

Press release: UK drinks industry helps drive up British exports

Latest figures (10th April) show UK exports continue to go from strength to strength as they reached £639.9bn in the year to February 2019, an increase of 3.1% since the previous year.

Goods exports in the same period remained particularly strong, increasing by 3.5% to £353.2bn.

UK exports of beverages, which include the world-renowned British gin and Scotch whisky, reached a high of £8.3bn in the year to February 2019, increasing by 7% on the previous year. The unprecedented demand for British soft drinks, wine and spirits have seen exports more than double in the past 15 years.

The UK boasted a healthy £1.6bn trade surplus in beverages. In fact, if the UK never exported beverages, the trade deficit would have been 26.1% greater.

October and November saw a spike in beverage exports approximately 23% above the 12-monthly average for drinks exports, as people across the world stocked up on Scotch whisky and gin ahead of the festive period.

Non-EU countries were the top destination for British beverages, accounting for 63.4% of all exports. There has been a massive increase in demand from India and Japan, with exports growing by 49.2% to £179m and 23.7% to £188m respectively. The US remains the top destination for UK drinks, growing by 3.9% to £1.8bn.

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

Today's figures show that despite the challenging global economic environment, people across the world are continuing to demand high-quality British exports.

The UK's drink industry has global appeal and it's fantastic to see the sector continue to deliver real tangible economic benefits for the UK. My international economic department stands ready to help businesses of all sizes achieve their exporting ambitions.

Scotch Whisky Association International Director Sarah Dickson said:

Scotch whisky continues to blaze a trail for UK exports, making up more than half of all UK beverage exports.

Last year, 41 bottles of Scotch whisky were shipped from Scotland every second to around 180 global markets, with an export value of £4.7bn. We should be proud that Scotland's national drink is the world's premier whisky, enjoyed by millions around the globe.

Consumers in key global markets are looking for products with a strong story, and with Scotch whisky they can discover a spirit with an unrivalled reputation for quality, authenticity and provenance.

One Yorkshire business that's tapped into increased global demand for British gin is Spirit of Harrogate, which has seen an increase in exports across markets including New Zealand, Germany, Malta, Finland, Denmark and Croatia.

Co-Founder of Spirit of Harrogate, Mike Carthy, said:

We're very proud that British gins are being so well received across the world.

When we launched the Spirit of Harrogate and Slingsby, everything had to reflect the essence of Harrogate and its traditions as a place where people could relax, indulge and socialise, taking us back to Victorian Britain and the heritage of the town.

The response from international buyers has been extremely positive, and we look forward to opening up in new markets and developing our brand further afield so that more people can enjoy our award-winning products.

Since its launch in November 2015, Spirit of Harrogate has developed a range with five different types of Slingsby gin, a Slingsby vodka and two 'gin experiences'.

The strong export figures follow the launch of the Export Strategy last year, 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.

Notes to editors

- Latest trade data for the year to February 2019 comes from ONS: UK Trade: February 2019.
- The calculation analysing the hypothetical impact on the trade deficit of excluding beverage exports uses the ONS: UK Economics Accounts Q4 2018. The analysis relies on the assumption that the UK continued to import beverages.

Press release: UK drinks industry helps drive up British exports

Latest figures released this week show UK exports continue to go from strength to strength, reaching £639 billion in the year to February 2019.

Press release: Penny Mordaunt to pledge extra Cyclone Idai funding, as she issues stark climate warning

Cyclone Idai caused devastation across Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe last month, killing at least 750 people and leaving around 3 million in desperate need of help.

The new UK funding, announced as she arrives in Washington D.C. for the World Bank Spring Meetings today (Thursday 11 April), includes £10 million of humanitarian aid, including food, water and sanitation facilities. Further funding of up to £4 million will provide emergency education to children caught up in the disaster. The UK and US remain the biggest donors to the cyclone response.

At the World Bank Meetings today Ms Mordaunt will co-host a to discuss the response to Cyclone Idai and encourage other donors to increase their funding. She will also stress the need to help African countries become more resilient to climate change.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt said:

We have all seen images of the terrible suffering and devastation caused by Cyclone Idai. The UK has, from the start, led the way in supporting the victims of this destruction and the fresh funding I am announcing will provide further help where it is most needed, right now.

But we must plan for the future too. Over the next century increasing temperatures are likely to make severe weather events across Africa more frequent. The UK is already leading the way in helping African communities adapt to climate shocks, providing technical expertise and finance.

However, climate change is a global issue which requires global action. We must act now, so worldwide we are better prepared to deal with future extreme weather events. If we don't the consequences could be devastating.

African nations are responsible for just 2 to 3% of global emissions, but Africa is set to be the continent worst impacted by climate change, hit by changing season patterns that damage crops and natural disasters that threaten communities.

During the World Bank roundtable Ms Mordaunt will urge her international counterparts to support African nations to:

- improve crisis preparedness and resilience, so countries can better cope with disasters;
- strengthen the use and accuracy of forecasts to predict destructive weather patterns, and;
- increase the use of disaster risk financing, so countries can more easily access funding following a disaster.

As well as funding the immediate cyclone relief effort across the region, the UK has already committed to spend £5.8 billion to help developing countries respond to the challenges of climate change up to 2021. This includes making agriculture more resilient to climate shocks and improving access to clean energy.

The additional £10 million of aid will be spent on helping the immediate humanitarian needs on the ground and will go towards the following areas:

- Water and Sanitation facilities – to contain disease outbreaks and contain levels of acute malnutrition.
- Health – to contain disease outbreaks and acute malnutrition
- Food security and nutrition – this will particularly support areas that depend on agriculture.
- Infrastructure – to help increase access to the worst affected areas.

Today's funding also includes up to £4 million towards Education Cannot Wait, the UNICEF hosted global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises. Thousands of classrooms in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi were destroyed by Cyclone Idai, affecting the education of hundreds of thousands of children.

The UK's support following Cyclone Idai includes matching £4 million in public donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal.

The DEC Appeal has raised £29 million. This includes £25 million of donations from the British public and £4 million of UK Aid Match funding.

UK aid has already provided temporary accommodation for around 50,000 people affected by the cyclone, as well as cash support and food supplies to feed around 700,000 people. It has also sent purification cubes, blankets and solar lanterns to the region and provided chartered planes and equipment to

help distribute supplies.

A team of British health workers is in the region to help deal with the growing threat of disease following the disaster. They are working alongside the World Health Organisation in Mozambique, to assess the risk of cholera.

[Press release: Penny Mordaunt to pledge extra Cyclone Idai funding, as she issues stark climate warning](#)

The International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt will announce extra UK funding of up to £14 million to help deal with the impact of Cyclone Idai.

[Press release: Sir Alan Duncan statement on Julian Assange](#)

Help us improve GOV.UK

To help us improve GOV.UK, we'd like to know more about your visit today. We'll send you a link to a feedback form. It will take only 2 minutes to fill in. Don't worry we won't send you spam or share your email address with anyone.

Email address

Send me the survey [Don't have an email address?](#)