

News story: Liz Truss encourages West Midlands independent businesses to embrace export opportunities

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury Liz Truss has praised independent and start-up businesses in West Midlands as the “engine of the Midlands economy” and revealed that first quarter exports from the West Midlands were worth more than £8.8 billion alone, up on last year.

Speaking during a roundtable event with a group of small businesses in Birmingham today (Thursday 5 July), the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Liz Truss, said:

We know that small businesses and entrepreneurs in Birmingham are doing great work creating jobs and powering economic growth for the Midlands.

The employment rate in the West Midlands has increased faster than any other UK region during 2018, and this is in part thanks to successful independent businesses.

To continue this positive trend, it’s important that businesses in this region have as much opportunity as possible to increase their trade and create jobs and I’m here today to learn about how we can help them do this.

The employment rate in the West Midlands is at a record high level with 2.8 million people in work. There are also 92,000 more businesses in the West Midlands now when compared to 2010.

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World news story: Kuwait eMISK opportunities: Invitation to tender

Building on the success of our previous work in Kuwait, the Kuwait Environment Public Authority (EPA) and Cefas will work jointly to develop an extensive understanding of Kuwait's marine environment, which will improve and energise both national and regional ocean governance to protect the Gulfs' marine ecosystems. This will help sustain regional food and water security and support sustainable economic growth and diversification.

Utilising marine expertise within Cefas, the project will promote international best practice and address prominent issues including those of marine litter pollution and the protection of critically endangered species and habitats that are located within the Gulf.

To deliver the programme, Cefas will require the support of subcontractors. Details of these opportunities and on how to bid are available the Cefas [website](#).

Press release: EU Expert Panel meets in Cardiff

The UK Government will continue its engagement on EU Exit in Wales, when the Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns convenes the latest meeting of his Expert Panel in Cardiff today (Thursday 5 July).

Alun Cairns will gather representatives from the business, local authorities, agriculture and third sectors in Wales at Caspian Point to discuss their priorities for Brexit and to update them on negotiations following the completion of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act's passage through Parliament.

The meeting comes in the week that the UK Government introduced its Fisheries Bill which, when combined with our withdrawal from the London Fisheries Convention, will allow us to control access to UK waters and the allocation of fishing opportunities. This will help provide prosperity for a new generation of fishermen in Wales, as well as preserve and increase the fish stocks in UK waters.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

It is vital that we have open and honest conversations about what Wales – and the UK as a whole – should look like after our exit from the European Union. This includes discussing the challenges that we may face along the way, and the opportunities that await us at the finish line.

Since the Expert Panel last convened, we have seen the EU Withdrawal Act complete its Parliamentary journey, paving the way to ensuring the UK exits the EU with certainty, continuity and control. We have also hosted the first joint EU Exit meeting with the Welsh Government where representatives of the fishing, farming and business industry gathered to examine issues including how returning powers should be exercised in future.

As we move through the various stages of negotiations, we will go on hearing from these important partners, to ensure that our discussions are informed by the views of every region of the UK, and each sector of our economy.

The Secretary of State for Wales established the Expert Panel to work with him to deliver a smooth and orderly exit from the EU in Wales. The meeting today builds on the constructive conversations they have already had, helping to contribute to the UK's negotiating position.

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