

Government extends Horizon Europe financial safety net

Press release

The government has announced an extension to the financial support provided to Horizon Europe applicants, originally launched in November 2021.



- Government extends Horizon Europe guarantee scheme, protecting funding for UK researchers, businesses, and innovators
- association to EU programmes remains the UK's preference, with the government's priority to maintain support for the UK's research and development sector during ongoing period of uncertainty
- guarantee will now be in place to cover all Horizon Europe calls that close on or before 31 December 2022

Today (1 September 2022), the government has announced an extension to the financial support provided to Horizon Europe applicants, originally launched in November 2021. The extension will ensure that eligible, successful UK applicants will continue to be guaranteed funding, supporting them to continue their important work in research and innovation.

The guarantee will now be in place to cover all Horizon Europe calls that close on or before 31 December 2022, with the majority of grant signature dates expected before the end of August 2023. This extension will protect and support the UK sector during the ongoing delays while we continue to encourage the EU to formalise UK association, including through the recently launched consultation process.

Eligible, successful applicants will receive the full value of their funding at their UK host institution for the lifetime of the grant. Successful awardees will be able to remain in the UK to receive this funding, which will provide reassurance for future collaborations, and support UK researchers whether association is confirmed, or otherwise.

The UK cannot wait indefinitely for association to EU Programmes, and in parallel to these measures, we continue to develop plans for a bold and

ambitious package of alternatives. The government released [a publication](#) on 20 July setting out further detail on these plans.

Details regarding the scope and terms of the extension are available on the [UKRI website](#).

Published 1 September 2022

[Civil news: early billing for asylum matters](#)

News story

Changes are being made to the 2018 Standard Civil Contract effective from 1 September 2022 to allow early billing for asylum matters.



Providers will be able to claim the standard fee for asylum matters from 1 September 2022 before the case has concluded.

We are making this possible through changes to the immigration and asylum specification in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract.

The changes follow consultations with your representative bodies. This will only apply to work carried out under the asylum standard fee scheme and which meets the criteria set out in the specification.

Where can I find out more?

Full details of the contract amendments can be found on the Standard Civil Contract 2018 page on GOV.UK.

Further information

[Standard civil contract 2018](#) – for table of amendments and immigration and

asylum category specific rules

[Guidance for reporting controlled work and controlled work matters](#) – for updated guidance on how to claim for work completed under the new clauses

[Legal aid guidance](#) – for practical guidance relating to early billing for asylum matters

Published 1 September 2022

[Incoming OSCE Chair-in-Office presents priorities for 2023: UK statement to the OSCE](#)

Thank you, Mr Chair. On behalf of the UK, I warmly welcome you, Minister Osmani to the Permanent Council. Thank you for outlining the priorities for North Macedonia's time as OSCE Chair-in-Office during 2023. Please be assured of the UK's full support for your intention to focus on genuine dialogue and for the agenda you have set out today.

The UK remains a strong proponent of the OSCE. The OSCE's concept of comprehensive security must remain at the organisation's heart and form the basis of everything we do. We have met on an almost weekly basis for the last six months in the shadow of Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. We fervently hope that the Russian Government will have seen sense and the war in Ukraine will have ended by the time you assume the role of Chair in Office. But whatever happens we believe that we need and will need the OSCE more than ever as we tackle the many challenges facing us all.

We welcome your intention to provide political leadership across all three dimensions. We note that protracted conflicts and progress towards peace will be topping your agenda. Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine, not only continues to pose the most serious threat to the OSCE area but also continues to blight the lives of Ukrainians caught up in the conflict. This must command our full attention and we should be giving our full support to the OSCE structures which contribute towards the peaceful resolution of this devastating conflict.

We note that women throughout the OSCE region have been and are disproportionately negatively affected by conflict and instability. We share your determination to harness effective multilateralism in response. It is vital to ensure women's full, meaningful and effective participation across our work in all three dimensions and to understand the gender based impact of conflict.

We agree that conventional arms control and confidence and security building measures remain crucial for security in the OSCE area. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has shown that the measures were not the issue, but that political will was. The UK remains committed to all confidence and security building measures, including the Vienna Document, provided that all participating States fully abide by their commitments under international law, including the Helsinki Final Act and UN Charter.

Mr Chair – transnational threats, including transnational organised crime and cyber security, will remain security challenges in the OSCE area to which we need comprehensive, holistic responses. We also remain committed to strengthening economic resilience, through improved governance and cracking down on corruption which undermines our societies.

In the economic and environmental dimension, Russia's invasion has shown the interconnectedness of energy, food, infrastructure and climate to our collective security, and how the deliberate actions by one country can cause devastating ripples across the world. The UK supports the OSCE's efforts to improve the region's energy security. Furthermore, we must not forget climate change and look forward to increased cooperation in meeting commitments under the [Stockholm Decision](#).

We welcome your intention to initiate a broad debate on the necessity of increased engagement on the respect for fundamental human rights not just because of the ongoing situation sparked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but also in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its legacy. Your commitment to providing political support to the autonomous institutions will be invaluable to ensure that all participating States implement, and uphold, our human dimension commitments. With democracy and human rights under attack in the OSCE region, we must continue to focus on the most egregious violations of our OSCE commitments using all available OSCE tools and mechanisms. The [Moscow Mechanism](#) has served us well in exposing abuses and violations.

We share your determination to support relevant policies to fight any kind of discrimination and intolerance. The UK was honoured to host the [International Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief](#) in London in July where participants shared practical lessons on how to protect the freedom of religion or belief. We look forward to continuing this work with you.

Your Excellency, dear Minister, in conclusion, the OSCE remains a critical multilateral institution for European and Euro-Atlantic security. At this vital time for our shared security, you can rely on the strong support of the UK in your search for solutions and progress and we wish you and your very capable team here in Vienna all the best as you prepare for your time as Chair-in-Office.

Thank you.

Government takes further steps to address serious council failures in Slough

- Local Government Minister Paul Scully expands government intervention in failing council
- New powers granted to Commissioners who will be given control over recruitment of senior officers at the Council
- Move comes following report from Commissioners outlining 'unprecedented' challenges at Slough Borough Council

The government will expand its [intervention in Slough Borough Council](#) after persistent failure to deliver best value for local taxpayers, Minister Scully will confirm today (1 September 2022).

A report from the Commissioners submitted in June of this year revealed the Council was facing an "unprecedented" scale of challenge, following years of financial mismanagement, piling debt and poor accounting practices.

The Council was also plagued by governance issues, and despite the best efforts of Commissioners, insufficient progress had been made to deliver proper value for money for Slough's taxpayers.

To ensure Council staff have the best support possible in place, commissioners are now being granted further powers to oversee the recruitment of the Council's most senior members of staff.

Local Government Minister, Paul Scully, said:

The people of Slough deserve a council that can deliver for their needs and drive long-lasting improvements and a brighter future.

Given the scale of the challenges set out in the Commissioners report, I am granting further powers to Commissioners to help implement much-needed changes.

I am confident that these expanded powers will support the Council so they can drive forward long-term change and protect hardworking taxpayers.

In July this year, the Levelling Up Secretary confirmed he was minded to expand the intervention in Slough. Having considered the representations made after this announcement, the decision to expand the intervention has now been confirmed.

Lead Commissioner Max Caller CBE said:

I am grateful to the Levelling Up Minister for confirming the expansion of the Directions and his support for Commissioners' work at Slough Borough Council.

There is much to do and no easy answers. Getting the right officer team in place quickly is an important step in the Council's recovery and in delivering best value for Slough's taxpayers.

On 1 December 2021, Commissioners were sent into Slough Borough Council to address serious financial and management failures at the request of the former Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

On 28 July, the Levelling Up Secretary announced that he was minded to expand the existing intervention in Slough Borough Council following the Commissioners' report on the failings in the Council. A period of representations was held which closed on 11 August. The representations received agreed with or were neutral toward the expansion of powers for Commissioners and the Secretary of State has duly granted them.

See all documents on the [intervention at Slough Borough Council](#).

[Ukraine Independence Day](#)

What should have been a time of celebration was this year marked by tragedy – 24 August also marked 6 months since Russia invaded the sovereign nation of Ukraine.

Since Ukraine's independence in 1991, a proud, internationally engaged country, and one committed to freedom and the principles of the UN Charter, has emerged. Ukraine has become a global exporter of grain – feeding hundreds of millions of people around the world.

But now the country and all it has achieved is under threat. Over the last 6 months, the scale of atrocities against Ukraine's citizens is certain, with extensive violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. Officially there have been 12,800 civilian casualties so far, with the expectation that real figures are considerably higher. At least 366 healthcare centres have been attacked, and over 2,200 schools. More than 12.8 million Ukrainians have been forced from their homes – displaced – with 6.2 million people now living as refugees.

The UK, EU and US, and many other countries, have stood by Ukraine in its darkest hour. We will continue to do so. We are committed to championing fundamental human rights, sovereignty, international humanitarian law and democratic values internationally, to help build a fairer, freer world.

Many Namibians will be able to relate to the grave situation in Ukraine, having fought so hard and so long for independence, and freedom from oppression, to become a proud, stable, democratic and peaceful nation.

The war in Ukraine continues to have a huge impact globally, affecting the most vulnerable people living in the world's poorest countries. Since the beginning of the year, we have seen a rise in the cost of living around the world, including here in Namibia. Global food insecurity and the risk of famine is at an all-time high, driven by conflict, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

At present, at least 1.6 billion people worldwide are directly affected by the surge in food and energy prices. In East Africa, millions of people are faced with the worst drought and food shortages in decades. Four consecutive years have seen insufficient rain for harvests. Livestock is dying, and the price of staple foods keeps rising.

Ukraine's grain exports collapsed after the invasion, which has exacerbated food insecurity around the world. African countries import more than 12% of their wheat from Ukraine.

This war is also affecting the trade of fertilisers. The African Development Bank (AfDB) estimates that, due to the conflict, Africa faces a fertiliser shortfall of 4 million metric tonnes this year – 33-40% of supply in 2020. Without sufficient supply of fertiliser, Africa could lose \$14-19 billion – one-fifth – worth of food production in the next 2 harvesting seasons, with significant knock-on consequences to food availability.

Recognising the global food crisis, international sanctions on Russia have deliberately not included food or fertiliser exports from Russia to third world countries. The UN-brokered deal to unblock Ukraine's grain exports across the Black Sea is a vital step, and news of a shipment by the World Food Programme transporting grain from Ukraine to the drought-hit Horn of Africa region is a positive sign of progress.

However, to enable a lasting return to global security and economic stability, there must be peace. No country deserves war. But in war time, there are rules: there is international humanitarian law and there is the commitment we made to uphold this through the UN Charter and the important role played by the ICRC. The world needs a free and a safe Ukraine so it can securely return to supplying the world with its food.

Our commitment to a better world, one that is fairer and strives for freedom for all – especially in the aftermath of the pandemic – is a challenge that we all must face together. Ukraine is our friend in this global reconstruction effort, and it is our partner in food security.

As we commemorate Ukraine's anniversary of independence, our respective countries and institutions stand together with Ukraine, both supporting Ukraine to help protect its own people, but also around the world in partnership with those nations who share these same goals.

Strength to you, Independent Ukraine.

Signed by:

HE Charles Moore, British High Commissioner

HE Sinikka Antila, Ambassador of the European Union

HE Herbert Beck, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany

HE Sébastien Minot, Ambassador of the Republic of France

HE Alberto de la Calle, Ambassador of Spain

HE Luis Gaspar Da Silva, Ambassador of Portugal

Jessica Long, Chargée d'Affaires a.i, United States of America

Matti Karvanen, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., Embassy of Finland