

[Press release: Latest ONS figures show exports in services continue to grow](#)

Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures show demand for British services continues to grow, as exports swelled to £286 billion in the year to 2018 Q2.

The data indicates UK service exports to the world rose by almost £19 billion – an increase of 6.9% compared to the same time last year.

Figures released today (24 October 2018) reflect an increase in exports to important trading partners including USA, Australia and South Korea.

The latest services surplus in the year to 2018 Q2 has also reached a new high, increasing to £117 billion – up 11.3% on last year. Other main points from today's release include:

- Service exports to Non-EU countries have increased by 4.5% to 167 billion. A fast-growing contributor was South Korea where the total value of exports in services increased to £2.4 billion.
- The USA remains the UK's top services destination, with exports increasing to £59 billion, accounting for 20.6% of total exports.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:

Today's trade figures show demand for UK services overseas continues to soar. Overall services exports have risen to £286 billion – up 6.9% on this time last year, while the trade services surplus has also increased to £117 billion.

There is clear appetite for British services further afield, as the US and Far East offer some of the greatest growth prospects of the 21st century. As we formulate an independent trade policy for the first time in more than 4 decades, my international economic department will continue to make sure British companies are not only seizing these opportunities, but also thriving from them.

The news comes after the launch of the government's [Export Strategy](#), which sets out a new ambition to increase exports as a proportion of UK GDP to 35%, making the UK one of the G7's most successful exporters.

[Press release: PM call with King](#)

Salman of Saudi Arabia: 24 October 2018

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

The Prime Minister spoke to King Salman today (24 October) to reiterate the UK's grave concerns about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

The Prime Minister said the current explanation lacks credibility so there remains an urgent need to establish exactly what happened. She strongly urged Saudi Arabia to cooperate with the Turkish investigation and to be transparent about the results. It is important that the full facts are established.

The Prime Minister also reiterated that all individuals bearing responsibility for the killing of Mr Khashoggi must be properly held to account.

She said the Home Secretary is taking action against all suspects in the murder of Mr Khashoggi to prevent them entering the UK. If these individuals have visas, they are being revoked.

Press release: PM meeting with PM Andrej Babiš of the Czech Republic: 24 October 2018

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

Prime Minister Theresa May met with Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš this afternoon in Downing Street for bilateral talks. The visit came as the Czech Republic celebrated its independence centenary, marking the foundation of Czechoslovakia.

The two Prime Ministers reflected on the strength of the bilateral relationship and the importance that this continues after the UK leaves the EU. They noted their close cooperation on defence and security matters, and on trade. Prime Minister May thanked Prime Minister Babiš for his support following Salisbury and offered her condolences on the death of a Czech soldier in Afghanistan on

Monday.

Prime Minister May offered an update on Brexit negotiations, outlining work being done to finalise the withdrawal agreement and agree an ambitious future partnership.

[Press release: Local government finance settlement date confirmed in government response to Hudson review](#)

Local authorities will have more certainty to plan their budgets as government confirms it will aim for set dates each year for the provisional and final local government finance settlements, the Minister for Local Government Rishi Sunak MP confirmed today (24 October 2018).

The minister outlined the move in a response to an independent review into the department's oversight of the business rates system.

The review, led by former Director General at HM Treasury Andrew Hudson, found the department has managed the increasing complexity of the business rates and associated systems well, but its processes for managing the local government finance system should be strengthened further. This is in anticipation of future challenges from the forthcoming Fair Funding Review, the 2019 Spending Review and the changes to business rates and their retention by local authorities.

The review also found the timetable for announcing both the provisional and final local government settlements has over the past few years moved to later in the year, allowing less time for scrutiny and for local authorities to set their budgets. It recommended that future provisional settlements be on or around the 5 December and the final settlement no later than the 31 January.

In a letter to the Chair of the Housing Select Committee, the Minister for Local Government Rishi Sunak MP confirmed the department will accept all of Andrew Hudson's recommendations and outlined the department is aiming to publish the provisional settlement for 2019 to 2020 on Thursday 6 December 2018. The letter also outlines the need to make sure each year that the settlement timetable aligns with fiscal events and Spending Reviews.

See the [full report and letter to Clive Betts MP](#).

Minister for Local Government Rishi Sunak MP said:

I thank Andrew Hudson for carrying out this thorough review. We accept his recommendations, and have already taken steps to ensure their implementation.

We recognise taking a more planned approach towards the provisional local government finance settlement in future will be fundamental to ensuring local authorities are given more certainty, and the time and space to consider their financial positions for the coming year.

With this in mind we will aim to publish the provisional and final settlements on or around the same dates every year from this December.

As part of the review's recommendations the department confirmed it is working with local government to design reform to business rates retention to make it simpler and this work will continue to be overseen by the joint MHCLG and Local Government Steering Group

Further information

Andrew Hudson's review was commissioned by the department's former Secretary of State the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP [in April 2018](#) in response to a data error which gave an overpayment of £36 million to local authorities at the provisional settlement for local government in December 2017.

The review was built on the principles set out in the [Macpherson review of 2013](#) of the internal processes and procedures which underpin MHCLG overseeing the business rates system, including policy decision-making and analysis and modelling.

Office address and general enquiries

2 Marsham Street

London
SW1P 4DF

Contact form

<http://forms.communiti...>

General enquiries: please use this number if you are a member of the public
030 3444 0000

Media enquiries

Email

newsdesk@communities.gov.uk

Please use this number if you are a journalist wishing to speak to Press Office
0303 444 1209

Social media – MHCLG

Twitter – <https://twitter.com/mhclg>

Flickr – <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mhclg>

LinkedIn – <http://www.linkedin.com/company/mhclg>

Press release: Uncooperative illegal waste carrier fined after getting his wish for day in court

A 54 year-old man has been fined £319 after pleading guilty to transporting waste without the necessary licence.

The offence was discovered during Operation Transporter; a multi-agency operation between the Environment Agency, Nottinghamshire Police, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and HM Revenue and Customs.

On 19 October 2018, at Nottingham Magistrates' Court, John Selfridge was fined £154, £50 for breach of a suspended sentence, £85 towards prosecution costs and a £30 victim surcharge.

Newark-based Mr Selfridge was caught transporting controlled waste without a licence during the multi-agency road stop on the A617 at Averham, near Newark in Nottinghamshire. Police directed him to pull in to a layby where his transit van was examined and confirmed to be carrying scrap metal and other waste.

A search of the public register revealed that he did not hold a waste carrier licence. Mr Selfridge refused to cooperate and refused to be interviewed under caution and stated that he would see the officers in court before he drove off.

Anyone transporting waste as part of their business, whether it's their waste or someone else's, has to register for a Waste Carriers Licence.

Speaking after the case, Iain Regan, Waste Regulatory Specialist at the Environment Agency said:

Householders and businesses should only use licensed waste carriers as this offers them greater certainty that their waste will be managed properly after they have handed it to a waste collector.

We hope that this case sends a clear message to the waste industry and wider business that you need a licence to transport waste and that checks are being made to identify those who refuse to comply. We will prosecute offenders who fail in their obligation to register.

The outcome of this case shows the value of multi-agency operations such as Operation Transporter in fighting environmental crime. As this case shows, unregistered waste carriers face an even greater risk of being caught and prosecuted as a result of these operations.

Operation Transporter is taking place regularly on roads across the East Midlands and South Yorkshire whilst its sister operation; Operation Highway is taking place regularly on roads throughout Nottinghamshire.

Members of the public can check if someone is a registered waste carrier online at gov.uk and can report unregistered waste carriers or illegal waste sites to the Environment Agency, in confidence on 0800 80 70 60 (24/7 service), or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.