


OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

<b>EU ENGAGEMENT REPORT</b>	
<b>Minister</b>	Angus Robertson (AR)
<b>Type of engagement</b>	Meeting with the Greek Ambassador Yannis Tsaousis (YT) in Edinburgh.
<b>Date</b>	28 October 2024
<b>Key points</b>	<p>AR welcomed the Ambassador and talked about the importance of EU nationals in Scotland and Scotland's commitment to staying as close as possible to EU partners.</p> <p>YT noted that sports diplomacy and tourism was a new interesting for them. Also noted that they are potentially organising an event on sustainable tourism which may be of interest to Scottish Government as both Greece and Scotland share similar issues in this matter.</p> <p>YT also mentioned the possibility of bringing a business delegation to Aberdeen, which would be focused on wind energy, both on and off shore. YT was travelling there the next day to hold some meetings prior to this potential business delegation coming.</p> <p>AR explained that our major economic agency is SDI and Scottish Enterprise and that they would be able to support and give advice on setting meetings up for this delegation if needed.</p> <p>YT thanked AR for his advice and mentioned they are looking to explore this for May 2025 as it will coincide with an Energy conference taking place in Glasgow.</p> <p>AR explained that Scotland is doing great work on off-shore floating projects and that it is important to bring in the communities as those locations to show them the importance of these projects and the benefits for their communities and economy.</p> <p>YT also noted that Greece is trying to boost islands' economy, with some eco friendly islands projects so that these islands are economically developed.</p> <p>AR explained that, in Scotland, we have an issue with rural depopulation in the islands. Scotland has been involved in these issues with other partners such as the Arctic.</p> <p>.[Redacted – under international relations, Section 32(1)(a)]</p> <p>YT mentioned they were also visiting Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh, which has a strong Greek presence in their robotics department.</p> <p>AR spoke about how Scotland produces the second biggest number of small satellites after California..</p>

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	<p>YT found the satellites point very interesting as he was not aware. AR noted that they are largely for commercial use.</p> <p>YT also explained that they are keen to include Greek language in the Scottish standard education and they had spoken to the Lord Provost about potentially finding a place in Edinburgh to host classes.</p> <p>AR welcomed this idea, however mentioned that demand for the language will be important to measure before it can be introduced.</p> <p>AR thanked the Ambassador for his visit and his time and invited him to come back for the Edinburgh Festivals in 2025.</p>
<b>Comments</b>	An extremely warm and productive meeting.
<b>Attending official</b>	[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)][Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]
<b>Copy List</b>	<p>Joe Griffin          Shona Riach          Martin Johnson          Donna MacKinnon          Frank Strang          John Webster          Ewan Crawford          [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)][Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)][Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)][Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)][Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]European Engagement</p>

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

<b>BRIEFING FOR CABINET SECRETARY ANGUS ROBERTSON</b>	
<b>What</b>	Courtesy meeting with Yannis Tsaousis, Greek Ambassador to the UK
<b>When</b>	Monday 28 October 2024, 12.15 – 13.00
<b>Where</b>	St Andrews House, Edinburgh
<b>Key points to make</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome the Ambassador on his first official visit to Scotland and hope that he has a productive trip around Scotland. (The Ambassador will be visiting Aberdeen on Tuesday).</li> <li>• The Ambassador has expressed an interest in talking about Scotland’s Green Energy potential and about possibilities of collaboration on Tourism.</li> <li>• Scotland can play a central role as a trusted and reliable trading partner in securing Europe’s future energy supply and accelerating the global transition to net zero.</li> <li>• Scotland has the resources, people and ambition to become a world leader in the production of reliable, competitive, sustainable hydrogen, with our Hydrogen Action Plan setting out how we will work collaboratively with partners to deliver our ambition of 5 GW of renewable and low-carbon hydrogen by 2030 and 25 GW by 2045.</li> <li>• Tourism is one of Scotland’s key Growth Sectors and the Scottish Government is committed to shaping the tourism sector to create a resilient, sustainable, accessible and inclusive tourism economy for the future.</li> <li>• Sustainability is at the core of Scotland’s Tourism National Strategy, Outlook 2030, which is a key component of the Scottish Government’s National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET).</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<p><b>Yannis Tsaousis, Ambassador of Greece to the UK</b></p>  <p>Yannis Tsaousis was appointed Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Court of St James’s in March 2023. Previously Ambassador Tsaousis was the Director of the Diplomatic Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2019 to 2023. Since joining the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1997, he has served in a wide range of Diplomatic Service roles in Athens and abroad, including service in the Permanent Representation of Greece to NATO in Brussels (1999-2003), in Cyprus (2003-2007), South Africa (2009-2012) and in the Permanent Mission of Greece to the UN and other Organisations in Geneva (2012-2016).</p> <p>Ambassador Tsaousis holds a Bachelor in Law from the University of Athens and postgraduate degrees from the University of Kent (LLM), the University of Paris I-Sorbonne (D.E.A.) and the University of Oxford (MSt) in the fields of Public International Law and International Organisations. He is married with one son.</p>
<b>Supporting official</b>	[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)] [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]
<b>Attached documents</b>	<p><b>Annex A – Greece Country Brief</b></p> <p><b>Annex B - European Hydrogen Narrative</b></p> <p><b>Annex C – Tourism lines</b></p> <p><b>Annex D – Youth Mobility</b></p>

## GREECE COUNTRY BRIEF

ANNEX A

**Official Name:** Hellenic Republic

**Population:** 10,815,197 (2011 official census)

**Capital:** Athens

**Area:** 131,957 sq km

**Exports:** food, oil, vegetables, textiles, ships

**GNI per capita:** US \$20,320 (2019)

**National Day:** 25 March, Independence Day (marks the start of the war of Greek Independence in 1821)

**British Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic:** Mr Matthew Lodge (since 2021)

**Greeks in Scotland:** 2359 (2011 census)

### **Government:**

Head of State: President of Greece, Katerina Sakellaropoulou (since March 2020);

Head of Government: Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis (since July 2019)

Minister of Foreign Affairs: George Gerapetritis

Leading Political Party: New Democracy

Opposition: SYRIZA

### **Parliament:**

Hellenic Parliament (Unicameral): 300 seats

**EU membership:** joined in 1981

**Number of MEPs:** 21

**Presidency of the Council of the EU:** Last held the presidency January to July 2014

### **Greece economy overview** (Source: CIA World Factbook, January 2021)

**GDP:** £154.3bn (2019 est.)

**GDP growth:** 1.87% (2019 est.)

**GDP per capita:** £18,083 (2019 est.)

**Unemployment rate:** 17.3% (2019 est.)

**Population:** 10,607,051 (July 2020 est.)

### **Recent Developments in Greece**

- The political situation in Greece is currently marked by significant challenges and shifts. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' center-right New Democracy party recently retained power after elections in June 2023, marking a second consecutive term. His government faces criticism over economic and social issues, particularly regarding inflation, labor rights, and housing costs. Mitsotakis is also contending with the management of immigration, exacerbated by recent natural disasters. Additionally, wildfires and floods have amplified calls for improved climate action and emergency response. Meanwhile, opposition parties, led by the leftist Syriza, struggle to regain ground amid internal fragmentation and shifting public sentiment.
- On the international front, Greek-Turkish relations remain a top priority. Recent diplomatic efforts between Mitsotakis and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan aim to ease long-standing tensions, particularly regarding maritime disputes in the Aegean Sea. Greece's commitment to the Western Balkans' European integration and navigating the complexities of the Middle East conflict are also central to its foreign policy agenda

## Scottish – Greek links:

1. **European Union Relations and Brexit:** Scotland and Greece share a pro-European Union stance, and Scotland's vote to remain in the EU in the 2016 Brexit referendum aligns with Greece's support for EU membership despite challenges during the debt crisis. Both nations' populations largely view the EU as essential for economic stability, freedom of movement, and security, fostering political affinity between them.
2. **Stance on Migration:** Both Greece and Scotland have been vocal about the humanitarian aspects of the migration crisis. Greece, as a frontline state, has dealt directly with large numbers of refugees, while Scotland has expressed solidarity and accepted refugees within the UK framework. Political figures in Scotland have shown support for Greece's calls for EU-wide solutions to migration challenges, creating diplomatic goodwill.
3. **Cooperation in Maritime and Environmental Policy:** Both Scotland and Greece have extensive coastlines, which makes them natural allies on issues of maritime law and environmental protection within European and international frameworks. Greek and Scottish representatives often advocate for stronger environmental protections, including policies related to fisheries and ocean health.
4. **Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power:** The Greek and Scottish governments actively promote cultural ties through diplomatic and educational initiatives. Scotland's International Relations team has engaged with Greek cultural bodies, especially in areas of historical preservation, archaeological collaborations, and shared museum exhibits.
5. **Role in EU's Energy and Climate Goals:** Both countries are highly committed to renewable energy and are active in EU discussions on climate change, with Scotland pursuing ambitious targets and Greece investing in solar and wind power. Politically, Scotland and Greece align on advocating for EU-wide climate action, including through the EU's Green Deal.

These links are grounded in shared political values, EU relations, and cooperative policies that promote economic, cultural, and environmental goals across both nations.

- Scotland can play a central role as a trusted and reliable trading partner in securing Europe's future energy supply and accelerating the global transition to net zero.
- Scotland has the resources, people and ambition to become a world leader in the production of reliable, competitive, sustainable hydrogen, with our Hydrogen Action Plan setting out how we will work collaboratively with partners to deliver our ambition of 5 GW of renewable and low-carbon hydrogen by 2030 and 25 GW by 2045.
- This will put us on the pathway to becoming a leading hydrogen nation by 2045 and provide the potential to secure Scotland's future as a centre of international excellence as we establish the innovation, skills and supply chain that will underpin our energy transition.
- With geopolitical events having triggered an acceleration of efforts in Europe to reduce fossil fuel consumption, reduce reliance on Russian oil and gas, and increase hydrogen production and use, we are focused on taking action to ensure Scotland is prepared to play a key role in meeting the growing global demand for hydrogen.
- In particular, Scotland's extensive renewable resources and geographic location mean we are well-placed to ensure long-term security of supply of green hydrogen in Europe.

### **Renewables and hydrogen potential**

- Scotland's extensive renewable resources, in particular our vast offshore wind potential, together with our experienced offshore workforce, skilled technicians and engineers, and highly specialised technical companies, mean that we can play an important role in bringing forward large-scale green hydrogen production and the hydrogen economy.
- Already in 2020, renewable electricity generation had risen to equivalent to 98.1% of Scotland's gross electricity consumption.
- As of December 2023, installed renewable electricity capacity had increased to 15.3 GW, with most of Scotland's operational capacity currently coming from onshore wind (9.5 GW).
- Scotland continues to generate more electricity than it needs with net exports of electricity to other UK nations in 2023 amounting to 15.9 TWh.
- For reasons of energy security, the environment, the economy and Scottish supply chain, the Scottish Government is seeking to maximise the opportunities from offshore wind in a way that is sustainable and aligns with our marine planning framework.
- Subject to planning and consenting decisions and finding a route to market, we have a reported potential pipeline of over 40 GW of offshore wind projects - the equivalent of producing enough electricity annually to power every home in Scotland for 17 years, or every home in the UK for over a year and a half - on top of 2.6 GW which is currently operational.
- In addition, we have the ambition of 20GW of installed capacity of onshore wind by 2030, and the potential for growth in marine and solar capacity. In Orkney, for example, we have the world's first hydrogen generated from tidal energy.
- The locations of our most ambitious offshore wind projects in the north east and islands of Scotland, coupled with associated grid constraints, mean that much of our excess electricity will be used to produce green hydrogen.
- The most ambitious economic impact scenario developed as part of our 2020 Scottish Hydrogen Assessment Project suggested that Scotland has the potential to deliver up to

126 TWh of green hydrogen per year by 2045 (3.3 Mt), with up to 94TWh (2.5 Mt) of this for export to Europe and the rest of the UK.<sup>1</sup>

### **Links to Europe**

- Scotland's location only 700km and 750km from Dutch and north German coastlines means that it benefits from lower transport costs and durations than many other potential hydrogen export nations and is well-placed to ensure long-term security of supply of green hydrogen in Europe.
- With the EU and member states such as Germany, Netherlands and Belgium identifying the need both to work together on research and technology developments and to import large amounts of green hydrogen, Scotland's close geographic proximity to growing centres of European hydrogen demand makes it an important contributing partner.
- Whilst pipelines are the cheapest option for the transportation of large volumes of hydrogen across long distances, it is likely that multiple options, including shipped transportation of liquid hydrogen, green ammonia and methanol, and Liquid Organic Hydrogen carrier (LOHC), could all be used for export at varying scales, depending on off-taker requirements.
- Building on our proximity and infrastructure connectivity, we are keen to deepen our renewable energy and hydrogen-specific partnerships and to develop the transnational value chains needed to produce and deliver large-scale green hydrogen from Scottish ports into the major hydrogen import locations in Northern Europe.
- To this end, Scotland has signed partnership agreements or is working closely on hydrogen with German states including Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Hamburg, Lower Saxony and the Hy-5 partnership of north German states, as well as with Occitania in France and with Denmark.
- We are keen to work in particular with our near northern neighbours - with Denmark, Norway and Ireland as an alliance of producing nations that can supply Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and beyond into Central Europe.
- Alongside our domestic networks, we are reviewing the preparedness of our ports and terminal infrastructure for hydrogen export and are engaging with emerging hydrogen hubs such as Rotterdam, Hamburg, Wilhelmshaven and Antwerp to ensure that our export infrastructure is compatible with key import infrastructure.
- This includes Scotland's Net Zero Technology Centre (NZTC) working with the Port of Rotterdam and other strategic partners on Phase 2 of the LHyTS project (LOHC for Hydrogen Transport from Scotland) - assessing the feasibility for a pilot shipment of LOHC from Scotland to the northern European mainland via Rotterdam and of a strategic export route between Scotland and the EU.
- We are also engaging closely with Hamburg, which wishes to build out its port infrastructure for shipped green ammonia and liquid hydrogen imports, including for onward distribution to northern and central Europe, and with Lower Saxony, where Wilhelmshaven aims to produce or import 50% of Europe's green hydrogen.
- To this end, we are delighted that Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport and Forth Green Freeport have been jointly selected by the Scottish and UK governments to become Scotland's first Green Freeports.

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<sup>1</sup> The economic analysis for the most ambitious scenario in the [Hydrogen Assessment Report](#) concluded that, depending on the scale of production and extent of exports, establishing Scotland as an exporter of green hydrogen to Europe could result in up to £25 billion Gross Value Added (GVA), with over 300,000 jobs supported by 2045. The ranges across the three scenarios were £5-25 million GVA and 70,000 to 300,000 jobs.



- In particular, our proximity and existing infrastructure connectivity to Europe makes transporting gaseous hydrogen by pipeline a cost-competitive option..
- The Scottish Government-funded Hydrogen Backbone Link project (HBL) has assessed the potential to connect Scotland to the European Hydrogen Backbone by either repurposing and optimising existing pipeline infrastructure or developing new pipelines.<sup>2</sup>
- The recent NZTC phase 1 report of August 2023 reaffirms the significant market opportunity in Northern Europe and Scotland's potential within future European hydrogen markets. Based on Scotland's resources and advantages for hydrogen production and export, it identifies viable pipeline routes that would be feasible for accelerated deployment, and several options for pipeline routing offshore that would connect major energy hubs in North East Scotland to the onshore European Hydrogen Backbone via e.g. Emden in Germany (now more likely to be Wilhelmshaven as the landing point of the German Aquaductus pipeline).
- The Phase 1 HBL report concludes that whilst it would be feasible to use existing pipelines, the development of new pipelines through an existing corridor into Danish and Norwegian waters and south to mainland Europe would enable accelerated deployment.
- It suggests that developing new pipelines linking St Fergus, Port of Cromarty, Flotta and Shetland could reduce transportation costs to 32 pence per kilogram of hydrogen. Such anticipated transportation costs could make the cost of delivered green hydrogen produced in Scotland internationally cost-competitive – the research report suggests €3.0/kg to the EU customer as opposed to €3.1/kg from the Middle East, North Africa and Chile,
- Phase 2 of the Hydrogen Backbone Link project is now assessing the hydrogen pipeline options for Scotland and the requirements to deliver a hydrogen backbone link at scale.
- In addition, the NZTC is building relationships with EU partners to align on North Sea infrastructure and to build energy security and resilience into the future energy system.
  - Funded by Scottish Government, it has recently published a joint study with German hydrogen consultancy Cruh21 on hydrogen supply from Scotland, German offtake, and transportation options. It is working with the German offshore hydrogen consortium AquaVentus on North Sea infrastructure, and with Ireland on the potential transportation of hydrogen via Scotland from Ireland to northern Europe.
- This is significant as Scotland positions itself both for point-to-point export and as a northern European hydrogen hub. By working with partners on a coordinated North Sea approach to hydrogen production, supply and storage, we want to help ensure that Europe is world-leading in terms of low-cost, secure green hydrogen production.
- Accordingly, we aim to deepen both bilateral and multilateral relations to develop the sector, to promote regional cooperation and understanding, and to strengthen the North Sea corridor's role in supplying EU import countries and providing energy security.

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<sup>2</sup> The European Hydrogen Backbone is a European industry-led initiative to build a network that will link up carbon-free hydrogen supply and demand across 25 EU Member States plus Norway, the United Kingdom and Switzerland. In addition, the Hydrogen Backbone Link project is working with UK National Grid on alignment with their 'Project Union' – an onshore UK hydrogen backbone that will allow for UK market distribution of Scottish hydrogen via St Fergus and Aberdeen. Please note that whilst decisions pertaining to the export of shipped hydrogen are devolved, the regulation of pipelines will be a reserved matter.

### **International collaboration - multilateral agreement and associations**

- Given the increased interest from across Europe in hydrogen imports, we are keen to work with – in addition to the rest of the UK - Scotland's near northern neighbours, in particular with Denmark, Norway and Ireland as an alliance of producing nations that can supply Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and beyond into Central Europe. We recognise that international co-operation will be key to developing future hydrogen markets and their supporting infrastructure and will continue to seek out collaboration opportunities.
- To this end, Scotland has signed partnership agreements and is working closely on hydrogen with German states including Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Hamburg, Lower Saxony and the Hy-5 partnership of north German states, as well as with Occitania in France and with Denmark.
- Our industry body, Hydrogen Scotland, similarly has international agreements across Germany, France, Denmark and Ireland.
- We additionally welcome the UK agreements with Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and France as providing provides a strong framework for further international collaboration.
- In addition to the Hydrogen Backbone Link and LOHC LHyTS ['Lights L.O.H.C' - LOHC for Hydrogen Transport from Scotland] projects, we are monitoring and supporting practical projects with European partners, e.g. the HyLion and LH2 Europe projects which aim to deliver green hydrogen in liquid form from Scotland to German off-takers.
- Scotland's surplus hydrogen production could also help the EU achieve the new hydrogen targets in the European Commission's REPowerEU package, which supports the EU's energy transition towards renewables.

#### *Engagement with the EU – facilitated by Scotland House Brussels*

- To help facilitate this, Scotland is a member of **Hydrogen Europe**, the European association that represents the interests of the hydrogen industry and its stakeholders, with more than 400+ members, including 25+ EU regions and 30+ national associations.
- Scotland is additionally involved in the **Vanguard Initiative** - an alliance of 39 European regions focused on stimulating industrial innovation and building European value-chains - and a member of the Vanguard Initiative Hydrogen Pilot. Approved in June 2022, this brings together 12 regions over an 18-month period to collaborate on a wide-range of topics relating to the hydrogen economy.

## Tourism Strategy

### Top Lines

- The Scottish Government recognises that the Tourism and Hospitality sector is a crucially important part of the Scottish economy. It creates jobs, sustains communities and contributes significantly to the economy and enables visitors and residents alike to experience the incredible offer we have here in Scotland.
- Tourism is one of Scotland's key Growth Sectors and the Scottish Government is committed to shaping the tourism sector to create a resilient, sustainable, accessible and inclusive tourism economy for the future.
- Sustainability is at the core of Scotland's Tourism National Strategy, Outlook 2030, which is a key component of the Scottish Government's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET).
- The aim of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry Leadership Group (ILG) is to provide strategic direction to drive Scotland's ambition to be the world leader in 21<sup>st</sup> century tourism.

### **The tourism and hospitality sector is driven by two key strategies; Scotland Outlook 2030, and the National Strategy for Economic Transformation.**

- Launched in 2020, Scotland Outlook 2030 is the national tourism strategy that outlines a clear vision for the future of the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Scottish Government worked closely with sector to develop the strategy. It sets out the shared ambition for Scotland to be the world leader in 21<sup>st</sup> century tourism and to be one of the most economically, environmentally and socially sustainable destinations in the world.
- Scotland Outlook 2030 focuses on four key priorities to realise this ambition: 1. Our passionate people 2. Our thriving places 3. Our diverse businesses 4. Our memorable experience.
- Scotland Outlook 2030 is the tourism and hospitality sector's contribution to delivering against the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, which aims to support a wellbeing economy, that is thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions, and that delivers prosperity for all Scotland's people and places.

### **VisitScotland (VS), Scotland's national tourism organisation, has a key role to play to ensure that the sector works collaboratively to achieve the ambitions of SO2030 and NSET.**

- VisitScotland has a strategic role as the lead agency for the visitor economy providing leadership and direction for the development of Scottish tourism to get the maximum economic benefit for Scotland.
- Its core purpose is to grow and develop the sustainable economic benefit of tourism to Scotland's visitor economy.
- VisitScotland's work specifically focuses on promoting Scotland, both domestic and international, supporting major events and working with partners to support the tourism industry.

- VisitScotland plays a key role in delivering against the shared industry ambition, Scotland Outlook 2030 and contributing to NSET.

**The Tourism and Hospitality Industry Leadership Group (ILG) provides strategic direction to drive Scotland’s ambition to be a world leader in 21<sup>st</sup> century tourism.**

- The ILG champions the national tourism strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030, a key component of the Scottish Government’s National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET).
- The ILG provides strategic leadership to help grow the visitor economy and enhance the benefits of tourism for our visitors, our communities and the people and businesses at the heart of our industry.
- Collaboration is at the heart of the ILG. It works with industry, public agencies and Scottish Government and will be informed by engagement with community stakeholders and industry.
- This work will ultimately help to drive sustainable growth in tourism and hospitality.

**Sustainable Tourism**

**VisitScotland, Scotland’s national tourism organisation, has a key role to play to ensure that the sector works collaboratively to achieve the sustainable aims of SO2030 and NSET.**

**Strategic direction**

- VisitScotland’s strategic approach is to grow the value of the visitor economy for Scotland whilst minimising any negative social or environmental impact. It delivers all its activity through a responsible tourism lens.
- The Scottish Thistle Awards now have responsible tourism embedded across every category to shine a spotlight on success and celebrate innovation.
- VS’ Corporate Plan 2024-2027 includes development and delivery of the “4 S’s” outcomes – spread, spend, sustainability & satisfaction. These ensure all VS’ business-as-usual activity has responsible tourism threaded through it.
- Responsible and inclusive events are a priority theme within Scotland’s refreshed National Events Strategy 2023-2035.
- VS’ responsible tourism strategy focuses on four pillars (low carbon economy, inclusive visitor economy, thriving communities, protection of natural and cultural heritage).
- Scotland is also, along with the government of South Australia, co-leading the **Green Hydrogen Taskforce** as part of the Net Zero Futures Policy Forum, an Under2 Coalition initiative intended to facilitate dialogue between governments on the practical challenges of achieving net zero emissions.

### **HORIZON EUROPE RESEARCH PROGRAMME We welcome that the UK is now fully associated to the Horizon Europe programme.**

- The Scottish Government has always believed full association to Horizon Europe was the best outcome for Scotland. We have continued to work with our EU partners to tackle challenges in areas of mutual interest, despite the impacts of Brexit on the research and innovation sector.
- Horizon Europe is globally unparalleled and Scotland has benefited greatly from the scope, scale and prestige of this €95.5 billion European Research & Innovation Framework programme.
- The Scottish Government's priority now is ensuring researchers have the support they need to maximise participation in Horizon Europe.

### **ERASMUS+ / SCOTTISH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME**

#### **The UK Government's disappointing decision not to associate to Erasmus+ currently prevents Scotland from participating fully in its own right.**

- The programme had a major impact in Scotland, with proportionally more inward and outward participants in Scotland than anywhere else in the UK.
- The UK Government's replacement Turing Scheme fails to match the breadth and scope of Erasmus+. It offers no provision for inward mobility to the UK, nor does it offer any provision for staff inward or outward mobility.
- The Turing Scheme is much less effective. It helps fewer students, it does not help staff at all, and it does not enable overseas students to come to Scotland.
- In 2023-24 the Scottish Government funded a test-and-learn project in order to re-establish some of the opportunities Erasmus+ provided, which the Turing Scheme does not. Building on the learning from year 1, we increased the project fund by 33% (to £400k) in 2024-25. This year's projects will begin this month.
- The test and learn project won't be able deliver the full benefits of the Erasmus programme – it's currently much smaller in scale – but will support student and staff exchanges and help develop stronger partnerships between educational institutions.
- We will prioritise placements for disadvantaged groups, again demonstrating our commitment to the EU and global partnerships with schools, colleges, and universities.

### **Youth Exchange**

- Currently young EU citizens can apply for a visa to visit the UK for up to six months. There are costs associated with applying and it is up to the Home Office whether your visa is granted and if it is granted for the full period. The range of permitted activities on a visitor's visa is limited. Applications for long-term visas to study and work are expensive and have extensive eligibility requirements.
- The EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement has no provisions for youth mobility. On 18 April 2024, the EU Commission proposed to the EU Council that it open negotiations with the UK Government on youth mobility.
- This new mandate would limit the scope of the agreement to 18-30 year olds and the length of stay to four years, with no route to permanent settlement. However, the proposal goes significantly beyond other UK youth mobility schemes including no quota, the right to bring dependants, access to home status for university tuition fees, and waiving the immigration health surcharge.

- A youth mobility visa would not be a re-establishment of freedom of movement but rather a controlled visa route. Polling by YouGov shows public support for a youth mobility agreement with the EU, with 68% in favour and 15% opposed.
- In a statement to parliament on 30 July, the Labour government committed itself to reducing net migration and continuing many of the Conservative's immigration policies. The statement made no mention of youth mobility.

RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]  
Hello!

Looks good to me!

Thanks !

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Sent:** Thursday, October 31, 2024 12:14 PM

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]  
Grateful for views as soon as possible please.

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Sent:** Wednesday, October 30, 2024 4:28 PM

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Subject:** FW: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]  
Apologies, the team have been tied up the last few days and only just getting to this now.

How does this look as text for a tweet about Mr Robertson's meeting with the Greek Ambassador on Monday?

[Redacted – under policy development, Section 29(1)(a)]  
Thanks,

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Sent:** Wednesday, October 30, 2024 4:08 PM

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Subject:** FW: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Sent:** Friday, October 25, 2024 4:17 PM

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024  
<[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <[Shona.Riach@gov.scot](mailto:Shona.Riach@gov.scot)>; Donna MacKinnon

<[Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot)>; Frank Strang <[Frank.Strang@gov.scot](mailto:Frank.Strang@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)] Ewan Crawford <[Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot](mailto:Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot)>;

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

Good afternoon,

Please find some briefing for Monday's meeting with the Greek Ambassador.

Kind regards,

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]From Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 12:02 PM

**To** [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]First Minister <[FirstMinister@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinister@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024 <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <[DFMCSEG@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSEG@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy <[cabsecfornze@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecfornze@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <[Shona.Riach@gov.scot](mailto:Shona.Riach@gov.scot)>; Donna MacKinnon <[Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot)>; Frank Strang <[Frank.Strang@gov.scot](mailto:Frank.Strang@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

The meeting is confirmed for 12:15 – 13:00 in 2N.14 SAH.

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)][Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 11:45 AM

**To:** First Minister <[FirstMinister@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinister@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024 <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <[DFMCSEG@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSEG@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy <[cabsecfornze@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecfornze@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <[Shona.Riach@gov.scot](mailto:Shona.Riach@gov.scot)>; Donna MacKinnon <[Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot)>; Frank Strang <[Frank.Strang@gov.scot](mailto:Frank.Strang@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]Ewan Crawford <[Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot](mailto:Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot)>;

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

Good morning

Thank you very much for the update, we will make sure the Ambassador receives apologies.

Per a previous message the Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture will be able to take the meeting on Monday.

May I please confirm the time so that we go back to the Embassy team and prepare the briefing?



[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**From:** [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]First Minister

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 22, 2024 2:19 PM

**To:** [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]First Minister

<[FirstMinister@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinister@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024 <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <[DFMCSEG@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSEG@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy <[cabsecfornze@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecfornze@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <[Shona.Riach@gov.scot](mailto:Shona.Riach@gov.scot)>; Donna MacKinnon

<[Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot)>; Frank Strang <[Frank.Strang@gov.scot](mailto:Frank.Strang@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]Ewan Crawford <[Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot](mailto:Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your email, FM has noted. Unfortunately, due to short notice and existing commitments, FM will be unable to meet the Ambassador on this occasion. I'd be grateful if you could pass on his apologies.

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**From**[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** Monday, October 21, 2024 1:18 PM

**To:** First Minister <[FirstMinister@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinister@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024 <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <[DFMCSEG@gov.scot](mailto:DFMCSEG@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy <[cabsecfornze@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecfornze@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <[Shona.Riach@gov.scot](mailto:Shona.Riach@gov.scot)>; Donna MacKinnon

<[Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot)>; Frank Strang <[Frank.Strang@gov.scot](mailto:Frank.Strang@gov.scot)>[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]Ewan Crawford <[Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot](mailto:Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

P/S First Minister

P/S Deputy First Minister

P/S Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture

P/S Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy

After speaking to the Embassy today it looks like they had to programme the rest of the activities for the Ambassador's visit timely and he now has to be in Aberdeen on Tuesday all day and flying back to London from there.

Their availability is now anytime between 10:00am – 14:30pm on Monday 28 October. Given the changes I am copying DFM's and CabSec Net Zero & Energy POs too as separate invites went to them from the Embassy.

## Recommendation

We recommend that both the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary agree to meet with Ambassador Tsaousis. However, if the First Minister is unavailable we would

recommend that Mr Robertson accepts in order to discuss wider relations and shared priorities. In case Mr Robertson is unavailable too we recommend a short introductory meeting is offered with the Deputy First Minister as it sits well with the Scottish Government's objective of retaining strong international links and remaining close to our European neighbours.

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**From:** Ewan Crawford <[Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot](mailto:Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 16, 2024 2:59 PM

**To:** First Minister <[FirstMinister@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinister@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024 <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <[Shona.Riach@gov.scot](mailto:Shona.Riach@gov.scot)>; Donna MacKinnon

<[Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot)>; Frank Strang <[Frank.Strang@gov.scot](mailto:Frank.Strang@gov.scot)> [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

Hi,

I'm content with the recommendation,

Ewan

Ewan Crawford  
Senior Special Adviser to the First Minister,  
EU affairs and the constitution.  
Tel: 0131 244 7399  
Mobile 07867375246

*Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot) for information.*

**From:** [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]First Minister

**Sent:** 16 October 2024 13:45

**To:** [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]First Minister <[FirstMinister@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinister@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024 <[CabSecCEAC@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecCEAC@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <[Shona.Riach@gov.scot](mailto:Shona.Riach@gov.scot)>; Donna MacKinnon

<[Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot](mailto:Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot)>; Frank Strang <[Frank.Strang@gov.scot](mailto:Frank.Strang@gov.scot)>; [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]Ewan Crawford <[Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot](mailto:Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

Many thanks for your submission – has it been cleared by SpAds?

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**From:** [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 16, 2024 11:59 AM

**To:** First Minister <[FirstMinister@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinister@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External

Affairs and Culture 2024 <CabSecCEAC@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Shona Riach <Shona.Riach@gov.scot>; Donna MacKinnon

<Donna.MacKinnon@gov.scot>; Frank Strang <Frank.Strang@gov.scot>; [Redacted -

under personal information, Section 38(1)] Ewan Crawford <Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Submission - Greek Ambassador visit - 27 to 29 October

## **PS First Minister**

## **PS Cabinet Secretary for External Affairs, Constitution and Culture**

### **MEETING WITH THE GREEK AMBASSADOR TO THE UK – 27 to 29 OCTOBER**

#### **Purpose**

1. To inform the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary of a visit by the Greek Ambassador to the UK, Yannis Tsaousis, on 27-29 October, and to recommend that both meet with the Ambassador.

#### **Timing**

2. **Urgent** to enable arrangement to be taken forward to meet the tight deadlines associated.

#### **Background**

3. This will be the Ambassador's first official visit to Scotland since he took up the role in March 2023. [Redacted – under international relations, Section 32(1)(a)] This would be a good opportunity to have introductory meetings with the Ambassador and to hear about his priorities.
4. [Redacted – under international relations, Section 32(1)(a)] Officials would support ministerial engagement as it sits well with the Scottish Government's objective of retaining strong international links and remaining close to our European neighbours. We believe the most appropriate engagement on this occasion would be with the First Minister and Mr Robertson, given the introductory nature of the meetings, and the range of policies we would like to discuss. These include renewables, climate, islands, sustainable tourism and Scottish Connections.

#### **Recommendation**

5. We recommend that both the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary agree to meet with Ambassador Tsaousis. However, if the First Minister is unavailable we would recommend that Mr Robertson accepts in order to discuss wider relations and shared priorities.

#### **Conclusion**

6. The First Minister and Cabinet Secretary are invited to note the contents of this submission and to indicate if they are able to meet with Ambassador Tsaousis.

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

## Email Chain 2 – coordination with Greek Officials

Visit to Scotland: Ambassador for Greece

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

Thank you for confirming the meeting between Cabinet Secretary Angus Robertson and the Ambassador of Greece, Mr Yannis Tsaousis . The Ambassador will be accompanied [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted – under international relations, Section 32(1)(a)]

With kind regards and renewed thanks,

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** 23 October 2024 12:12

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** Visit to Scotland: Ambassador for Greece

Good afternoon,

I can confirm that Cabinet Secretary Angus Robertson will be able to meet the Ambassador on Monday 28 October at 12.15 in St Andrew's House, Edinburgh. The timings of this work well as the Ambassador's session at the International School will start at 1pm in the same building.

Unfortunately, due to other commitments, the First Minister will not be able to join this meeting.

I would be grateful if you could let me know of any specific points that the Ambassador will want to raise with Cabinet Secretary Robertson.

Looking forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards,

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** Thursday, October 17, 2024 1:17 PM

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** RE: KIND REMINDER : Vist to Scotland :Ambassador for Greece

Thank you [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

we will be awaiting to hear from you regarding a meeting with First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Angus Robertson. Kindly note that the Ambassador will be available for meetings in Edinburgh on Monday 28 October. On Tuesday 29 he will be travelling to Aberdeen.

With kind regards,

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** 17 October 2024 12:57

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** RE: KIND REMINDER : Vist to Scotland :Ambassador for Greece

Good afternoon,

Apologies for the delay [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

I am waiting on confirmation from the offices of the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Angus Robertson to confirm a meeting during the Ambassador's visit, and I am hopefully I will get it on Monday.

I have spoken to colleagues in the Scottish Parliament and they have asked me to share their contact details with you to be able to confirm meetings with the committees mentioned below.

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 5:02 PM

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** RE: KIND REMINDER : Vist to Scotland :Ambassador for Greece

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

Thank you for your email.

I am copying [Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]  
, who is taking your requests forward and will be able to provide an update shortly.

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 4:06 PM

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** KIND REMINDER : Vist to Scotland :Ambassador for Greece

**Importance:** High

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

Following my email herebelow, I was wondering if you have any news regarding the meeting requests for the Ambassador of Greece, Mr Yannis Tsaousis.

With kind regards,

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Sent:** 19 September 2024 11:21

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

**Subject:** Vist to Scotland :Ambassador for Greece

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]

I write to inform you that the Ambassador is planning a visit to Scotland on 27- 29 October.

[Redacted – under international relations, Section 32(1)(a)]

I remain at your disposal for any further clarification.

Thank you in advance,

[Redacted - under personal information, Section 38(1)]