

Access to EU market vital for Flintshire jobs – Ken Skates

Figures show 24 percent of the workforce in Flintshire are in the production sector, mainly in manufacturing, producing goods sold around the world.

In 2017, 60 percent of identifiable Welsh goods exports went to the EU and the Welsh Government doesn't want any new barriers after Brexit that could disrupt this job supporting trade.

The Welsh Government's Brexit trade paper outlines how the Welsh economy is best protected by retaining full access to the European Single Market and membership of a customs union.

Analysis shows the severe impact a hard Brexit would have on Welsh jobs and the economy. If the UK were to move to World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, the Welsh economy could shrink by 8% – 10%, which would be the equivalent of between £1,500 and £2,000 per person in Wales.

The trade paper outlines how the Welsh economy would be disproportionately impacted by a hard Brexit and identifies that the sectors most at risk from tariffs are automotive, chemicals, steel and electrical engineering, while the aerospace industry is most at risk from non-tariff barriers. These are sectors which are amongst the most productive in Wales and provide a large number of highly-skilled, well-paid jobs.

Ken Skates said:

“Our access to EU markets are vital for jobs in Flintshire. Figures show 24 percent of the workers in the area are in the production sector, creating goods and products we sell across the globe.

“Our biggest market is the EU, with around 60% of identifiable Welsh goods exports going to the EU, worth £16.4 billion each year. Any deal with the EU after Brexit must protect this and that is why we need continued full and unfettered access to the Single Market and participation in a customs union. This is about safeguarding jobs and investment. Wales is currently attracting record levels of inward investment, which is largely due to our access to the EU's 500 million customers.

“These hard facts show what is at risk if the UK Government fails to get the right deal for the UK or we crash out of the EU without one. We have our forward proposals for a sensible Brexit, based on evidence and analysis, that would protect jobs and the Welsh economy.”