumental in bringing together a range of humanitarian demining stakeholders to discuss the latest changes to the Mine Action Law and to facilitate public involvement in state mine action policy formation. Continued support on developing policy, training and raising mine awareness is even more important as we seek to overcome the Covid-19 operational challenges.

Lastly, as well as working to mitigate the physical impacts of the conflict, the PCU has provided psychosocial support to conflict-affected populations. We welcome the training provided by PCU for representatives of Psychological Support Services within the Ministry of Internal Affairs on psychological support and rehabilitation and we hope this will help alleviate some of the stress and trauma felt by those who go on to receive these services.

The UK remains committed to the long-term security, stability and prosperity of Ukraine. We thank the PCU for promoting reform across a broad range of issues, some of which have been highlighted today. We reiterate that the mandate of the PCU applies to all Ukrainian territory including in eastern Ukraine, and illegally annexed Crimea. We thank Ambassador Villadsen and his team for their work supporting Ukraine, and I wish them continued success.