

Events Industry Alliance End of Week Report

Friday 29th May

EIA update

Hi all,

Although this was a quieter Westminster week with Parliament in Whitsun recess, Henham and the EIA have used the period to make significant gains across our core workstreams.

We are closely monitoring the Culture, Media, and Sport Committee's [Major Events inquiry](#) through its report-writing phase. With the new Parliamentary Session now under way, the report's landing remains the critical near-term opportunity to ensure business events are treated as a distinct strategic part of any UK-wide major events framework. In anticipation of this we have reached out to Parliamentary allies to ensure we can maximise the impact of the report's findings.

Alongside this, we met with Jae Samant (Director General at DBT) and Robert Hamilton (Head of Business Engagement and Strategy at DBT) to discuss ministerial attendance as well as positioning business events as key to the work of DBT.

We have begun receiving responses from various Government departments to the questions we asked Mims Davies to table regarding ministerial attendance since 2023. Most of them note the lack of data departments have around ministerial attendance, and also illustrate how uncollaborative departments are around event attendance - evidence we will put to the Government in future communication. See the 'written questions' section for further detail.

Finally, we are also developing our messaging around findings from the ministerial attendance survey which have yielded some really interesting results. A big thank you to all who have responded already. If you have not yet, the link to the survey is still live. For organisations who wish to list multiple events please use the [venue's version](#) of the survey and stipulate that you are an organiser instead. The standard survey for organisers can be found [here](#).

Best,
Alexander

Government this week

Saturday 23rd May

- The Prime Minister's Office [framed the Government's mid-term progress](#) around a "Great British Summer Savings" package. Keir Starmer cited the UK being the fastest-growing G7 economy in Q1 (0.6%), inflation lowering to 2.8%, and net migration falling to its lowest level since 2021 as evidence of progress. This came alongside the announcement of a 5% VAT cut on admissions to theatres, theme parks and other attractions running from 25th June to 1st September - the first time the Treasury has selectively cut VAT on cultural admissions in this Parliament.

Tuesday 26th May

- DCMS [has updated](#) its Major Events Evaluation Frameworks guidance, bringing together key Government appraisal and evaluation tools for assessing the impact of major cultural, sporting and business events. The revised framework explicitly includes the VisitBritain Business Events Legacy and Impact Toolkit, strengthening the position of business events within Government evaluation practice.

What happened in Parliament

Parliament was in recess this week; both Houses will return on Monday 1st June.

Written Questions

Friday 22nd May

- **Mims Davies (Shadow Secretary of State for Wales)** [asked](#) the Chancellor how many times Ministers from her Department have attended UK conferences, trade shows and exhibitions in each year since 2023.
 - **Rachel Blake (Economic Secretary to the Treasury)** said Ministers regularly engage with businesses including by attending UK conferences, trade shows, and exhibitions and the requested information could only be collated at disproportionate cost.
- **Mims Davies** [asked](#) the Secretary of State for Business and Trade how many times Ministers from his Department have attended UK conferences, trade shows and exhibitions in each year since 2023.
 - **Kate Dearden (Minister for Employment Rights)** said details of the meetings held by Ministers of the Department for Business and Trade are available on transparency pages of gov.uk

Tuesday 26th May

- **Jim Shannon (DUP, Strangford)** [asked](#) the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, what support is available to small exporters seeking to access new markets overseas.
 - **Blair McDougall (Minister for Small Business)** said DBT has integrated its business support offer in a single, accessible place - the Business Growth Service - to help firms start, scale, and succeed. He added that through Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) businesses can also benefit from tariff reductions and improved market access, and that DBT works with businesses to ensure they have the tools and knowledge they need to seize these opportunities.

Wednesday 27th May

- **Mims Davies** [asked](#) the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology how many times Ministers from her Department have attended UK conferences, trade shows and exhibitions in each year since 2023.
 - **Ian Murray (Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts)** said Ministers regularly attend and speak at conferences, trade shows and exhibitions across the UK. These events provide valuable opportunities to engage with stakeholders and the public. He added that the requested information could only be collated at disproportionate cost.

Regional news

Friday 29th May

- The Events APPG [will be holding](#) a Roundtable in Edinburgh, bringing together a small group of senior event leaders who represent both the supply chain and those who are delivering business events

across Scotland. The purpose of the session is to share insights into Scotland's current challenges and opportunities, given that tourism and business events are a devolved matter for the Scottish Government.

Week ahead

Monday 1st June

- The Events APPG will be holding a Parliamentary Roundtable discussion on accessibility in UK events, hosted by **Martin Rhodes (APPG Chair)** and **Dr Shani Dhanda**, the leading disability campaigner.

Tuesday 2nd June

- The European Affairs Committee will discuss 'Dynamic alignment' with witnesses including **Max Green (Senior Policy Manager, Make UK)**, **Will Webster (Chair, UK Emissions Trading Group Ltd)** and **James Low (Associate Director, Energy and Climate, Flint Global)**

Wednesday 3rd June

- PMQs. **Henham to monitor.**
- The Lords will hold the First Reading of the Backbench 'European Union (Withdrawal Arrangement) Bill, brought forward by **Lord Dodds (DUP)**.
- The Lords will hold the Second Reading of the Sporting Events Bill.

Thursday 4th June

- The Lords will debate a Parliamentary Question put forward by **Baroness Caine (Lab)** on 'securing better cultural exchange arrangements between the creative sectors of the EU and the UK'.

Media snapshot

UK-EU Summit Risks Delay Over Slow Progress and Weakened Starmer

[Bloomberg has reported](#) that the next UK-EU summit, originally scheduled for June, may now slip to July at the earliest. Negotiations on electricity market coupling, the UK Emissions Trading Scheme linkage and the SPS Agreement have stalled, with some interlocutors describing the Prime Minister as too weak to offer the concessions required. This slippage may have a knock-on effect on the operational timeline on dynamic-alignment and Mutual Recognition Agreement.

Business confidence across services sector falls sharply again

The [CBI's Service Sector Survey for the quarter to May](#) found business optimism dropped to -43%, deepening from -28% in February. Business volumes fell across both professional services and consumer services, with cost pressure increasing. The press release also stated that, looking ahead, firms across the services sector anticipate activity to fall sharply again over the quarter ahead with consumer services seeing a heavier rate of decline compared to business and professional services.

AEV announces new logistics partnership with Voyage Control

The Association of Event Venues (AEV) [has announced](#) a 2026 logistics partnership with Voyage Control, a global provider of delivery and supply chain management software. The partnership builds on a long-standing relationship and will support members through improved delivery scheduling, logistics efficiency, and exhibitor experience. Voyage Control will also engage with members via a new logistics focus group and sponsor the AEV Annual Conference in November.

If you have any questions regarding this update, please contact the Henham Strategy team

Get in touch

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