

Press release: Inside the international suitcase: The UK's top holiday exports revealed

As millions of people fly away for the summer break, so do British goods as latest figures show sunglasses, swimwear and ice-cream are big exports, accounting for more than three quarters of UK holiday goods.**

Latest HMRC statistics show the UK exported more than £302 million worth of holiday goods (2016), including £160 million worth of sunglasses, £93 million worth of swimwear and £16 million worth of ice-cream. UK flip flops are also a big summer hit, with £8 million worth exported around the world.

DIT helped to secure billions of pounds in export opportunities over the past year, setting up 11 trade working groups across 16 countries to strike trade deals and strengthen commercial ties with key trading partners.

Now the International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox is encouraging other UK businesses to seize the exciting opportunities posed by trade with the rest of the world after Brexit.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox said:

From ice-cream to swimwear, you can find UK holiday exports in travel destinations around the world. Last year alone, more than £300 million worth of these goods have been sold to shoppers across the globe showing increasing demand for home-grown summer essentials.

As an international economic department, we are supporting British business to take advantage of the growing global markets after we leave the EU and design a trade relationship in Britain's national interest. There has never been a better time for our dynamic and innovative businesses to export their goods and services abroad.

Overall latest trade statistics show that UK exports of goods and services have increased – exports stand at £547.6 billion, up 5.8% on 2015.

The UK also attracted more foreign direct investment projects than ever before (year 2016 to 2017). With more than 2,200 projects recorded, the post-referendum figures show an increase of 2% the previous year.

Global markets

In regards to trade, the European Commission states that 90% of global growth in the next 20 years will be outside the EU. In promising news for trade

deals, outside the EU some of the biggest markets for holiday exports include South Korea, Australia, UAE, Hong Kong and the USA.

Sunglasses remain one of the top holiday exports, with £3.8 million worth sold to Hong Kong, £4.6 million worth of UK swimwear to the USA and more than £1.4 million worth of flip-flops sold to non-EU countries.

Card games are another must-have holiday item and £3.7 million of UK playing cards exported to non-EU countries last year, with £2.1 million heading to Australia.

Holidaymakers across the world are also keeping cool with British ice-cream with £1.3 million heading to non-EU countries.

Through [great.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/great), the government gives UK businesses access to millions of pounds' worth of potential overseas business, helping them start or increase exporting with a 'matching service' for global buyers and lists thousands of export opportunities at a click of a mouse.

DIT has also doubled [UK Export Finance's](#) risk appetite to £5 billion, to ensure no viable export deal fails due to lack of finance and insurance.

Notes to editors

**The worldwide exports of sunglasses, swimwear and ice-cream in 2016 equates to £269.6 million.

The UK exported £302.2 million of the following holiday goods:

- sunglasses
- swimwear
- playing cards
- inflatable balls
- ice cream
- travel sets
- flip flops

This is not an exhaustive list of all holiday goods.

Further information

Contact the DIT Media and Digital Team on 020 215 2000.

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