

Press release: David Mundell speaks on PM's Brexit Deal



In a speech to stakeholders in London today [6 December 2018] Mr Mundell pointed to the businesses the length and breadth of Scotland who have urged MPs to vote for the deal. He said:

I have engaged closely with the business world in Scotland, and the Prime Minister was in Scotland last week. We've heard concerns. We've faced some difficult questions. But a clear view has also emerged. There is a recognition that there are currently only two options on the table – and that one of them, a no deal Brexit, would be a disaster for the economy. There is a consistent view that the Withdrawal Agreement provides a workable basis on which to move forward. Over the past fortnight, calls to support the deal have grown steadily louder.

The Scottish Secretary set out that the deal – while a compromise – was the best alternative to a 'no deal' which would be bad for businesses and individuals across Scotland. He said:

I am more and more convinced the deal is right for Scotland and the whole of the UK. I'm not saying it is perfect. And let me be clear, I'm not pretending organisations and business leaders believe it is perfect. It is a compromise. No-one gets things all their own way in a negotiation and we have had 18 months of tough negotiations with the EU. But it is increasingly clear that both sides have had to give ground. Parts of the Withdrawal Agreement are as uncomfortable for other EU member states as they are for us – and that's why I do not believe it is realistic to suppose there is a better deal on offer.

The Scottish Secretary stressed the Prime Minister's robust assurances on protecting Scotland's fishing industry. He said:

It is essential that Brexit delivers for our fishermen. They want out of the CFP. They want the UK negotiating on quotas and access to waters as an independent coastal state. They do not want a future deal that links EU access to our fishing grounds to our access to EU markets. We can and will deliver all that. The Prime Minister has defended our fishing industry in negotiations so far – and has pledged 100 per cent to do so in future. Claims that Scotland’s fishermen have been ‘sold out’ are demonstrably false. It’s old fashioned scaremongering.

Mr Mundell reiterated his view that the proposed Irish backstop will protect the integrity of the UK. He said:

I accept the backstop remains a concern. It would result in a limited number of additional checks on livestock and goods entering Northern Ireland from the UK. This is an extension of the already existing unique circumstances in order to prevent a hard border. As a Unionist I’m wary of anything that might appear to weaken the UK’s vital internal market. But I’m a Unionist and a devolutionist. I’ve been a champion of doing things differently within our Union since I became an MSP nearly 20 years ago. And what I see proposed for Northern Ireland – in the event of the backstop kicking in – are effective, carefully tailored arrangements that take account of their special and unique circumstances. That means avoiding a hard border with Ireland. It means honouring the Belfast Agreement and fostering the still fragile peace process. What I do not see proposed – crucially – is a border down the Irish Sea. Nor do I see ‘special treatment’ that would give Northern Ireland a competitive advantage and should be extended to Scotland. In short, I see a pragmatic solution to a difficult problem.

Published 6 December 2018

[Press release: David Mundell speaks on PM’s Brexit Deal](#)

Scottish Secretary David Mundell has given a speech on the PM’s Brexit deal.

Press release: Fishing trip cost **Leicester man over £1,400 – a licence** **costs £30**

Matt Ralton, of St Stephens Road, Leicester was proved guilty of fishing without a licence failing to state name and address and obstructing a constable

Press release: Fishing trip cost **Leicester man over £1,400 – a licence** **costs £30**

A 44-year old man from Leicester has been found guilty of fishing without a licence, failing to state his name and address, and obstructing a constable in the execution of his duties in June 2018.

The case was brought to Leicester Magistrates Court by the Environment Agency on 5 December 2018 where Matt Ralton, of St Stephens Road, Leicester was proved guilty in his absence and ordered to pay a total penalty of £1,428.

The penalty includes fines of £800 plus costs of £548 and a victim surcharge of £80 after Ralton was found in breach of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act (1975) and the Police Act (1996) on 2 June 2018 at Watery Gate, Normanton Turville, Thurlaston.

Following the verdict, Peter Haslock, Area Enforcement Team Leader for the Environment Agency said:

This case shows anglers how seriously the courts take these offences and highlights how we do not tolerate obstructive behaviour towards our officers under any circumstances. It acts as a reminder to anglers of the importance of having a rod licence and we hope it will provide a deterrent to any angler who is thinking of fishing without a licence or of failing to give details to an officer.

All of the money raised from rod licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, benefitting anglers and, for those caught cheating the system, we will always prosecute.

Every year across the country, thousands of anglers are prosecuted for not having a fishing licence. As well as cheating other anglers, fishing illegally can carry a hefty penalty. Getting caught without a licence could land a fine of up to £2,500.

Any angler aged 13 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence. A 1-day licence costs from just £6 and an annual licence costs from just £30 (concessions available). Licences are available from www.gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing activities can contact the Environment Agency Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

[News story: Exports continue to rise across the UK](#)

New figures released today (6 December) by HMRC reveal that in the year ending September 2018:

- Exports of goods from England increased by 3.1% to £247.6 billion
- in Scotland, goods exports increased by 6.2% to £29.6 billion
- in Wales, goods exports increased by 3.0% to £16.9 billion
- in Northern Ireland, goods exports decreased by 0.2% to £8.6 billion

Between July and September 2018, the average value of goods exported in the UK per exporter was £0.8m.

Businesses were also taking advantage of global interest as the number exporting to non-EU countries in the latest quarter rose to 49,000. The most popular non-EU destinations include USA, that 19.9% of exporters sold goods to, Australia (7.9%) and Switzerland (7.3%).

Comparing the year to the previous year, the growth in goods exports came from regions across the UK with the East Midlands seeing the greatest rise in the value of exports (up 10.9%) followed by Yorkshire and the Humber (8.6%) and South West (6.3%).

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP said:

The continued rise in exports across the country is fantastic news for Britain – driving job creation and prosperity.

More than 110,000 businesses are expanding their horizons and

making the most of the demand for quality British goods.

Through our Export Strategy, my international economic department has set out an offer for all businesses to ensure they are able to make the most of the global opportunities this presents.

Export Strategy

Launched in August, the Export Strategy set out how DIT will support businesses of all sizes to make the most of the opportunities presented by markets around the world.

A government-led collaboration with business, developed after extensive engagement with a range of UK firms – the Strategy sets a new ambition from government to increase exports as a proportion of UK GDP to 35%.

ONS investment figures

Separate figures released this week by the ONS show the UK remains a top destination for foreign direct investment (FDI), with inward stock at the highest level since records began 12 years ago.

The figures show stocks from across Asia have increased by more than 33% in 2017 to £128bn and stocks from Japan increased by 71% to £78bn.

The greatest growth from any country has come from Indian investors, rising 321% to £8bn.

- The HMRC figures on number of exporters focus on Q3 2018 (July to September) and the comparison to Q3 2017 (July to September). HMRC figures on values of exports compare the year to Q3 2018 with the year to Q3 2017.
- The Export Strategy sets out how the government will support businesses of all sizes to make the most of the opportunities presented by markets around the world.
- Research shows that companies that export have increased growth potential, are more productive and have better paid jobs

Top 5 export markets for goods from the Midlands Engine were:

- USA (£8.8bn, accounting for 15.8% of total goods exports from the midlands engine)
- Germany (£6.0bn, 10.8%)
- China (£4.5bn, 8.0%)
- France (£4.2bn, 7.5%)
- Ireland (£2.8bn, 5.1%)

Top 5 export markets for goods from the Northern Powerhouse were:

- USA (£6.3bn, accounting for 10.6% of total goods exports from the northern powerhouse)
- Germany (£5.9bn, 10.0%)

- Netherlands (£5.2bn, 8.7%)
- France (£3.7bn, 6.2%)
- Ireland (£3.5bn, 5.9%)