

Letter from Ambassador Knott to UK nationals in Poland

Dear UK nationals in Poland,

Following developments over the last week, I wanted to write to update you on the situation around the UK's departure from the EU. And to offer some advice.

The UK and EU have agreed to extend the deadline for the UK's Exit from the EU. The terms of the extension mean that the new exit day will be 31 January 2020, although the UK's withdrawal could take place earlier if a deal is ratified by both sides. For the period of this extension, the UK will continue to hold full membership rights and UK nationals will retain their full EU citizenship rights. So if you are a UK national living in Poland now, nothing has changed.

In the absence of a deal, or a further extension, the legal default remains that the UK will leave the EU on 31 January 2020 with no deal. So it is still important to be ready for that. If you have not already done so, we recommend that you follow the steps below to ensure you are prepared:

Make sure you are registered with your local Voivode office.

If you want to learn more about your residency and steps you need to take, please check the Polish Office for Foreigners' [Brexit webpage](#). Please remember that if you are in doubt – you should go and check with your local Voivode Office whether you are correctly registered.

Exchange your UK driving licence for a Polish one if you are living in Poland for more than 6 months.

If you have a paper driving licence, you must exchange it soon – in a “no deal” scenario, paper driving licences will not be valid in Poland after Brexit.

Make sure you are registered for healthcare in Poland, unless you wish to pay for private healthcare.

You should check with ZUS if you are correctly paying contributions in Poland. There are some useful links where you can find more information about your access to healthcare in Poland and the UK:

Check if your passport is valid for travel.

You should have at least 6 months of validity on your passport. If you are unsure whether you have enough time on your passport, you should use our [passport checker tool](#).

Returning to the UK.

Make sure you have checked what rules apply to any non-British family members if you decide to [return to the UK with your family in the future](#). There are several webpages on gov.uk where you can find more information which applies in both a deal and no deal scenario.

Travelling with pets.

There might be changes to the rules around travelling with pets after Brexit. You should contact your vet at least 4 months before travelling and check if your pet has all arrangements at place. You should also [read our guidance](#).

Take steps where necessary to ensure your [professional qualifications](#) are recognised in Poland before Brexit.

To access the latest advice, please visit our [Living in Poland guide](#) where you will find the details about your rights as the UK leaves the EU. When you visit this webpage, you will find there an option of [signing up for our email alerts](#). We recommend you register for these updates as you will be notified about the latest information and developments regarding Brexit.

[UK Space Agency confirms £7.35 million funding to support small satellite launch from Cornwall](#)

The UK Space Agency will award £7.35 million to Virgin Orbit UK Limited, the UK branch of US launch operator Virgin Orbit, to enable horizontal launch of small satellites at Cornwall Airport Newquay, it was confirmed today (Tuesday 5 November).

The funding will help to develop advanced ground support equipment, including UK-based manufacturing of key equipment, and conduct mission planning. Together with funding from the Cornwall Council for spaceport infrastructure, this grant helps secure the first satellite launch from Spaceport Cornwall, which Virgin Orbit are planning for the early 2020s, pending regulatory approvals.

Spaceport Cornwall estimates a horizontal launch spaceport at Cornwall Airport Newquay could create 150 immediate jobs, with additional opportunities for local businesses in directly supporting the site.

Science Minister, Chris Skidmore said:

We want the UK to be the first country in Europe to give its small

satellite manufacturers a clear route from the factory to the spaceport. That's why it's so important that we are developing new infrastructure to allow aircraft to take off and deploy satellites, a key capability that the UK currently lacks.

Today's announcement will help the UK to harness the commercial opportunities offered by the global space industry and put the UK firmly on the map as Europe's leading launch destination.

Access to space is a vital tool for global efforts to tackle climate change, as satellites give the science community key measurements of temperature, sea levels and ice cover, while improving management of natural resources. The government is clear that launch activities must not unduly affect the environment and independent research carried out by the University of Exeter demonstrates that Spaceport Cornwall is not expected to have a significant impact on Cornwall's overall greenhouse gas emissions and efforts to combat climate change.

The UK Space Agency originally announced its intention to award funding to Spaceport Cornwall and Virgin Orbit in [June](#), subject to approval, as part of a wider £20 million funding package from Cornwall Council and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership. Today's announcement by the UK Space Agency follows the completion of the necessary due diligence and conclusion of the grant agreement with Virgin Orbit UK Limited. Cornwall Council are expected to confirm whether they will award £10 million capital funding to the project at a council meeting later this month.

This new funding will complement the recent award of £300,000 from the UK Space Agency's targeted development fund to further support Cornwall's ambition to be a centre for future flight technologies.

Pending regulatory approvals in the US and UK, Virgin Orbit plan to operate its LauncherOne system from Cornwall Airport Newquay using a modified Boeing 747 jet to carry the launcher system. Virgin Orbit will make its own contribution to the project of around £2.5 million, with the company's launch activities helping to attract new business and investment opportunities, as well as inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers.

Dan Hart, CEO of Virgin Orbit, said:

We're tremendously excited to be supporting the UK Space Agency and Cornwall Council by bringing space launch to the UK. By establishing a strong local hub for our launch system, this joint project will boost UK participation in a fast-growing global space economy while also providing direct, ready, and responsive access to space for government missions.

We very much look forward to furthering our ties with the cutting-edge satellite innovators across the UK and with local industry, who will be critical partners in fulfilling the full potential of this endeavour.

We're eager to set up a world-class launch facility at Spaceport Cornwall, bring domestic space launch to the UK, and launch the next generation of satellite developers in their quest to better understand our Earth and our environment, connect human kind, serve national security, and explore our solar system.

Minister for the Future of Transport, George Freeman said:

This latest investment in Spaceport Cornwall and Virgin Orbit is the exciting result of Government and the aerospace sector working together to help potential spaceports realise their global ambitions.

The UK is a world leader in small satellite technology and we are committed to supporting the UK as a world leader in space technology, and establishing a network of spaceports that enables us to operate regular flights is key to that.

To help grow the UK's spaceflight capabilities, Government is funding a range of industry-led projects including £31.5 million to help establish launch services from a new vertical launch spaceport in Sutherland, Scotland.

[Securing justice and maintaining peace for Bosnian citizens](#)

Thank you, High Representative. Thank you to Ms Korjenic for your briefings.

I think we take a different view on the importance of the office of the High Representative than the Russian representative has just set out. We believe that the Office of the High Representative continues to play an essential role in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has the United Kingdom's full support, including, as other countries have mentioned round the table, for the use of the Bonn powers if and when the situation requires. And the reason for that, I think, is obvious. There are some people, including some leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who want to do all they can to stop Bosnia and Herzegovina being a flourishing, normal state. Dayton requires Bosnia to be an independent state with two entities, the Federation and Republika Srpska. But it does not place the entities above the state and therefore, as long as there are leaders in Bosnia who refuse to acknowledge or who work against that very important statehood aspect of Bosnia and Herzegovina enshrined in Dayton, codified by this Council and implemented for very many years through the Peace Implementation Council and the steering board, as long as that antagonistic approach to Bosnia as a state continues, the Office of the High

Representative will continue to be necessary and the Bonn powers will continue to be necessary. So I just want to put on record the United Kingdom's very firm support for you, High Representative, and your team.

I also want to thank Ms Korjenic from Trial International. We in the UK support Trial's work to secure justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and we pay tribute to all the work you do – and I'll come back to that in a minute, if I may. And we join other colleagues in welcoming the unanimous adoption of the resolution for a further 12 months, authorising the European Union to continue Operation Althea. This demonstrates the continued commitment of the international community to Bosnia's security and stability, but as the French representative said, it also underscores Bosnia's European and Euro-Atlantic direction and trajectory.

And I just want to say on that that it is my understanding that there are certain laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina that codify this Euro-Atlantic integration, both in respect of the European Union and in respect of NATO, and there are certainly resolutions of this council that codify the Euro-Atlantic integration and there are numerous decisions by the Peace Implementation Council and by the steering board, which codify that Euro-Atlantic integration. And that desire of the Bosnian people has never been overturned in law. So while leaders may argue against that because they've changed their mind or it doesn't suit their political rhetoric, the law of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the corpus of decisions supported and passed by the international community is in favour of supporting Bosnia for as long as she wants to go down that road of Euro-Atlantic integration. And these are battles that need to be fought democratically, not undemocratically through polemic and demagoguery.

I want to just recall that nearly 30 years ago, Bosnia and Herzegovina was the big issue for this council, where our predecessors passed many resolutions day after day to try and stop the fighting and restore stability and peace to the country. The war lasted for four dreadful years and it changed forever the way the UN does peacekeeping. In 1995, as we've heard today, the massacre in Srebrenica claimed nine thousand lives of Muslim men and boys – the worst massacre in Europe since 1945. These are not insignificant events for Europe or for Bosnia or for the Balkans. And the reason the International Criminal Tribunal was set up was indeed to try people for these crimes. So we very much agree with Ms Korjenic that people should not be trying to undermine what the ICTY discovered. The ICTY was a legitimate tribunal. It was established by this Council and its judgments still stand.

I'm running out of time so I will simply say that on reconciliation, I endorse what the German and Indonesian representatives said. That's a very important part of what is happening. And I also want to stress the vital importance of the rule of law for all Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens. Ms Korjenic exhorted us not to despair. I don't give up on Bosnia. I've worked on the issue of the Balkans since 1991. We're not going to despair because if we despair of Bosnia, it fundamentally means the bad guys have won. And that's not what we're going to let happen. So you can rely on the United Kingdom and your Atlantic institutions to remain helping Bosnia as long as

all of Bosnia's citizens want it.

Thank you very much.

[Housing Minister announces new champion for modern housebuilding](#)

- Construction and real estate expert Mark Farmer appointed as Champion for Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) in housebuilding
- New Champion will oversee delivery of minister's Advanced Construction Corridor in the North
- Comes at a turning point for MMC just as the government launches biggest ever investment into an offsite manufacturer to boost production and the UK sets a world record for the tallest modular building

Housing Minister Esther McVey MP has announced a new Champion for Modern Methods of Construction as part of the government's drive to make the UK the global leader in housing standards.

Mark Farmer brings 30 years' experience in construction to the role and will provide independent scrutiny and advice to the Government on how to increase the use of MMC in homebuilding. He will also be charged with developing the '[Construction Corridor](#)' in the North and promoting wider innovation in the sector.

Farmer will also act as an ambassador overseas for the UK's MMC activities in homebuilding, using international networks and trade opportunities to attract investment into an industry that could be worth an estimated £40 billion once mature.

It follows a major funding deal, as the Housing Minister announced the government was injecting £30 million into ilke Homes, the biggest ever government investment in an MMC factory, as we develop a Construction Corridor in the North. This new, transformational funding will play a crucial role in the scaling up of production, bringing down production costs and allowing up to 8 homes, which will create less waste and be more energy efficient, to be built a day.

Housing Minister Esther McVey MP said:

I want to see modern methods of construction – the new gold standard of building – being used up and down the country to usher in a green housing revolution. That’s why it is such fantastic news that Mark Farmer has agreed to be our new MMC Champion – to really drive forward innovation, and to help the government deliver a new generation of green homes.

MMC Champion Mark Farmer said:

I am delighted to have been asked to carry out this new role. This is a really important time for the construction industry and there is an urgent need to rethink how we build homes, delivering better quality, improved safety, carbon reduction and an array of exciting new career opportunities.

I look forward to working with both industry and Government to make sure we now accelerate the uptake of modern methods of construction.

Russell Pedley, co-founder at Assael Architecture who co-chairs the Urban Land Institute UK Residential Council with Mark Farmer, said:

Mark is the perfect ambassador for the sector and this welcome appointment shows ministers are really prioritising ways to build cleaner, better quality homes more quickly in factories

Modern Methods of Construction are a combination of offsite manufacturing and onsite techniques that provide alternatives to traditional house building, allowing homes to be built quickly, be more energy efficient and better designed. It can deliver high-quality housing at pace and it has been shown that some homes built using modern methods have 80% fewer defects and can reduce heating bills by to 70%.

Some of the main benefits of MMC housing include:

- Speed – homes delivered using MMC are manufactured offsite with less disruption than onsite construction.
- Reduced carbon footprint – homes built using MMC have the potential to contribute significantly to the reduction of carbon emissions, through greater precision in the manufacturing process leading to more energy-efficient homes and reduced construction waste.
- Skills – production lines enable companies to take apprentices and train

them on specific tasks irrespective of their backgrounds.

- Safety – As Dame Judith Hackitt points out ‘Over the longer term, it is expected that the changes set out in the report will lead to the greater use of more standard and better quality assured systems being constructed offsite and less elemental construction onsite.

This news also comes days after the final piece of the world’s tallest modular building was installed in Croydon, just 35 weeks after construction started. The two towers of 101 George Street, developed by Tide and its sister company Vision Modular Systems in its Bedford factory, stand at 44-storeys and 135.6m it is the tallest modular apartment tower in the world – the same height as the London Eye.

- To date more than £233 million of loans have been agreed for projects using modern methods of construction from the Home Building Fund.
 - The definition framework identifies the following 7 MMC categories:
 - Category 1 – Pre-Manufacturing – 3D primary structural systems
 - Category 2 – Pre-Manufacturing – 2D primary structural systems
 - Category 3 – Pre-Manufacturing – Non systemised structural components
 - Category 4 – Pre-Manufacturing – Additive Manufacturing
 - Category 5 – Pre-Manufacturing – Non-structural assemblies and sub-assemblies
 - Category 6 – Traditional building product led site labour reduction / productivity improvements
 - Category 7 – Site process led labour reduction / productivity improvements
 - Mark Farmer has 30 years’ experience in construction and real estate. He is Founding Director and CEO of Cast Consultancy. He authored a review of the UK’s construction labour model entitled ‘Modernise or Die’. He is a member of the Construction Innovation Hub Industry Board, the Construction Leadership Council Advisory Group and chairs the MHCLG joint industry working group tasked with enabling greater use of Modern Methods of Construction in the residential sector. He is also a member of the Mayor of London’s Construction Skills Advisory Group, a board member for the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre, a co-chair of Constructing Excellence, a vice chair of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) UK Residential Council, a trustee of the MOBIE educational charity and is an honorary professor at The University of Salford’s School of Built Environment.
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Syria: Minister for Middle East meets Chairman of White Helmets



Dr Murrison said:

I had a valuable meeting with Chairman of the White Helmets, Mr al-Saleh today to discuss the situation on the ground in Idlib.

White Helmet volunteers continue to be subjected to a massive disinformation campaign by the Syrian regime and the Russian government. These deceitful tactics are a brazen attempt to divert attention from the barrage of appalling attacks against the Syrian people, which has included the use of chemical weapons.

I thanked Mr al-Saleh for the lifesaving service that the White Helmets provide to thousands of ordinary Syrians and reiterated the UK's unwavering support.

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