

# CAVENDISH

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## Weekly Monitoring – Friday 19 December



### **EIA Update**

Ahead of the Christmas break, the EIA has been preparing for its engagement and priorities in the new year. We are delighted to say that following a successful 2025 that culminated in the EIA being invited to provide evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee, the Committee is going to produce a report which will include recommendations for Government on the industry.

The EIA is continuing to organise a meeting with Nigel Huddleston, Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and looks forward to discussing its key asks with him in the new year.

*N.B this will be the last monitor until 9th January 2026, wishing you all a wonderful break and a Happy New Year.*

### **Political Update**

The Government had a busy week, announcing a series of policies ahead of the Parliamentary recess, which began on 18 December. The Government had pledged to publish several strategies and plans before year-end, including the National Visitor Economy Strategy, many of which are now expected in the new year.

This follows the Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, vowing to “get to the bottom” of damaging leaks concerning the Budget and Cabinet, insisting they did not originate from his office. The Government has faced multiple unauthorised leaks, including Budget details and leadership plots, prompting an inquiry and renewed scrutiny over standards in public life.

Also this week, it was confirmed that local elections in nine English council areas may be delayed until 2027, with Ministers allowing postponements if requested by mid-January. The move has sparked controversy, with critics accusing Labour and Conservative leaders of undermining democracy, while some councillors could serve up to seven years without facing voters.

Parliament rose for recess on 18 December and return on 5 January 2026.

## **News**

### **Recognition of UK Professional Qualifications in the EU: Guidance for Practitioners**

DBT has published guidance on UK professionals seeking to work in EU member states and how to obtain recognition of professional qualifications. The guidance states that they must check if their profession is regulated by consulting the EU's REGPROF database. If regulated, you must apply to the relevant competent authority in each country, providing evidence of your qualifications, experience, and sometimes language proficiency. Some sectors benefit from bilateral agreements, including Architecture, Auditing, and Engineering which can simplify recognition.

### **UK to Rejoin Erasmus+ Scheme, Expanding Study Abroad Opportunities**

The UK will rejoin the Erasmus+ programme in 2027, following a new agreement with the EU. This move will enable young people from all backgrounds, including apprentices and adult learners, to study, train, and work across Europe. Over 100,000 Britons could benefit in the first year, with the scheme shown to boost career prospects, especially for disadvantaged groups. The deal also includes progress on energy market integration and future trade agreements, strengthening UK-EU cooperation.

### **UK-South Korea Free Trade Deal**

The newly upgraded UK-South Korea Free Trade Agreement delivers permanent tariff-free access for 98% of British exports and aims to strengthen trade in goods and services, which reached £15.8 billion in 2024. The deal introduces modernised digital and customs rules, new opportunities in financial services and Government procurement, and provisions to support supply chain resilience. Industry groups have highlighted the potential for increased collaboration, innovation, and market access, while the Government claims the agreement will help UK firms compete in South Korea's economy.

### **UK Unemployment Hit Four-Year High Ahead of Budget**

UK unemployment rose to 5.1% in the three months to October, the highest rate since early 2021. The Office for National Statistics reported the largest fall in payroll numbers for five years, with young people particularly affected. Wage growth excluding bonuses slowed to 4.6%.

### **Bank of England Cuts Interest Rate to 3.75% as Inflation Falls**

The Bank of England has reduced the Bank Rate by 0.25 percentage points to 3.75%, marking the sixth cut since August 2024. The decision follows a continued decline in inflation, now at 3.2%, down from a peak of over 10% three years ago. The Monetary Policy Committee indicated that further gradual cuts are possible, but future moves will depend on trends in pay growth and services inflation, aiming to return inflation to the 2% target.

### **Downing Street Responds as Pubs Bar Labour MPs in Tax Protest**

Downing Street has reiterated its support for pubs after more than 250 venues joined a campaign to bar Labour MPs in protest at hospitality tax rates. Landlords argue that rising taxes and business rates threaten their survival, despite a Government support package. Industry groups dispute the Government's figures, while Labour MPs say the ban undermines local business relationships. The Government maintains it is backing hospitality through tax relief and business rate caps.

## **Parliament**

### **House of Commons**

#### **Written Question on Tour Operators and Travel Agents**

Bambos Charalambous, Labour MP for Southgate and Wood Green, asked the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport:

*"What steps her Department is taking to help support economic growth for (a) travel agents and (b) tour operators.."*

Stephanie Peacock, Minister for Sport, Tourism, Civil Society and Youth:

*"The Government has recently announced the Small Business Plan. It outlines how we will make thriving small and medium sized businesses, which includes travel agents and tour operators, a reality across the UK through the most significant package of legislative reforms in 25 years to tackle late payments; unlocking billions of pounds in finance to support businesses to invest; removing unnecessary red tape; revitalising the High Street as a place to do business; and delivering growth boosting support for Digital and AI Adoption with a new online Business Growth Service.*

*"The British Tourist Authority (BTA) supports specialist travel businesses through marketing and trade opportunities, linking UK businesses with the travel trade globally through events.*

*"In addition to this, the BTA offers training programmes, research insights, and targeted funding schemes that help travel businesses reach international markets and build capability. It connects operators with overseas buyers through both international trade events and UK based hosted buyer programmes, promotes bookable products via its platforms, and provides data, tools, and grants to strengthen the UK's visitor economy.*

*"The Government has also launched The Business Growth Service as part of the Small Business Plan. This makes it easier and quicker for businesses to get the help, support and advice they need to start, grow and succeed."*

#### **Written Question on Zero Hours Contracts**

Damian Hinds, Conservative MP for East Hampshire, asked the Secretary of State for Business and Trade:

*"What assessment he has made of the potential effect of measures on zero hours contracts in the Employment Rights Bill on the (a) music festival and live music events, (b) theatre and (c) exhibitions, conferences and business events sectors."*

Kate Dearden, Minister for Employment Rights and Consumer Protection, responded:

*"My department has published a robust set of Impact Assessments that provide a comprehensive analysis on the potential impact of the Employment Rights Act, available [here](#).*

*"This analysis includes consideration of increases in labour costs for businesses and the subsequent effects, as well as assessments on how the proposed zero hour contract measures could affect different sectors. The impact on the sectors in question will depend on the regulations that we will bring forward following consultation."*

#### **Written Question on Business Events**

Cameron Thomas, Liberal Democrat MP for Tewkesbury, asked the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs:

*"What assessment her Department has made of the potential role of business events in improving and building international partnerships."*

Seema Malhotra, Minister for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development, responded:

*"The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) recognises that well-designed business events play an important role in strengthening international partnerships. Through initiatives such as the Lancaster House Business Engagement Series, the Department brings senior diplomats together with UK business leaders to share geopolitical insight and deepen understanding of global markets. These events help businesses make informed decisions about international opportunities, supporting stronger commercial links overseas. The FCDO is also expanding its regional outreach through Heads of Mission Roadshows, which allow ambassadors and high commissioners to engage directly with companies across the UK and discuss geopolitical developments relevant to their sectors. In addition, the Department is establishing a Diplomatic Advisory Hub within the British Chambers of Commerce to provide tailored guidance on international risks and partnerships. Early feedback from businesses has been positive, and these initiatives are helping ensure that UK companies are better equipped to build and sustain successful international relationships."*

#### **Written Question on Martyn's Law**

Cameron Thomas, Liberal Democrat MP for Tewkesbury, asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department:

*"What steps her Department is taking to help ensure proper support for venues transitioning to the requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 during the implementation period. "*

Dan Jarvis, Minister for Security, responded:

*"The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act, also known as Martyn's Law, received Royal Assent on 3 April 2025.*

*"An implementation period of at least 24 months is now underway, giving those responsible for premises and events sufficient time and support to meet their new obligations. It will also allow time for the Security Industry Authority (SIA) to establish its new regulatory function.*

*"The Act is intended to improve protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK. It will require certain premises and events to ensure steps have been taken to prepare for potential terrorist attacks. Larger premises and events will be required to consider and, where appropriate, implement steps to reduce their vulnerability to acts of terrorism.*

*"Statutory guidance will be published during the implementation period to help those responsible to understand the requirements set out in the legislation. The guidance is being designed to be easy to follow, requiring no specialist expertise or the use of third-party products or services.*

*"The Home Office continues to engage with businesses and organisations, including through attendance at industry events and a nationwide webinar series to raise awareness and understanding for sectors in scope of the Act, and regularly issues communications and updates via ProtectUK, Gov.uk, SIA.gov.uk and the Home Office and SIA social media channels."*

#### **MPs Demand Funding Parity for Deaflympians After Tokyo Triumph**

After a of 'State of Play' session into the deaflympics in October, the Culture, Media and Sport Committee has urged a £3 million support package ahead of the next games and long-term funding parity with the Paralympics and Olympics. Members are calling on the

Government to end funding inequality for elite deaf athletes, who remain the only group of British disabled elite sports competitors without public funding.

**For any queries regarding this round-up  
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