

# Information for British citizens in Latvia

The British Ambassador to Latvia, Mr Keith Shannon, hosted meetings about Brexit for British citizens resident in Latvia on 1 October at King's College, The British School of Latvia, and on 2 October at Riga Stradins University.

Senior officials from the Latvian Ministry of Interior's Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, the Latvian State Social Insurance Agency, the Latvian National Health Service, and the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science joined the meeting.

The Ambassador provided an overview of the current status of Brexit negotiations, emphasising that the United Kingdom Government's objective is for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union with a Withdrawal Agreement (a 'Deal') but that, like any responsible government, it must also prepare for the United Kingdom to leave without an agreement ('No Deal').

The Ambassador and Latvian officials then explained the preparations that had been made by the governments of the United Kingdom and Latvia for both 'Deal' and 'No Deal' scenarios, covering residency, social security including pensions and healthcare.

## **Get ready for Brexit**

The Ambassador advised that in order for British citizens who are legally resident in Latvia on the date of Brexit to benefit fully from the law "On Legal Cooperation and Protection of Human Rights in the Transition Period after the Withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union", which was passed by the Latvian Parliament on 21 March 2019, there are four actions they should take now, before the United Kingdom leaves the European Union:

## **Questions & answer session at the event**

After the presentations from the Ambassador and Latvian officials, a number of questions were asked and answered. For the latest information, please refer to the [Living in Latvia guide](#).

## **Is a new residence document or card needed after Brexit?**

After Brexit, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (Pilsonības un migrācijas lietu pārvalde) will write to each British citizen legally resident in Latvia on the date of Brexit inviting them to submit an application for a new residence document/card. A completed application can be submitted by post, electronically signed with secure electronic signature, or personally at any client service centre of the Office of Citizenship and

Migration Affairs.

The deadline for the submission of applications will be 31 December 2020. Examination of an application will be free of charge, but a fee will be applied for the issuance of the new residence card/document: 15.00 EUR (within 10 working days) or 30.00 EUR (within 2 working days). The new residence card/document will contain the description "former citizen of the European Union". The validity period for the new residence card/document will be 5 or 10 years.

Please check that the address you provided when you applied for your residence card/document is up to date as that is the address to which the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs will send the letter.

You are required to keep the Office for Citizenship and Migration Affairs informed of any changes to your personal data or changes to your travel document (passport). If you have any changes to your family situation (e.g. marriage, divorce, birth of a child) you are also required to inform the Office for Citizenship and Migration Affairs.

British citizens arriving in Latvia after Brexit will be required to register for residence in the same way as citizens from any other visa-free countries (e.g. US, Canada) if they intend to stay for more than 90 days.

### **Will I still be able to go through the EU/EEA/CH immigration line at Riga airport?**

If you have a Latvian residence card/document you will still be able to use it with your British passport to go through the EU/EEA/CH immigration line at Riga airport. If you do not have a Latvian residence card/document you must use the other line.

### **If I get something sent to me through the post from the United Kingdom will I have to pay customs duties?**

After Brexit there will be changes in duties to be paid for parcels received in Latvia from the United Kingdom by post. Personal packages sent by post from an individual to an individual will be exempt from duties if their value does not exceed 45 EUR. For packages above 45 EUR value customs duties, VAT and excise tax (for excise goods) will be applied. There will be different rules for commercial packages.

Further information is available at the following links:

[receipt of consignments](#)

[quantitative restrictions on non-commercial consignments](#)

[commercial consignments](#)

## Useful links

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### [Tech UK conference 2019](#)

It's a pleasure to be back in Manchester today, at Tech UK's first flagship conference on skills and opportunities. And it's a real honour to be addressing you as representatives of companies and technologies that, today, are defining the world we will live in tomorrow.

As the Prime Minister said himself just last month in a speech to the UN, no one can ignore the gathering force of technology that is reshaping the future of each and every one of us.

Every day, developments in digital technologies are pushing the boundaries of what is possible. And, together, your companies and innovations are stretching the limits of what humanity can achieve, and what the UK can achieve as a nation.

The Prime Minister has rightly acknowledged the UK as "one of the world's tech leaders". And the facts speak for themselves:

The tech sector in the UK contributes over 7% of UK (GVA). And, last year alone, Venture Capital funds invested £6.3 billion in UK tech. That's more than in any other European country.

UK investment in AI has also grown almost 6-fold in the 4 years between 2014 and 2018.

All of this adds up to more jobs and more fast-growing companies.

Our tech sector is going from strength to strength in front of our very eyes, growing at 50% faster than the rest of the UK economy.

And as it grows, it transforms more and more lives in ways we never thought possible in the past.

Thanks to great British technologies, many of us got here on a modern day version of Stephenson's rocket, we are browsing the web on a browser first invented by Tim Berners-Lee, we'll dry our hands on a Dyson hand dryer, and we might get tonight's dinner delivered by a Deliveroo rider.

However, advancements like this don't simply happen overnight. They don't just pop up out of thin air like magic.

Instead, they are nurtured and cultivated through weeks, months, years and often decades of hard work, perseverance and dedication.

What's more, the path to success is not always clear. I'm sure most of you in this room today have overcome obstacles and setbacks.

But you persevered. And you found ways to succeed.

Summoning ingenuity and imagination. Originality and determination. Cleverness and creativity.

It is, ultimately, these very human values that allow technologies to emerge and flourish.

And it is, therefore, people – people like you – that have made every single one of our tech successes in this country possible.

People who have dedicated their entire lives to pushing forward the frontiers of knowledge and human capabilities.

I am keenly aware that our tech sector won't go on thriving if we don't concentrate on people.

On putting people and skills at the centre of our innovation system. On ensuring that our regulatory system is as modern as the technologies that it supports. And on ensuring that the whole of the UK benefits from our growing technology sector.

So, let's take keeping the brightest and best people in the sector first. How do we do it?

Well, we need to recognise and address the challenges researchers and innovators face on a day-to-day basis.

Developing a people-first research strategy is just one part of this.

Last month, I was pleased to support the launch of the revised Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. This encourages signatories from across higher education and innovation to work together on the challenges facing researchers in the world today.

A world where research positions are shorter and more precarious than they used to be.

A world, which relies on the continuous transfer of talented people between academia and industry.

And a world where individuals may find themselves balancing heavy workloads with poor mental health and wellbeing.

It is on all of us to ensure we are supporting people across the entire innovation and tech sector to be the best they can be. From researchers, academics and innovators, to technicians, postgraduates and post-docs.

All of these people together are integral to the overall strength and prowess of UK tech.

Embracing diversity in the sector is crucial to getting this right.

As some of you may know, today is Ada Lovelace Day – an international celebration of the achievements of women in science, technology engineering and maths.

And In a world where half the population are women, it isn't right that the UK tech sector is still seen by many as a man's world, despite recent improvements in the number of women entering STEM careers.

On this, it's great to see the work you're already doing with the [Tech Talent Charter](#), which is supported by government and aims to deliver greater inclusion and diversity in UK tech workforce – one that better reflects the make-up of the wider population. Over 400 organisations – from international tech giants right through to start-ups – have already signed the Charter, including the organiser's of today's event, TechUK.

This government is determined to address the gender imbalance in tech careers, in particular by improving girls' take-up of maths, computing and physics at all stages of the education system from primary school through to university.

Initiatives like the 'Women in Innovation' programme from Innovate UK are also helping to get more women with excellent ideas innovating in UK businesses and boosting the economy.

We're keen that more people from currently under-represented groups, including those with disabilities and those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, realise a career in tech can be for them as much as anyone else.

That's why schemes like the 'Bristol and Bath Creative R&D Partnership' are key to supporting businesses to find new ways to engage the audiences of the future and develop a diverse new talent base. Their aim is to make creative technology innovation available to the widest possible cross-section of talent.

And that takes me on nicely to talk about how the sector can make the most of this and ensure it has the skills it needs.

Investing in high-level technical skills for the whole country is paramount.

I'm proud that this government is pumping millions into improving the UK's STEM skills-base.

Included in this is the £20 million invested by the Department for Education in the Institute for Coding. This was set up in 2017 specifically to address the high demand for skilled IT and digital specialists, and to better equip graduates with industry requirements.

I'm delighted that the Institute for Coding consortium, led by the University of Bath, has now grown to include 37 higher education institutions and over one hundred employers. And it's a pleasure to see 22,000 students having

started on Institute for Coding courses in September.

What's more, it's great to see the Institute for Coding continuing to make links to other government initiatives – not least the new Institutes of Technology we're opening, with the express intention to provide students with university-level technical qualifications and a clear route to technical employment.

Just last week the Secretary of State for Education announced we will make available up to an extra £120 million so we can have an Institute of Technology in every part of the country, and provide different regional economies with the unique mix of digital skills they need to flourish.

Here in Manchester, for example, government has invested £3 million in a pilot 'Fast Track Digital Workforce Fund', lead by GMCA. This brings together employers and training providers to find the digital skills solutions that meet their needs – while also helping local people move into better jobs.

This will mean everybody, in every part of our great nation, will get the chance to gain the high-level digital skills both they and your businesses need.

And we're not just talking about young people here. About those who are taking A-Levels or indeed the new T-Levels, who want to progress to technical education.

We're also talking about adult learners. Those people who, later in life, want to access the further technical training they need.

This latter point is something that is going to become ever more important as technology develops and the world of work as we know it changes.

In the digital age, education is going to become a lifelong endeavour, not just something you do until you're 18 or 21. But something individuals may want to revisit as our lives and circumstances change.

Education in the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution is not just about providing young people with skills. It's about providing everyone with opportunities to re-skill and up-skill, at whatever age and whatever level they need it.

That's why we've put in place now a commitment to introduce a national entitlement to adult basic digital skills training from 2020. Adults without the digital skills needed for life and work will have the opportunity to study new qualifications free of charge, so that nobody gets left behind as the world around us inevitably moves on.

Education in the digital age is ultimately about enabling society to adapt to new technologies and developments, and make the most of the opportunities they bring. AI is just one case in point.

This government has already invested heavily in AI – most notably through the new Alan Turing AI Fellowships aimed at attracting and retaining the very

top tech talent. And we will soon be launching the call to recruit the next cohort of fellows.

This month will also see the first PhD students starting at our new AI Centres for Doctoral Training.

A total of £100 million has been allocated for additional doctoral training focused on AI – providing training for around 1,000 additional PhD studentships in AI over the next 9 years. This will ensure that we have the AI experts we need working both in ground-breaking research and in innovative tech businesses across the country.

But, if we're serious about meeting our target to invest at least 2.4% of GDP in R&D by 2027 then we can't just rely on home-grown talent alone.

Creating a climate based on the free movement of talent is obviously going to be key to generating the numbers and diversity the sector needs.

It probably hasn't escaped your notice that, later this month, we are set to leave the European Union.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Brexit may well mean that we are leaving the EU, but it certainly does not mean that we are leaving our European friends and partners behind.

I'm going to be speaking on this very issue in more detail at a speech to the British Academy in London tomorrow, but for the purposes of this event, today, it is worth emphasising this government's intention to remain open and international as we commit to getting Brexit done.

The [International Research and Innovation Strategy](#) I launched earlier this year best evidences our commitment to global engagement in the science and tech sectors.

And the [International Education Strategy](#), launched the same month, sets out our ambition to increase the number of international higher education students studying in the UK by over 30% to 600,000 by 2030.

This will undoubtedly increase the talent pool that will furnish our business and industries with the people, knowledge and ideas they require.

And thanks to the hard work of my successor-come-predecessor, Jo Johnson, the introduction of the Graduate Route, or 2-year post-study work visa, will hopefully incentivise much of this talent to stay on our shores, work in our companies, and set up their own businesses.

As a government, we know we must do everything we can to make the UK the most attractive place to come and start a tech business, to undertake new research directions, and to test and develop new technologies.

That means having a dynamic, fit-for-purpose regulatory environment – an environment that enables new technologies to develop faster, to be tested at pace, and implemented and adopted in new and exciting ways.

This isn't just about removing the hurdles created by out-of-date rules and regulations. It's about creating new standards and frameworks that provide confidence to investors and customers.

I saw a great example of this when I visited the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington the other week. The important work they are doing with electric engines, with their hydrogen fuel cell testing rig, is all about taking this new technology and measuring its response to different qualities of hydrogen supply – stress-testing it, finding its limits, and developing new performance benchmarks and new standards.

These will become the benchmarks and standards that others will build on, providing confidence to wider industry partners and investors, and in turn speeding up adoption of that all-important green technology.

This is modern, smart regulation in action – regulation that can lift technology up, not squash it down.

There are numerous similar examples of where our regulatory environment needs to adapt and where the old rules just don't make sense – for instance in personalised medicine, autonomous vehicles and, of course, AI.

This isn't about creating the Wild West in tech.

I firmly believe that standards and regulation, when done well, can allow new technologies to flourish. And these are the lessons that we will learn as we implement further regulatory reforms, building on our white paper on regulation in the fourth industrial revolution, which I welcomed earlier this year.

This innovation is something that we are also seeing in the fintech sector – a sector that has grown considerably over the last few years, where smart and modern regulation has combined with investment and new technology to create a boom in new financial products and services in the UK.

We have embraced this technology much faster than other nations, It is a shock to go to the US and still sign for a card purchase, for example. And when I went to the bank recently to complete my house purchase, it really felt like going back in time.

It doesn't have to be this way. And it's not this way in many sectors and areas.

But, while parts of London and the South East are now completely cash-less, this can't be said of the whole country – and that brings me on to my last point.

It cannot have escaped anyone's notice that our Research and Innovation sector is incredibly concentrated in London and the South East. Per-capita spending on Research & Development in the North East is way under half that in London.

The Golden Triangle is of course an incredible strength of ours – a magnet



for foreign investment and talent, and a true national asset. But it is not enough to have this activity continue to be so concentrated.

If we are to become an innovation nation, then we must learn from this, ensuring that the whole of the UK benefits from our tech revolution.

This means ensuring that our most innovative SMEs can scale up and access seed funding as well as large grants, enter the market, and even shape new markets.

And this is not just about investment. It is about ensuring that we create the kinds of spaces that tech firms want to be in, with the partners that they need to work with, and with the planning rules that allow for this. Not just in the Golden Triangle, but also developing and redeveloping new and existing spaces – in universities, cities and towns, bringing spill-over benefits and opportunities to communities right across the UK.

I want us to build on the work we've done with University Enterprise Zones, which I launched last month, and to build on our amazing network of incubators, accelerators, catalysts and catapults – spreading the benefits right across the UK. To create a truly business-friendly environment. To join together research, development, and innovation. And to create a new unity of purpose.

I also recognise that the UK doesn't operate in isolation. And there is a real opportunity to learn from the best of what works abroad, from the Engine at MIT, to Station F in Paris. But I don't just want one Station F – I'd love to see a whole alphabet of Stations, right across the UK, leaving no part of the UK behind.

For as long as I'm Universities and Science Minister, I want to help the UK to find a new gear, to put the UK tech sector in the fast lane, and to grow an incredible tech ecosystem that can accelerate into the future.

I – like many of you – want to see a world where the UK is an innovation powerhouse. A powerhouse where the most talented people are not only free to come to, but actively want to come to.

A powerhouse where people from all walks of life can take their inspiration and ideas forward.

A powerhouse where ideas are nurtured and transformed into booming new businesses.

And a powerhouse which gives us a platform on the global stage, and an edge in a rapidly developing world.

As your Universities and Science Minister, I can assure you I am committed to building this powerhouse in the way I've just described. And I look forward to working with you to ensure the UK tech sector has the people and talent it needs for an ever digital future.

Thank you.

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# Zantac – MHRA drug alert issued as GlaxoSmithKline recalls all unexpired stock

The MHRA has issued an [alert to healthcare professionals](#), as GlaxoSmithKline is recalling all unexpired stock of four types of Zantac, the medicine used to treat conditions such as heartburn and stomach ulcers.

The four products affected are Zantac 150mg/10ml Syrup, Zantac 50mg/2ml Injection, Zantac 150mg Tablets and Zantac 300mg Tablets. All four are prescription only medicines. Over-the-counter products (Zantac 75 Relief (PL 02855/0081 [GSL]) and Zantac 75 Tablets (PL 02855/0082 [P])) are produced by a different company and are not affected by this recall.

The MHRA is advising that patients should not to stop taking their medication, and do not need to see their doctor until their next routine appointment but should seek their doctor's advice if they have any concerns.

The recall is a precautionary measure due to possible contamination of the active substance in Zantac, ranitidine, with an impurity called NDMA (N-nitrosodimethylamine) which has been identified as a risk factor in the development of certain cancers.

Healthcare professionals have been told to stop supplying the products immediately, quarantine all remaining stock and return it to their supplier.

An MHRA investigation into other ranitidine medicines which may also be affected is continuing and further updates will be provided as this investigation progresses. The MHRA has asked manufacturers to quarantine all ranitidine products which may contain the active pharmaceutical ingredient that is potentially affected by this issue.

Dr Andrew Gray, MHRA Deputy Director of Inspections, Enforcement & Standards, comments:

“Whilst this action is precautionary, the MHRA takes patient safety very seriously.

“Patients should keep taking their current medicines but should speak to their doctor or pharmacist if they are concerned and should seek their doctor's advice before stopping any prescribed medicines.

“We have asked companies to quarantine batches of potentially affected medicines whilst we investigate and we will take action as necessary, including product recalls where appropriate.

“We have also requested risk assessments from the relevant companies which will include the testing of potentially affected batches.

“Currently, there is no evidence that medicines containing nitrosamines have caused any harm to patients, but the Agency is closely monitoring the situation, and working with other Regulatory Agencies around world.”

ENDS

Note to editors:

1. [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.
2. MHRA is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) and the [Clinical Practice Research Datalink \(CPRD\)](#). MHRA is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care.

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## [Consultation to update Ofqual's 'Taking Regulatory Action' policy](#)

Ofqual has today (8 October 2019) [published a consultation on proposals to update its policy for Taking Regulatory Action against awarding organisations](#) who breach its rules. The changes are intended to better reflect our regulatory strategy and current practice, and include a recommendation to change the name of the policy to ‘Supporting Compliance and Taking Regulatory Action.’

The proposals include:

- introducing new measures to manage some instances of non-compliance, including issuing rebukes and imposing fixed penalties
- an explanation of developments in our approach to supporting awarding organisations to remain in compliance, including how we might notify awarding organisations where we have concerns about a training provider, school or college
- an explanation of our approach to making requirements under our conditions
- the removal of the £10,000 lower threshold on recovering our costs where we take regulatory action

Sally Collier, Chief Regulator, said:

Our rules are designed to make sure that those who take or use the qualifications we regulate can be confident they are a reliable and valid assessment of the skills and knowledge acquired. Where awarding organisations breach our rules, we take appropriate and proportionate action to put things right and to deter others from making the same mistakes.

The sector we regulate continues to change and we are proposing changes to how we use our regulatory powers. We welcome contributions from awarding organisations, schools and colleges, and other users of regulated qualifications.

[The consultation](#) is open until 2 December 2019.

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## **CDL Commons statement on Brexit preparations: 8 October 2019**

Mr Speaker, with your permission I would like to make a statement on our preparations to leave the European Union on 31 October and the steps we are taking to get ready.

### **Our desire for a deal**

It is the strong desire of this Government to leave the EU with a deal.

Our proposals to replace the backstop were published last week. I commend the Prime Minister and the Exit Secretary for their continued efforts to ensure that we can leave the EU with a withdrawal agreement in place.

We have put forward a fair and reasonable compromise for all sides that respects the historic referendum result and we hope that the EU will engage with us seriously.

In setting out these proposals, we have moved – it is now time for the EU to move too. If it does, then there is still every chance we will leave with a new deal.

### **Preparing for every eventuality**

However, if the EU does not move, this government is prepared to leave without a deal on the 31st .

We must get Brexit done so the country can move on and focus on improving the

NHS, cutting crime, helping families with the cost of living and further improving school standards

Now, In preparing for every eventuality, we are today publishing our No Deal Readiness Report.

This document is a comprehensive summary of the UK's preparedness for leaving the EU without a deal.

It sets out the preparations that the Government has made, how these have been intensified under the determined leadership of my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister, and also it outlines the steps that third party organisations need to take in order to get ready.

### **Government preparations**

Mr Speaker, the actions in this report reflect our top priority: ensuring we maintain the smooth and efficient flow of goods and people from the UK into the EU, and vice versa. The actions are also aimed at ensuring that we continue to support citizens – upholding their rights and helping them to prepare for the changes ahead.

My Rt Hon Friend the Chancellor in order to prepare for Brexit has doubled funding from £4bn to £8bn.

And we have also published a significant volume of material relating to no deal planning, including 750 pieces of guidance setting out the steps that businesses, traders and citizens should take in order to prepare.

We have also published 31 country guides for all EU/EFTA states, setting out what UK nationals living there need to do in order to get ready for Brexit.

And this morning, my Rt Hon Friend the Trade Secretary has published the Temporary Tariff Regime which will apply from the 1 November. In all, it liberalises tariffs on 88% of goods entering the UK by value. It maintains a mixture of tariffs and quotas on 12% of goods, such as beef, lamb, pork, poultry and some dairy products to support farms and producers who have historically been protected through high EU tariffs in the past. I should say that as a result of cutting these tariffs we should see a 15% reduction in the cost of honey from New Zealand, a 9% cut in the cost of grapes from South America and of course a 7% reduction in the cost of wine from Argentina.

Now Businesses have raised a number of points in response to the publication of the original tariff schedule in March. Government listened carefully to these representations and has made three specific changes as a result: we're reducing tariffs on HGVs entering the UK; we're adjusting tariffs on bioethanol to retain support for UK producers; and we're also applying tariffs to additional clothing products to ensure that developing countries continue to have preferential access.

### **Third party readiness**

But it is not enough just for government to get ready; we need businesses and

citizens to get ready too. And even with every government project complete and necessary IT systems in place, flow at the border would still be affected if hauliers don't have the right paperwork.

If companies do not prepare, they will face challenges in trading their goods and services with the EU.

And while the Government can of course lobby EU member states to improve their offer to UK nationals who are living in their countries, we need individuals to act as well, to register for residency and to make arrangements for continued access to healthcare.

For that reason, the Government is investing £100 million in one of the largest Public Information Campaigns in peacetime. Through both mass market and targeted advertising, we are alerting businesses and citizens to the actions they need to take to get ready.

And we are also providing a further £108 million to support businesses in accessing the information and advice they need.

My Rt Hon Friend the Business Secretary is overseeing a series of events with businesses around the country, designed to provide information on all the steps they need to take to get ready, including actions which will support the flow of trade through the short straits..

My Rt Hon Friend the Health Secretary has also today established a trader readiness support unit for suppliers of medical products.

And this week, HMRC is writing to 180,000 businesses setting out the full range of steps they need to take in order to import and export with the EU after we leave.

And of course in advance of 31 October, we will continue to use every means at our disposal to communicate to business the need to get ready.

I want to pay particular tribute to the automotive, retail and transport sectors, including authorities at the Port of Dover and Calais, as well as Eurotunnel, for the extent of their Brexit preparations.

On a recent visit to the West Midlands, the heartland of our automotive industry, I was impressed by the steps that manufacturers are taking to prepare.

And Retail businesses have also made significant strides: Morrisons, for example, now reports it is "prepared for all eventualities" in the UK, while the Co-op says it is "prepared for the worst case".

Of course, risks remain and challenges for some businesses cannot be entirely mitigated, even with every possible preparation in place. But the UK economy is in a much better position to meet those risks and challenges thanks to the efforts of these sectors and companies and my Rt Hon friend the Chancellor .

It is also the case, Mr Speaker, that the impact of no deal on both the UK

and the EU will depend on decisions taken by the EU and its member states.

On citizens' rights, internal security, data protection and of course the vital position of Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom, we have taken decisions which will benefit UK nationals as well as EU citizens, I hope the EU will match the generosity and flexibility that we have shown.

Through the EU Settlement Scheme, we have ensured that every EU citizen resident here by the 31 October can acquire a formal UK immigration status, protecting their right to live and work in the UK.

To date, 1.7 million citizens have applied and 1.5 million have been granted a status. Those who have not yet applied have until the end of December 2020 to do so.

So far, very few EU member states have made as generous an offer to UK nationals as the UK has made to EU citizens.

We don't believe that citizens' rights should be used as a bargaining chip in any scenario. EU citizens in the UK are our friends and family – we want them to stay. We now hope the EU extends the same hand of friendship towards UK nationals as we have to EU Nationals.

At the same time, keeping our fellow citizens safe should be a priority. My Rt Hon Friend the Home Secretary has written to Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans to ensure effective arrangements are in place on the exchange of Passenger Name Record data, disconnection from SIS II, and working arrangements with Europol, as well as the transfer of law enforcement data. We hope the EU will respond positively, in the interests of the shared security of us all.

And We have also unilaterally ensured that personal data can continue to flow freely – and legally – from the UK to the EU and the EEA. A swift adequacy decision from the EU would reciprocate this arrangement, providing legal certainty to EU entities and companies.

And of course with respect to Northern Ireland, in order to avoid a hard border, we have committed not to introduce any checks at the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. The limited number of checks which do need to take place, due to international obligations, will all be carried out well away from the border and only will affect a very small number of businesses.

Now The Irish Government and the EU have not yet set out how they will manage the Irish border if we leave without a deal – we urge them now to match our commitment.

### **Opportunities from Brexit**

Mr Speaker, let me finally turn to the opportunities from Brexit as laid out in the report.

For the first time in 50 years, the UK will have an independent trade policy; we'll be able to take our own seat at the WTO.

We will be able to introduce a points-based immigration system which prioritises the skills we need as a country, We will have autonomy over the rules governing our world-leading services sector, and continue our leading role in setting global standards for financial services.

We can be a beacon for the world in setting progressive policies on farming, fishing and the wider environment.

And, outside the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice, we will set our own rules, putting in place smarter, more responsive regulation.

Of course, no deal will bring challenges – I have been open about that today, as I have been in the past. It is not my preferred outcome, nor the government's. We want a good deal.

But whatever challenges no deal may create in the short term, and they are significant, these can and will be overcome.

Far worse than the disruption of no deal would be the damage to democracy caused by dishonouring the referendum result.

17.4 million people voted to leave – many of them turning up to vote for the first time in their lives.

They voted to ensure the laws by which we are governed are set by the politicians in this place whom they elect.

They voted for a fairer immigration system, which attracts the brightest and the best

They voted to end vast financial contributions to the EU budget, and instead invest in the people's priorities – such as the NHS and our brave police service.

That is what the British people voted for and that is what this government will deliver.

And I commend this statement to the House.