

## **'Get Ready For Brexit' campaign launches in Belgium**

The UK government has launched a major information campaign urging UK nationals living in and travelling to the EU to take steps to get ready for Brexit on 31 October 2019.

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The information campaign, launched on 16 September 2019, will inform the more than one million UK nationals living in the EU about specific actions they need to take to secure their rights and services in their host country, including information on residency, healthcare, driving licences and passports.

It will also encourage people travelling to the EU to make all necessary preparations by checking passports, buying travel insurance and checking driving licenses and pet passports.

The campaign will use multiple channels – from Facebook posts to newspaper ads – urging people to take action ahead of 31 October.

Martin Shearman, British Ambassador to Belgium, said:

Protecting the rights of UK nationals in Belgium is an absolute priority as we leave the European Union.

I'd urge UK nationals in Belgium to visit our Living in Guide for Belgium where they can find out about the steps they need to take and get specific information about residency, healthcare, passports and driving permits in Belgium.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

We are stepping up efforts to ensure Britons abroad are prepared for Brexit on 31 October. This campaign provides practical advice to the more than one million British people living in the EU, as well as British tourists and business travellers.

There are over one million UK nationals living in the EU, with around 25,000 British nationals living in Belgium.

The UK government recently announced up to £3 million in grant funding for charities and other voluntary organisations who can inform UK nationals about the need to register or apply for residency and to support them as they complete their applications.

The Government also allocated an extra £300,000 to British Embassies and Consulates across the EU to engage with 'hard to reach' UK nationals such as disabled people, those living in remote areas or people who might need extra help to complete any paperwork in preparation for Brexit.

This extra assistance will build on the support that British Embassies are already providing with more than 541 outreach events with UK nationals since November 2017. So far the UK Embassy in Belgium has organised 23 outreach events across Belgium, and another 4 are scheduled.

Europe is the most popular travel destination for British travellers, with around 60 million visits every year.

### **Living in Belgium guide**

The new information campaign asks UK nationals to take action to prepare for Brexit by [checking the Living in Belgium Guide](#) and:

- apply for residency
- register for healthcare
- exchange their UK driving licence for a Belgian one
- check their passport is valid for travel

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## **UK Statement on Democratic Institutions at HDIM 2019**

Delivered by Ambassador Neil Bush at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM), 17 September 2019

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## **UK Statement on Democratic Institutions at HDIM 2019**

Mr Moderator

I fully align with the statement given by Poland on behalf of the EU, but would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

15 September marked International Day of Democracy – the theme this year was “participation”, recalling that at the heart of democracy are people. This reflects our OSCE commitments, notably from Copenhagen in 1990. In this we agreed that: “The will of the people, freely and fairly expressed through periodic and genuine elections, is the basis of the authority and legitimacy of all government.”

Given the challenging global environment, it is very important to mark the International Day of Democracy. And to continue to support and encourage strong, functional democracies globally.

This is particularly true in the OSCE context as democracy, human rights and the rule of law contribute to long-term security and prosperity.

Advocating respect for these values is in all our national interests. There is a strong correlation between societies that are secure and prosperous, and those that enjoy open and participative democracy.

The UK supports democracy around the world – including the OSCE region – by standing up for those individuals who strive to defend these principles, locally and nationally, when they are under threat. Without the vigilance and bravery of human rights defenders, democracy can be undermined and weakened.

Human rights defenders play a crucial role in the democratic process, often putting themselves and their families at great personal risk to stand up for the rights of minorities and others.

To make clear our commitment, in July, we published the [“UK Support for Human Rights Defenders”](#) document, which sets out the type of support the UK Government can offer.

The strength of any democracy can be measured by its ability to cope with strong differences of opinion, and its respect for the right of all persons to exercise their fundamental freedoms that underpin democratic societies.

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## **End of survey**

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