

CAVENDISH

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Weekly Monitoring
Friday
17th October



EIA Update

This week, we were pleased to submit our budget representation to the Treasury ahead of the Autumn Budget. Our submission highlighted the need for a dedicated Business Events Programme, designed to support not only the growth of our sector but also key industries identified as priorities by the Government.

We were also delighted to correspond with Jo Platt MP following her participation in our panel event at the Labour Party Conference. We look forward to continuing our work with Platt to promote our industry and address the challenges we face.

We are continuing engagement off the back of our Economic Impact Study for 2024. Please do interact with our LinkedIn posts on the study to help with the engagement and visibility of our findings.

Political Update

Parliament returned this week following the conference recess. The Government now has until the Christmas recess to deliver on many policy plans which they had promised for this autumn.

As the Autumn Budget draws closer, speculation is growing about probable tax rises. Chancellor Rachel Reeves confirmed “targeted action” in the upcoming Budget to ease cost-of-living pressures, such as potentially cutting VAT on increased energy bills and reducing regulatory levies. However, Reeves also indicated that further tax and spending measures may be needed to address a £22bn fiscal gap and rising borrowing costs. Despite pledging not to raise income tax, VAT or National Insurance, she faces pressure to balance fiscal rules while tackling the UK’s high inflation rate.

MPs are seeking further explanation from Director of Public Prosecutions Stephen Parkinson after the collapse of a case against two men accused of spying for China. Parkinson cited insufficient evidence, despite new claims of large-scale espionage. Parliamentary committees have launched inquiries and given Parkinson until next week to respond, with calls for him to appear before MPs. The row has intensified scrutiny of the CPS and sparked political controversy involving ministers and Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer.

News

Visit Britain Annual Report

The British Tourist Authority have published their annual report for 2024 to March 2025. The report showed that they supported 36 international business events in 2024-25. These events took place in 18 UK cities and generated £27.5 million in confirmed delegate spend, with a potential total value of £53 million. The Business Events Growth Programme provided grants to help cities bid for new events and increase international delegate numbers.

VisitBritain and VisitEngland participated in trade missions and exhibitions such as IMEX America, IBTM World, and Destination Britain Middle East & Asia. These activities led to over 4,400 business leads for UK suppliers. Birmingham and the West Midlands secured a major scientific conference worth over £1.5 million.

Partnerships with organisations like Expedia Group and British Airways promoted regional destinations and encouraged bookings. The report highlights that business events are a key part of the UK's tourism strategy and contribute directly to economic growth.

Survey launched into touring mobility in the EU

PEARLE*, the European Employers Association, has launched the [Big Mobility and Touring Survey](#). Artists, producers, crew, and technical professionals with EU touring experience are invited to share the administrative obstacles and costs they face. The survey aims to inform the European Commission and help remove barriers for touring professionals.

People are encouraged to participate before the 31 October 2025 deadline. The survey can be completed [here](#).

UK-Turkey Enhanced Free Trade Agreement Negotiations

The second round of UK-Turkey Enhanced Free Trade Agreement negotiations took place in London in September 2025. Trade between the UK and Turkey reached £28 billion in 2024, supporting over 57,000 UK jobs. Talks made progress on digital trade, financial and professional services, investment, and market access. Discussions also covered environment, labour, anti-corruption, dispute settlement, intellectual property,

procurement, customs, and consumer protection. The UK aims to secure new opportunities for services trade.

Greater Anglia Rail Services Move to Public Ownership

On 12 October 2025, Greater Anglia's rail services transferred to public ownership, now managed by DfT Operator Ltd. This follows earlier transfers of South Western Railway and c2c, with West Midlands Trains and Govia Thameslink Railways scheduled next. The government's public ownership programme aims to unify rail operations ahead of Great British Railways' launch. DFTO now oversees 33% of all GB passenger rail journeys, with full transfers expected by 2027.

UK economy grew in August 2025

Official figures reveal UK GDP grew by 0.1% in August 2025, driven by higher manufacturing output. July's figure was revised to a 0.1% contraction. Over the three months to August, GDP rose 0.3%, with services up 0.4%, production down 0.3%, and construction up 0.3%. Focus now shifts to next month's Budget.

Parliament

House of Commons

Written Question on Hospitality NIC exemptions

Victoria Collins, Liberal Democrat MP for Harpenden and Berkhamsted asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer:

"Whether she has considered extending National Insurance Contribution exemptions; and if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of doing so on levels of recruitment in the hospitality sector."

Dan Tomlinson, Exchequer Secretary responded:

"Businesses can claim a number of employer NICs reliefs including those for under-21s and under-25 apprentices. This means employers will pay no employer NICs for apprentices under 25 or employees under 21 on earnings up to £50,270."

"There are a wide range of factors to take into consideration when introducing or expanding a tax relief. These include how effective the relief would be at achieving the policy intent, how targeted support would be, whether it adds complexity to the tax system, and the cost."

"The Government keeps all taxes under review as part of the policy making process. The Chancellor will announce any changes to the tax system at fiscal events in the usual way."

Topical Question on Venues

Luke Taylor, Liberal Democrat MP for Sutton and Cheam asked:

"What steps she is taking to support grassroots music venues"

Ian Murray, Minister for Creative Industries, Media, and Arts responded:

"As someone who used to manage a local band called Squeezebox when at university—available at all bad record stores—I understand that grassroots music is the lifeblood of the music industry. The Government have committed to supporting the live music industry's introduction of a voluntary levy on tickets for stadium and arena shows and that money will be ploughed straight into the grassroots music sector. The Government are providing up to £30 million for the music growth package, which will provide further Government support to grassroots venues by fostering domestic growth, talent development and music exports."

Taylor responded:

"Grassroots music venues across the country, particularly across London, are finding it increasingly difficult to survive as customers are spending less when they come to gigs because of the cost of living crisis. Will the Minister explain the progress on the levy? Will he consider the Lib Dem calls to reverse the national insurance rise on small businesses to give venues such as the Sound Lounge and the CryerArts Centre in Sutton, which are so valued by our local community, the best chance to survive and thrive?"

Murray responded:

"The hon. Gentleman lays out the difficulties, of which there are many, for the live music sector and potentially the venues, many of them in his constituency. We want to see 50% of all ticket sales for stadium and arena shows in 2026 enter that music levy; that is this Government's aspiration and we encourage all ticket providers to do so. In the autumn 2024 Budget, as he suggests, the Chancellor set out plans to transform the business rates system over this Parliament. Those reforms will provide certainty and support to businesses, including music venues. The Government have been engaging with the live music sector on business rates reforms and will set out further policy details in next month's Budget."

**For any queries regarding this round-up
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