

Press release: UK exports of trainers sprint to glory ahead of London Marathon

A record 414,168 runners applied to take part in this Sunday's (28th April) London Marathon and UK exports have also been smashing records, as sales of trainers and sports footwear overseas reached £392 million in 2018, a 21% increase since the previous year.

The most popular destination was the Irish Republic, which imported British products worth £94 million. Exports to other economies also raced up; China by 233% to £2.3 million, UAE 181% to £1.6 million and the largest growth came in the Thai market, with exports growing by 1157% to £1.1million.

Trainers and Sports footwear have been a high performer for British exports, increasing at an average annual growth rate of 21% and have more than tripled in value.

London took 1st place in the regional race for most footwear exports in the UK, worth over £1.8 billion in 2018. They were followed by North West England in 2nd (£1.1 billion) and the East of England in 3rd (£634 million).

Secretary of State for International Trade, Dr Liam Fox, said:

Exports of UK trainers and sports footwear are doing brilliantly all over the world, the record number of applicants for this year's London Marathon is truly inspiring, and it's encouraging to know that more runners than ever will have British made trainers on their feet.

The export success of companies like Norman WALSH and New Balance, which have large headquarters in the UK is testament to the economic benefits of selling overseas. I encourage like-minded businesses to get in touch as my international economic department stands ready to offer its expertise in helping all companies to unlock their exporting potential.

Norman WALSH Footwear are a UK exporter of specialist running shoes who were established in 1961 and based in Bolton. They have had great success exporting overseas through the help of the Department for International Trade.

A spokesperson from Norman WALSH, said:

Currently we are exporting to Japan, China, Korea, Europe and we have just opened accounts in Kuwait. The Department for International Trade has been very helpful on a number of occasions by sourcing new distributors, trade exhibitions and helping with contract negotiations.

Our turnover has increased and approximately 60% of our sales coming from exports, future plans are in place to continue our export sales drive with the USA, our next target for expansion.

New Balance, who are proud sponsors of the London Marathon, were founded over 100 years ago in the United States before investing in the UK. They employ approximately 400 people in the U.K. almost evenly split between the company's factory in Flimby and its European headquarters in Warrington, Cheshire.

A spokesperson from New Balance UK, said:

New Balance exports to all major global markets, with 80 per cent of the production from the company's manufacturing facility in Flimby, West Cumbria, going in exports.

New Balance has built a strong relationship with the DIT over a number of years with the Department offering the company assistance in areas such as exporting and international retail expansion.

As well as working with individual businesses, DIT has worked side by side with the British footwear industry to ensure people across the globe continue to enjoy British brands.

BFA and DIT have maintained a long standing and close dialogue on international trade, and of course particularly recently in relation to Brexit. We were delighted to be invited to create one of the first industry specific trade panels and continue to share information with government colleagues.

BFA is committed to working with DIT to ensure the best possible outcome and clear guidance, for our industry whatever the detail of Brexit brings.

Notes to editors

1. Norman Walsh are a British sports footwear manufacturer. Contact

info@walshsports.co.uk or visit their website www.normanwalshuk.com for more information.

2. New Balance are a US based sports footwear manufacturer, who have factories in the UK. They can be contacted on nbukcs@newbalance.co.uk.

[Press release: Yemen Quad meeting in London – joint declaration](#)

The foreign ministers of the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United States acting assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs, met today (26 April) in London to discuss the situation in Yemen.

The Quad nations underlined their commitment to a comprehensive political solution for the conflict in Yemen and their endorsement of the agreements reached in Stockholm by the Yemeni parties in December 2018. The Ministers underlined that the firing of Iranian made and facilitated ballistic missiles and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles by Houthi forces into neighbouring countries posed threats to regional security and prolonged the conflict. The Ministers expressed full support for Saudi Arabia and its legitimate national security concerns and called for an immediate end to such attacks by Houthi forces and their allies.

The Quad members expect the Yemeni parties to start the implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement immediately and in particular called on the Houthis to redeploy from the ports of Saleef, Ras Issa, and Hodeidah. The Quad members looked to the Security Council to review progress on such implementation when they meet on May 15, with the expectation that implementation will be underway at that point.

The four representatives noted that implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement would not only have an immediate and significant positive impact upon the lives of Yemeni people, but was a crucial first step towards the larger goal of an enduring comprehensive political settlement in the country.

In that regard, the Quad nations reiterated their full support for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen in implementing the Hodeidah Agreement, which will give the opportunity to start a comprehensive, inclusive and enduring political process, in line with his mandate.

Press release: The £2.4 million UK / South Korean 5G challenge

- UK and South Korean businesses to pilot 5G technology on Seoul subways
- Augmented Reality (AR) trials could revolutionise tourism sector
- Competition will help drive South Korean investment in the UK and create new opportunities for UK businesses in South Korea

A new UK / South Korea 5G competition has been launched by Digital Minister Margot James to help prepare the UK for a future 5G rollout. Businesses are now being encouraged to apply for a unique opportunity to trial new content and services on South Korea's transport networks.

The UK and South Korean Governments are funding a £2.4 million project to support businesses in the two countries and develop 5G technology. The project will live test content and services on the Seoul metropolitan subway system.

5G is the next generation of mobile connectivity, providing speeds up to 20 times faster than current 4G technology.

Minister for Digital, Margot James said:

We want the UK to be a world leader in 5G services, and this collaboration with South Korea will create new opportunities for UK businesses abroad and encourage more inward investment. The UK has a huge pool of 5G scientific research and engineering talent, and I would encourage all businesses in this field to enter this innovative competition.

The trials will enable businesses and researchers to investigate and address a number of user and technical challenges that are crucial to the future roll out of 5G.

These could include:

- Augmented Reality (AR) experiences in busy public spaces, giving tourists and commuters a dramatic new insight to the city and the way in which they experience it.
- Optimisation of traffic management systems, to better manage commuter flows, reduce overcrowding, improve safety and better protect the environment.
- Providing uninterrupted infotainment services for commuters such as interactive content, video streaming and gaming, with more reliable and faster services across the subway network.

Chairman of 5G Forum Executive Committee, Prof. DongKu Kim said:

British businesses are renowned for their creative content, design and innovation. We welcome the chance for our technologists and researchers to collaborate with them to create the next generation of mobile entertainment and services.

Additional benefits this innovative collaboration will deliver include:

- New industry partnerships between UK and South Korean institutions to further trade opportunities for UK companies in South Korea.
- New South Korean investment opportunities in the UK, helping to diversify the UK telecoms supply chain.
- Greater access for UK Industry and academia to South Korean technology, hardware, software and intellectual property.

The funding competition is part of the UK's 5G Testbed & Trials (5GTT) Programme, which aims to maximise the opportunities for UK businesses, especially SMEs, to develop new 5G applications and services for both domestic and global markets. It is a key part of the Government's modern Industrial Strategy – making sure that the UK has the right infrastructure in place to be a world leader in new 5G technology.

The deadline for applying is 1st June and the competition is being managed by [UK5G](#) on behalf of DCMS.

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Notes to Editors

Details on how to apply are available [online](#)

More information on the 5G Testbeds & Trials Programme is available [here](#)

Please contact korea@uk5g.org at UK5G for more information on the competition call.

Businesses and organisations from the UK are invited to apply for up to £1.2 million funding from DCMS to deliver the project, finishing 31st March 2021.

The test environment will be provided by South Korean partners and the technical architecture provided is a hybrid 4G/5G network, but any solution must be designed for a 5G future. The subway in Seoul can deliver high bandwidth (of up to 1.5Gbps) to passenger train carriages.

[The Industrial Strategy](#) sets out a long term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how we are building a Britain fit for the future – how we will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

[Press release: New general licence for controlling carrion crows comes into force](#)

Natural England has today (Friday 26 April) published the first of the [new general licences](#) for controlling birds.

The licence starts to replace the previous general licences for controlling carrion crows, a priority species for landowners looking to protect against damage to livestock. Further licences will be introduced at pace over the coming days and weeks.

The new licence is part of Natural England's urgent work to identify alternative solutions for all those affected by the decision on Tuesday (23 April) to revoke three general licences for controlling certain wild birds.

Further general licences will be issued as quickly as possible, starting with those species that are most likely to require urgent control. This will mean landowners can continue to take necessary action as they do now, whilst also taking into account the needs of wildlife.

Those who need to control wild birds in the circumstances described in this licence, for example where crows cause harm to new lambs, can now do so without further steps: there is no need to apply for an individual licence. For people in other circumstances who need to take urgent action before new general licences are issued, Natural England has also published a simple online application system for individual wild bird control licences.

The decision to revoke these licences was not taken lightly. Natural England explored all other options available, but was left with no choice but to revoke the licences. This was done to protect people with legitimate reasons to control wildlife from committing offences by acting outside the law.

Natural England's interim chief executive Marian Spain said:

This new licence should give peace of mind to landowners who need to shoot to control certain wildlife that they can do so within the law.

I recognise, as does my team at Natural England, that the interim measures announced earlier this week will cause disruption for licence users. This is not a ban on control, it is a change to the licences that allow control to take place.

We will continue to work hard to ensure new licences are in place as soon as possible which cover other species and situations. I hope the fact that we have been able to provide this one earlier

than first indicated is a sign of our commitment to resolve this problem as soon as we are able and ensure landowners can continue to take necessary action.

Next steps

Natural England is committed to working with farmers, pest controllers, gamekeepers and other professionals who rely on these licences to ensure everyone who needs to control the 16 species of wild birds covered by the revoked general licences can.

What to do if you use a general licence

It is expected that, over time, most situations currently covered by the three general licences will be covered by new licences.

Natural England is undertaking new licensing assessments to support lethal control of certain birds in defined situations. The first of these new licences is now in place to prevent serious damage to livestock from carrion crow. We have also published a timetable to show which licences will be available when.

If people need to take action in the meantime for the species which are still not covered by a general licence, they will need to apply for an individual licence, using our simple application form on GOV.UK.

Background on the general licences

General licences were introduced in the 1990s to allow the legal control of bird species of low conservation concern to protect public health and safety, prevent serious damage and disease, and protect plants and wildlife.

Further details of the wider review into the operation and provision of general licences will be shared shortly. We will seek feedback from those using them and from wildlife protection and other groups. We expect to complete this review by the end of the year.

Part of Natural England's role is to ensure relevant provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are upheld to protect wildlife, as well as recognising the needs of people

Background

- To apply for an individual species licence, please make use of the online application system. Apply now: [Direct link to the online application forms](#).
- Get the latest comment on this story on the Natural England blog.
- Natural England is working at pace to get the new licensing regime up and running, so users can be sure that they are acting within the law. They will consult with stakeholders in advance of the wider review of general licensing that will take place later this year.

- Currently the three licences subject to the legal challenge cover 16 bird species, including several members of the crow family (crows, magpies, rooks, jackdaws and jays), feral and wood pigeon and number of invasive non-native species (such as Canada goose).

The specific licences:

- General licence GL04: To kill or take certain species of wild birds to prevent serious damage or disease
 - General licence GL05: To kill or take certain species of wild birds to preserve public health or public safety
 - General licence GL06: To kill or take certain species of wild birds to conserve wild birds or flora or fauna
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[News story: Liam Fox highlights British Investment success at Mansion House Speech](#)

Dr Liam Fox, International Trade Secretary highlighted the UK's success as the No. 1 country for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2018.

Speaking at Mansion House in the City of London to an audience of UK and Qatari delegates Liam Fox spoke about the 'true vote of confidence in the country' and said the UK is "pro-business, open to foreign investment and open to the world."

He drew attention to, not only the City of London as a global financial centre, but also to the growing financial hubs of Manchester-Liverpool and of Birmingham, increasingly recognised worldwide for their investment opportunities and business innovation.

Reiterating that Britain is open for Business and is truly global, Dr Fox highlighted the importance of Fintech to the UK economy, saying: "In the first half of 2018 the UK received more than \$16 billion in FinTech Investment: 28% of the entire world total and \$1.8 billion more than the US."

Speaking at 'Qatar day' at Mansion House, Dr Liam Fox, International Trade Secretary, said:

Already, since the EU Referendum, we have bucked the global trend of falling Foreign Direct Investment.

EY now ranks us first in the world for FDI, having overtaken the

USA and we now host over £1.3 trillion of FDI stock – a UK record.

That is a true vote of a confidence in a country that is using Brexit as an opportunity to do what we already do even better.

The UK is a country that is pro-business, open to foreign investment, and open to the world.