

News story: Exports worth toasting: from Colombia to Cameroon, the East Midlands on track for record export year, says Liz Truss

- Liz Truss urges more businesses in the East Midlands to take advantage of global exporting opportunities

Exports from East Midlands were worth more than £20 billion in 2017, up by 10 per cent on the previous year.

And in 2018 the East Midlands has already exported more than £10.7 billion worth of goods, putting the region on track for a record-breaking year of exports.

The East Midlands is already exporting drink around the world, from Colombia to Cameroon. Visiting Global Brands drinks distribution centre which employs 330 in Chesterfield, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury Liz Truss said:

The East Midlands is fizzing, and quickly becoming one of the most impressive exporting regions, delivering growing export figures year after year.

We are seeing exports go up, with more people across the UK and around the world enjoying the best of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and beyond.

It's now vital to build on that trend and ensure that UK businesses have every opportunity to increase their trade.

Trade leads to more jobs and higher wages, and the Government has launched its new exporting strategy to help more businesses get the advice and support they need, become connected to overseas buyers and gain access to insurance and finance.

The East Midlands has also received sustained investment in recent years, including more than £400 million for the strategic road network, and more than £60 million to tackle congestion and improve local transport, and £10 million for the brand-new Ilkeston Station.

And at the most recent budget the Chancellor set out plans to make the East Midlands an even more competitive area for manufacturing by:

- making the East Midlands manufacturing zone pilot to reduce planning restrictions for businesses looking to expand
- launching a £190 million national Challenge Fund to encourage faster

rollout of full-fibre networks by industry, starting with a pilot in the East Midlands in early 2018.

Since 2010 unemployment has also fallen faster in the East Midlands than in London, and employment has increased by 9 per cent with 179,000 more people in employment.

The government's Midlands Engine strategy is also supporting the East Midlands to realise its huge potential – enabling businesses to create more jobs, export more goods and services and grow their productivity through initiatives including £392 million of funding from the Local Growth Fund, and an investment of £20 million in the Midlands Skills Challenge to boost people's employment prospects.