

Press release: Fox launches ambitious new Export Strategy to boost British Business

- Liam Fox sets out ambitious new plan to make Britain a 21st century exporting superpower
- Government sets new ambition to increase exports as a proportion of UK GDP to 35%
- A government-led collaboration with business developed after extensive engagement with range of UK businesses
- Streamlined and targeted offer for businesses of all sizes, set to raise productivity, boost wages and protect employment across the UK
- Strategy set to help Wales become a world-leading export nation

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP, will today (Tuesday 21 August) set out how the Government will make Britain a 21st century exporting superpower through better use of our overseas network, new online tools and building an extensive business to business network.

This comes as the Government continues to roll out sector deals as part of the Industrial Strategy, boosting jobs and growth in the areas where the UK has a competitive edge – now supporting the export of this expertise across the world.

Research shows that companies that export have increased growth potential, are more productive and have better paid jobs.

Last year £620bn of goods and services exported by British companies accounted for 30% of our GDP, with UK exports are at a record high.

This includes £16.4bn of goods exports from Wales, a 7.1% rise on the previous year.

However, the Department for International Trade estimates that 400,000 businesses believe they could export but don't, while demand for British expertise and goods overseas is only growing.

Dr Fox, joined by Baroness Fairhead, Minister of State for Trade and Export Promotion, will today set out the government's long-term ambition to go further and increase total exports as a proportion of GDP to 35%.

Baroness Fairhead will also visit Cardiff-based Cloth Cat Animation, whose children's television programmes have enjoyed great success in China and Australia.

Responding to a call from business, The Export Strategy outlines how the government will produce smarter and more tailored support to UK companies. There are key elements to the strategy to support companies selling overseas:

- Encourage and inspire more businesses to export. This includes an increased focus on amplifying the voice of existing exporters to inspire other businesses and facilitating peer-to-peer learning.
- Inform businesses by providing information, advice and practical assistance on exporting. New measures include developing great.gov.uk into a single digital platform for both domestic business growth and export support and working with large companies to help build the capability of UK supply chains. We will also assess financial incentives and signposting as a means to support SMEs access new markets and private sector export support.
- Connect UK businesses to overseas buyers, markets and each other. New measures include support for businesses looking to invest overseas and developing an online tool enabling businesses to submit non-tariff barriers they face.
- Put finance at the heart of our offer.

Deploying an awareness campaign to target UK exporters most likely to benefit from up to £50bn worth of export finance and insurance support from UKEF, and promoting UKEF support in overseas markets to help UK companies and consortia win contracts.

In a speech to a business audience in London, International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP is expected to say:

The United Kingdom is a great exporting nation and our exporters lead the way, in creating jobs, raising wages and growing our economy.

UK businesses are superbly placed to capitalise on the rapid changes in the global economic environment and I believe the UK has the potential to be a 21st century exporting superpower.

As an international economic department, we are determined to support, connect and grow UK companies on the world stage through our international network.

As we leave the EU, we must set our sights high and that is just what this Export Strategy will help us achieve.

Baroness Fairhead, Minister of State for Trade and Export Promotion at the Department of International Trade, said:

Since its creation two years ago, DIT has already helped thousands of UK companies to export – with exports now at a record high.

As the world's sixth largest exporter, we do punch above our weight, however, we also punch below our potential. This Export Strategy sets out to change that and to increase exports as a proportion of GDP from 30% to 35%, taking us from the middle of the

G7 to near the top. This is ambitious, but achievable.

This strategy builds on the UK Industrial Strategy and our existing export support services – our network of trade advisers and promoters across the UK and in 108 countries worldwide, UKEF's £50 billion capacity to support exports in 60 currencies, and our great.gov.uk service. To achieve our aim, Government must join up across departments to enable UK companies to succeed overseas.

This strategy is a first step – a foundation – for a new national drive to export.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Wales is home to a whole host of successful exporting companies, whose products and services are being sold around the world. Cloth Cat Animation is no exception, their work has been watched on networks around the globe including in China and Australia.

This Export Strategy aims to guide and inspire other Welsh companies looking to make their mark in international markets. Through the creation of Export Champions across the UK and unrivalled access to overseas trade specialists in 108 countries, our goal is to maximise Wales' potential as a world-leading export nation, removing the market access barriers faced by businesses to create better, higher paid jobs across the country.

Carolyn Fairbairn, CBI Director-General, said:

Expanding trade is fundamental to creating new jobs, raising productivity and increasing prosperity across the country. This strategy is a timely signal that the Government is committed to improving the United Kingdom's international competitiveness.

The CBI strongly supports the ambition to make exports 35% of GDP, which will put the UK out in front of many of our international competitors. We estimate that in every region of the country there are around 10% of businesses that could export, but don't, and we look forward to working alongside the Government to support and inspire them to seize the opportunity.

The CBI has consistently called for a long-term approach to exports. Previous strategies have come and gone, but businesses have been let down by their execution. Firms will work with the strong team in place at the Department for International Trade to ensure these plans are now rigorously carried out.

Dr Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

Dialing up the intensity of UK trade – both close to home and further afield – will be the cornerstone of our future economic success.

Working together, business and government have a real opportunity to turbo-charge UK exports, and help more of our firms increase sales and profits in markets all across the world. Our biggest competitors invest heavily in promoting their countries' products and services, and the UK must match or exceed them.

We welcome the UK Government's pledge in the new Export Strategy to work hand-in-hand with business to unlock opportunities for UK firms all across the globe. A clear, long-term commitment to support British firms on the ground – both here at home and overseas – is needed to provide a springboard for many companies to take risks and go for growth.

Stephen Martin, Director General of the Institute of Directors, said:

Maximising trade opportunities across the globe will be key to the UK's future economic success, so we welcome this new export strategy, which provides a solid foundation upon which to build. The Government deserves credit for investing time and effort in working with business to draw up this strategy, and we are delighted that a number of the IoD's recommendations have been incorporated.

Improving the UK's export performance will depend upon many variables, but the good news is that there is plenty that can be done now to help businesses, irrespective of Brexit. We will be encouraging our members to engage with government to make sure this strategy really takes off and enables British firms to realise their full trading potential.

The Government's new network of HM Trade Commissioners will help improve government-to-government relationships to reduce tariff and market access barriers as we leave the EU.

In a series of high-profile appointments by the department, earlier this year DIT appointed former Barclays head of corporate banking John Mahon as the UK's first Director General for Exports, to lead the implementation of the Strategy.

And former Citigroup banking vice-chairman Mark Slaughter was appointed in

June as Director General for Investment, to lead a drive to attract more investment into the UK.

The strategy builds on an already strong DIT offer to businesses which includes 250 International Trade Advisors around the UK, showcased export opportunities on GREAT.gov.uk and UKEF support such as trade finance.

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Further information:

- Latest ONS figures showing UK exports to the world rose by £26bn, an increase of 4.4% compared to the same time last year.
- At the heart of the campaign are its 'Export Champions'; everyday businesses of all shapes and sizes from around the UK that are proudly exporting. They form a nationwide network of UK companies that are ambassadors for international trade. They share their success stories, offer practical advice and lead by example, under the rallying call 'If We Can, You Can'

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News story: Trade Union Facility Time Publication Service: 2017-2018 Data published

Today the Cabinet Office published all [public sector facility time data](#) submitted by organisations using the [facility time reporting service](#).

Under the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 all public sector organisations that employ over 49 full time employees are required to publish certain data relating to facility time usage within their annual reports, on their organisation website and also through the Cabinet Office reporting service, by the 31st July.

Over 55% of the total expected returns for most sectors were received, including the NHS and Local Authorities. However there are still many public sector bodies who have provided no data and are still required to do so. The Cabinet Office will be following up these late returns to ensure there is a full dataset in due course.

The Facility Time regulations are intended to ensure transparency of facility time and the associated costs to the taxpayer. Organisations should ensure the costs to the taxpayer of facility time are proportionate to the benefits in the delivery of public services.

Minister for Implementation Oliver Dowden said:

The regulations provide a framework for open and transparent monitoring. Greater accountability has already been introduced within the Civil Service, resulting in sensible savings.

[Press release: Important role of festivals in Scotland to be recognised by UK Government](#)

The Scottish Secretary David Mundell will be joined by other UK Government cabinet ministers in Edinburgh this week in a show of support for Scottish festivals and to celebrate the international profile and significant economic boost they bring.

Latest figures show that Edinburgh's festivals as a whole contribute £313 million to the Scottish economy.

The Scottish Secretary will today (Monday August 20) host a reception to thank organisers for their efforts and will be attending performances across festivals this week.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

Scotland's festivals are of immense importance to the UK and internationally. Running not only in August but throughout the year they are a hotbed of home-grown and international talent spanning so many disciplines.

The Edinburgh festivals are a phenomenon which contribute so much to the economy as both significant employers and tourist attractions. Their excellence makes them of worldwide significance and embodiments of what Scotland has to offer on a global stage and the UK Government looks forward to the festivals going from strength to strength for future generations to enjoy.

Earlier this month, the [UK Government announced £100,000 in funding for this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#) to help it deliver a step change in showcasing emerging artistic talent to the world. The UK Government has a commitment to promote Britain on a global stage and Scotland's festivals exemplify this.

Edinburgh is the home to 12 iconic festivals and the season goes well beyond August, encompassing the likes of Edinburgh's Hogmanay and the Edinburgh International Science Festival.

Key organisers of Scotland's festivals have been invited to the annual Office for the Secretary of State for Scotland Festivals Reception today. Hosted by the Scottish Secretary, the event celebrates the important role the festivals

play in Scotland's economy and their cultural contribution to the UK.

The reception will include a performance by Circus Abyssinia from Ethiopia. Featuring the Konjowoch Troupe, their show "Ethiopian Dreams" is a retelling of the cast's own journey towards founding a circus in the country. Showcasing exciting stunts and circus skills, the performance tells the story of brothers Bibi and Bichu joining the circus.

Tomorrow (Tuesday August 21) Mr Mundell will see the "Sowhereto Africa" performance at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe followed by visits to Edinburgh Art Festival and Edinburgh International Festival. Finally, Mr Mundell will visit Army @ The Fringe to see "The Troth Akademi", a story of how Indian men fought for the Allies in World War One.

[News story: Giant crane to help bring historic chimney down](#)

The 110m structure – the scene of Britain's worst nuclear accident – will begin to disappear later this year.

A giant crane has been constructed to bring it down.

[Timelapse of crane erection](#)

The 152m crane is the tallest structure ever built at Sellafield, just six metres shorter than the Blackpool Tower.

It will begin work this autumn, removing and lowering chunks of the chimney cut out using diamond wire saws.

Duncan Thompson from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority said:

The complex task of decommissioning and demolishing the Windscale Pile One stack has reached an important stage.

It is another example of the ingenuity that goes into solving the UK's decommissioning problems.

Once demolition begins it will be a very visible demonstration of the work being done to make Sellafield a safer place.

The Windscale Pile One chimney, with its distinctive top-heavy appearance, has dominated the Sellafield skyline for nearly 70 years.

Famously, its filtration system was a last-minute addition, placed unusually

at its summit.

Despite being mockingly referred to as 'Cockroft's Folly', after its designer Sir John Cockroft, it turned out to be a masterstroke.

In 1957, fire broke out in the Windscale Pile One reactor. The sky-high filters captured an estimated 95 per cent of the radioactive dust created.

Now, the chimney is a decommissioning project.

Teams from Sellafield Ltd and its supply chain are working together to safely pull it down.

The first piece to go will be the square-shaped 'diffuser' at the top.

Because buildings containing nuclear material surround the stack, traditional demolition techniques like explosives cannot be used.

George Frost from Sellafield Ltd, said:

We're making visible progress on this demolition, and it won't be long now until we start to see the diffuser removed.

The chimney is one of the iconic legacies of Sellafield's past, so the skyline change as the chimney is removed will be significant.

This has been a challenging piece of work, so everyone is pleased to see work progressing. This is thanks not only to the Sellafield and supply chain teams involved now, but over more than a generation.