

News story: Foreign Secretary's message for Eid-ul-Adha

Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt said:

As Muslims the world over come together to celebrate Eid, I wish you all Eid-ul-Adha Mubarak.

I am proud of the diversity of this great country, where freedom, tolerance and rule of law prevail.

I want to assure Britain's Muslim communities that this country will always be a place where people of all faiths and none, will be free to live and practice their religion in line with their own conscience- because liberty is at the heart of our democracy.

Britain's Muslim communities are part of the fabric of our country's story, contributing to all areas of our society. The United Kingdom's strength is its people. And it is our diversity, our different experiences and perspectives that creates dynamism, innovation and prosperity for all.

Eid Mubarak.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@Jeremy_Hunt](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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News story: Lord Ahmad's Eid-ul-Adha message

The Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief & Minister of State at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

I join with Muslims in Britain and across the world to celebrate the holy festival of Eid and extend my best wishes and prayers on the blessed occasion of Eid-ul-Adha.

This Eid let us remember not only does Eid-ul-Adha mark the end of the holy pilgrimage of the Hajj, it is also about sacrifice and obedience to God. The ultimate message within the story of Prophet Abraham and of his beloved son is that we should all strive towards putting others before ourselves.

So, as we celebrate with our loved ones, let us remember those the world over who are affected by conflict, hunger and great injustices.

Last month, I was honoured when the Prime Minister appointed me as her Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, to help promote inter-faith respect and dialogue internationally and to stand up against the persecution of people because of their faith or belief.

I am proud to live in a country where religion and belief is celebrated and people from all faiths and none are free to practice as they wish. Our country, the United Kingdom is an open and respectful society, a truly multi-ethnic, multi-faith democracy. A country that values people's freedom to be themselves, and practise their religion or belief, without fear, without prejudice, without persecution. Yet, we must never be complacent, be it at home or abroad, in rooting out intolerance and standing up and defending the right of freedom of religion or belief for all.

So on this joyous and special occasion of Eid-ul-Adha, from my family to yours, with prayers for peace and humanity, Eid Mubarak.

Further information

- Follow Foreign Office Minister Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon [@tariqahmadbt](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)

- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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Press release: July 2018 Transaction Data

In July:

- HM Land Registry completed more than 1,794,850 applications to change or query the Land Register
- The South East topped the table of regional applications with 412,457

HM Land Registry completed 1,794,855 applications in July compared with 1,701,272 in June and 1,619,118 last July, of which:

- 408,138 were applications for register updates compared with 67,516 in June
- 860,123 were applications for an official copy of a register compared with 825,155 in June
- 231,386 were search and hold queries (official searches) compared with 226,333 in June
- 27,245 were postal applications from non-account holders compared with 24,801 in June

Applications by region and country

Region/country	May applications	June applications	July applications
South East	398,029	391,741	412,457
Greater London	332,546	324,861	342,764
North West	194,722	189,790	199,371
South West	169,351	166,626	175,922
West Midlands	147,196	146,855	153,247
Yorkshire and the Humber	131,727	128,441	138,612

Region/country	May applications	June applications	July applications
East Midlands	121,511	121,551	129,991
North	78,596	79,945	84,004
Wales	78,038	77,307	81,079
East Anglia	71,749	74,017	77,226
Isles of Scilly	41	66	109
England and Wales (not assigned)	72	72	73
Total	1,723,578	1,701,272	1,794,855

Top 5 local authority areas

Top 5 local authority areas	May applications	Top 5 local authority areas	June applications	Top 5 local authority areas	July applications
Birmingham	26,902	Birmingham	25,724	Birmingham	27,538
City of Westminster	24,121	City of Westminster	23,468	City of Westminster	22,955
Leeds	19,782	Leeds	19,257	Leeds	21,258
Cornwall	18,301	Cornwall	17,591	Cornwall	18,581
Manchester	17,347	Manchester	16,765	Manchester	18,026

Top 5 customers

Top 5 customers	May applications	Top 5 customers	June applications	Top 5 customers	July applications
Enact	53,314	Enact	53,868	Enact	55,674
Infotrack Limited	28,453	Infotrack Limited	29,175	Infotrack Limited	30,027
Optima Legal Services	28,173	O'Neill Patient	26,523	O'Neill Patient	28,146
O'Neill Patient	26,645	Optima Legal Services	26,239	Optima Legal Services	26,763
TM Group (UK) Ltd	22,706	TM Group (UK) Ltd	21,465	TM Group (UK) Ltd	24,461

[Access the full dataset on data.gov.uk](#)

Notes to editors

1. Transaction Data is published on the 15th working day of each month. The August Transaction Data will be published at 11am on Friday 21 September 2018 at [HM Land Registry Monthly Property Transaction Data](#).
2. The monthly Transaction Data showing how many applications for new titles, leases, splitting titles, updating existing titles, official

copies of the register and search and hold queries (official searches) were received, reflects the volume of applications lodged by customers using an HM Land Registry account number on their application form.

3. We are challenging ourselves to reassess our language to make our terms understandable to both our commercial and our citizen customers. This is in line with our commitment set out in the [Business Strategy 2017-2022](#) under the 'simplicity' element of our ambition.
4. Completed applications in England and Wales shown by region and by local authority include postal applications as well as those sent electronically.
5. Transaction Data excludes: pending applications; bankruptcy applications; bulk applications; and discharge applications (to remove a charge, for example a mortgage, from the register).
6. Transactions for value are applications lodged involving a transfer of ownership for value. For an explanation of other terms used, see [abbreviations used in the transaction data](#).
7. Most search and hold queries (official searches) carried out by a solicitor or conveyancer are to protect the purchase and/or mortgage. For example, a search and hold query will give the buyer priority for an application to HM Land Registry to register the purchase of the property. This can give an indication of market activity.
8. Reasonable skill and care is used in the provision of the data. We strive to ensure that the data is as accurate as possible but cannot guarantee that it is free from error. We cannot guarantee our data is fit for your intended purpose or use.
9. Transaction Data is available free of charge for use and re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#) (OGL). The licence allows public bodies to make their data available for re-use.
10. If you use or publish the Transaction Data, you must add the following attribution statement: *Contains HM Land Registry data © Crown copyright and database right 2018. This data is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.* HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.
11. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are

covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.

12. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £4 trillion, including around £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles showing evidence of ownership for some 85% of the land mass of England and Wales.

13. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry

14. Follow us on Twitter [@HMLandRegistry](https://twitter.com/HMLandRegistry) our [blog](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#)

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[Speech: Minister Fairhead: speech to launch the Export Strategy](#)

[Read the government's Export Strategy.](#)

Our country is already an exporting power. We're pretty good at it. Last year our exports grew over 10% to more than £600 billion – they now make up 30% of GDP.

But that still leaves us in the middle of the G7 pack. Less than 20 years ago, German exports were 30% of GDP, today they are 47%.

Our ambition is to move nearer the top and to increase exports as a first step to 35%.

Rather than an exporting power, we aim to be an exporting powerhouse!

And that's why we're launching this Export Strategy today.

Some government strategies are about solving problems – social or economic. Some are about mitigating risks.

This strategy, I am pleased to say, is about building on our strengths and rising to the challenge.

As the Secretary of State said, we have great businesses, and the world is ready for our goods and services.

We now have an [Industrial Strategy](#) which resonates with the business community – backed by serious government investment.

We see the DIT's job as being the international wing of that strategy.

We have so much potential.

And we have the opportunity – us, as a country together, with government alongside business – to rise to that challenge.

And if we meet that challenge, it will be transformational.

For, as someone with over 30 years of business experience, it is clear to me that government does not export, companies like yours and your members do.

So this strategy has to be business led.

We've undertaken massive and continuing engagement with businesses exporters, business organisations and associations as well as private-sector providers of export support; through over 25 roundtables all across the country, meetings, workshops and user surveys.

This strategy is developed with you and for you.

We've worked to understand what the barriers are that businesses face and where government can help.

And companies have also been clear that government can play a very fundamental role in supporting exports: particularly by focussing on "doing things that only government can do". And by being clearer and prioritising more .

So this strategy doesn't duplicate private sector export advice – or its export financing. Instead, it targets support where the government can add genuine value.

And what have businesses told us? We've identified 4 main areas:

Firstly – encouraging more companies to export and more countries to look at UK goods and services. Secondly – informing our companies in a more effective, pragmatic way. Thirdly – providing finance in areas of market failure, and finally – using the connecting and convening power of government in a significantly enhanced way.

Let me take each in turn.

Firstly: encouraging firms to export. Many new exporters told us that, once they did start exporting, it was less difficult than they'd thought – they wished they'd started sooner!

But businesses were clear that they are much more likely to listen to – and benefit from their peers, with similar and relevant experiences rather than government .

So we will build up a national network of Export Champions – businesses who have successfully exported and have the credibility to mentor others to do the same. Currently, we have over 500 from the excellent work in the [Midlands Engine](#) and [Northern Powerhouse](#). We can build on this and take it further. We'll also develop an online community for businesses to network and share information in a more time efficient way.

We'll also deploy our resources to encourage overseas buyers to buy British. This activity will encompass large expos – such as [Dubai 2020](#), or the Great British Festival of Innovation and Technology held in Hong Kong this year, continued use of the PM [Trade Envoys](#) but also more targeted, focussed missions which highlight specific areas of expertise. I returned from a very targeted such mission to Mumbai and Bangalore with virtual reality and gaming technology. The results exceeded our hopes!

Secondly: informing. Many businesses, especially small ones, said they didn't have the expertise to export: lacking knowledge about local business cultures, regulations, or consumer needs.

Companies need help in understanding opportunities overseas.

We believe that, alongside support from our trade advisers, an improved [great.gov.uk](#) – one-stop-shop for digital advice for companies entering overseas markets – can be part of the solution.

Central to the improvements is our plan to increase, over the next 2 months, the number of opportunities listed on our site from 1750 to the tens of thousands. This will allow firms to discover contracts which match their capabilities and capacity.

In the future we will aim to apply machine learning and big data for companies who opt in, so that we can 'nudge' them if we identify possible opportunities.

We also need to harness the extensive support that is available from other

sources.

So we are working on ways to signpost firms to private sector support more effectively, too. As part of the Industrial Strategy, the government is reviewing the private sector market in export and business advisory services more broadly – the results of which will inform our efforts to direct companies to the right support for their needs. Our aim is that there will be “no wrong door” for businesses seeking support.

Thirdly: Connecting. This was identified as a core and unique capability of government. Many businesses lack an ‘in’ to local markets abroad or face obstacles in selling abroad.

This is where government can really step in – we are uniquely placed to reduce barriers to trade.

Government is already acting to help support consortia bids from UK firms on foreign contracts. At the forefront of this we have [Infrastructure Exports: UK](#), a body led between industry and government working to convene businesses from throughout the infrastructure supply chain to present overseas buyers with a complete UK offer to meet their needs.

In similar fashion, the Department for International Trade, including [UK Export Finance](#), is working with other government departments to organise supplier fairs, where foreign buyers can bring specific opportunities directly to UK businesses, an initiative which has already seen astonishing success.

As well as convening businesses, we also plan to make even more effective use of those attributes only government has. For example, we aim to deploy the government’s outstanding and extensive overseas network – present in 108 countries worldwide – even more efficiently to ensure UK businesses have unrivalled access to overseas opportunities. As part of this, we are acting to ensure the effective linking up between our teams in the UK and those based in posts abroad.

And I am pleased to say that we have delivered on our promise to publish upcoming ministerial visits online so that businesses can get in touch if they feel they could benefit from international ministerial engagement.

We recognise that in many countries, UK-government backing is seen as a seal of quality – especially where the state plays a bigger role in the economy than it does here in the UK.

So we will also be focussing more on our government-to-government offer. And our trade policy arm will be actively working to improve market access and regulation.

To assist this activity, we will be setting up a new digital service to report trade barriers, enabling us to target our lobbying efforts in improving market access.

And we will be developing new government-to-government agreements that

include a state-level commitment to UK goods and services.

This will be supported by the work of our nine new Her Majesty's Trade Commissioners, who are now all in place and will be leading our overseas teams, setting a clear vision and direction for DIT's operations in each region.

Fourth and finally: Finance. Companies need export and trade finance to let them compete on a level playing field to win contracts, fulfil those contracts, and make sure they get paid at the end.

At the moment, many firms say they aren't getting that finance – or that by the time they get it, the opportunity has already gone.

So we have put finance at the heart of the Export Strategy. The mission of UK Export Finance – the world's oldest export credit agency– is for no viable export to fail due to lack of finance or insurance. We have a £50 billion export finance capacity, we provide multiple export finance support products, including working capital and political risk insurance. We also offer the capability to 'buy British pay local' by providing export finance in over 60 currencies.

And this is a service which has been substantially improved in the very recent past. UK Export Finance is now a world leading export credit agency. For those companies who use it, it is often described as a 'game-changer'. So where, you might ask is the problem?

It's because it remains one of the best kept secrets – we need more businesses – particularly SMEs to take up the offer. So we are planning several actions to do just that – creating an awareness building campaign, posting our UKEF advisers overseas to hook up companies with opportunities and increasing the number of Supplier Fairs to engage SMEs.

We will also continue to develop enhancements to UK Export Finance's suite of products and consider the potential for new ones to remain at the top of the rankings.

Another piece of good news: we're not beginning from a standing start. Businesses already say time and again that government provides services of real value. This strategy is about enhancing that value to the maximum extent, and focussing our support on those services that businesses really need from government.

And let me say one last thing before I conclude.

DIT is clearly the lead department on supporting exporters, but we must join up across government to achieve our aim. For almost every government department has a role to play.

Through our overseas networks, we naturally work alongside the Foreign Office and DFID. As the international wing of BEIS's Industrial Strategy they are also a critical partner. And together we can help improve the productivity of our nation.

But joining up reaches further. That's why I'm delighted that this strategy has been devised in close collaboration with our partners at the Department for Transport, Her Majesty's Treasury, and the Department for Health, among many others.

And that's why I'm confident this strategy will be a success – and that it will make real difference to our economy. It can be the catalyst that transforms thousands of businesses and workers lives up and down the country.

Of course a strategy without implementation is just a document to collect dust.

It's the implementation that matters – the effect the strategy has on real businesses.

That's why the strategy was designed with implementation in mind, from the ground up.

That's why we've appointed a senior business executive, [John Mahon](#), with us here today, as our new Director-General for Exports.

So this launch is just the first step. We aim to implement this successfully while continuing to engage with business to identify what further changes – in policy or regulation or support – that can turbocharge our performance.

We have an exciting national challenge. Let's rise to it – government, and business together and become that global powerhouse to hand over to generations to come.

Thank you.

[Press release: Trade Minister visits New Zealand and Australia](#)

- Minister for Investment Graham Stuart visits New Zealand and Australia, the first Department for International Trade minister to do so since the opening of consultations on future trade relationships
- Minister promoted opportunities for UK firms in NZ infrastructure and launches a joint UK-Australia investment report which shows UK is now second largest destination for Australian investment
- He'll also visit China to promote UK smart cities expertise as UK-China trade reaches all-time high of £66.5 billion

With consultations over future trade relationships with New Zealand and Australia now open, Trade Minister Graham Stuart has become the first government minister to visit the countries since the consultations began.

Earlier this week, Graham Stuart was promoting UK businesses at New Zealand's biggest infrastructure event and today (Friday 17th August) launches a joint UK-Australian investment report alongside Steven Ciobo, Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment.

The report shows that the investment relationship between the UK and Australia grew by 22 per cent from 2010 to 2017 to more than £50 billion, meaning that the UK is now the second-largest destination for Australian foreign direct investment (FDI).

Over 500 Australian companies operate in the UK, while more than 1,200 UK companies are in Australia, employing 95,000 people. This includes BAE Systems, which landed a £20 billion contract to build nine British-designed warships in Adelaide, creating 4,000 jobs.

Combined trade between the UK and both New Zealand and Australia was worth £18.8 billion in 2018 (£2.8 billion and £16 billion respectively).

Graham Stuart, UK Minister for Investment, said:

We've taken a major step towards building our bilateral trading relationships with Australia and New Zealand – 2 of our closest international partners – by opening consultations on our potential future agreements. Combined, their investment into the UK delivered 95 new projects last year, creating almost 2,500 British jobs. These consultations will examine new possibilities for British exporters in the region, especially in technology and infrastructure.

The Department for international Trade is determined to help UK businesses take advantage of opportunities these, and maintain the UK's position as Europe's top destination for FDI.

Steven Ciobo, Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment said:

Across diverse industries ranging from defence to education, technology and infrastructure, Australia and the UK continue to invest in ways that increase prosperity and create jobs in both countries.

Both countries offer large, open and flexible economies as well as an ideal location from which to access other regional opportunities, be it in Europe or Asia.

Following his visits to New Zealand and Australia, the Minister will head to the Chinese city of Shenzhen next week, where he will promote the UK's smart

cities capability at the China Smart City Expo.

Non-EU countries make up the bulk of the UK's services exports (60.6% as of May 2018), with demand for world-class British expertise in countries such as China expected to propel this proportion higher in the years to come.

He will also visit telecommunications giant Huawei, who recently committed £3 billion of investment to the UK over the next 5 years, with a UK workforce already of 1,500 people.

UK trade with China is now at an all-time high of £66.5 billion as of the first quarter of 2018.

More information

The visit comes after the fourth meeting of the UK-Australia trade working group in July, with Prime Ministers Theresa May and Malcolm Turnbull reiterating the shared goal of a free trade agreement once the UK leaves the EU.

The Department for International Trade offers a range of export and investment support including through its new global network of HM Trade Commissioners.