

News story: British businesses back the Jordanian economy

- Commercial agreements between UK businesses (Jaguar Land Rover, Strathclyde University, Lyndon Water, and the Creative Group) and the Jordanian government will create close to 650 jobs in Jordan
- These deals were announced at today's (Thursday 28 February) Growth and Opportunity – the London Initiative 2019 international conference to support investment, growth and jobs for Jordan.
- The Department for International Trade has also launched a new partnership to improve the investment climate in Jordan and the UK's export credit agency has doubled its capacity for Jordan. Jaguar Land Rover, Lyndon Water Limited, Strathclyde University and the Creative Group are helping to boost opportunities and jobs for young people in the country that has provided vital support to Syrian refugees during the conflict.

The UK is using its global leadership, expertise and influence to convene the Jordan: Growth & Opportunity conference in London on 28 February 2019. It will rally the international community and private sector to create an attractive environment for investment in Jordan, underpinned by reform.

Strengthening Jordan's economy, ensuring jobs, growth and opportunity for everyone, including women and young people, is vital to securing its long-term stability and prosperity.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:

The UK is an ambitious trading nation. These commercial agreements demonstrate the already close trade and investment links between the UK and Jordan, supporting HM King Abdullah II's ambitious vision for reform and long-term, sustainable growth.

We see Jordan as an effective long-term partner in tackling regional instability, providing a safe, stable haven for refugees to remain in their region and countering extremism and terrorism. UK businesses are demonstrating their support by investing and working with the Jordanian government to create a prosperous future together.

The five commercial agreements include:

- Jaguar Land Rover is investing in the creation of the first regional Apprenticeship Training Academy for high-skilled car mechanics. This brand-new facility could eventually train 48 high-skilled mechanics per year.

- Lyndon Water Limited is introducing new techniques to remove salt from brackish water to farm fish and grow plants in water, this will create up to 200 jobs.
- To help train pharmacists, Strathclyde University will be launching a joint PhD programme in Jordan with the Middle East University (MEU).
- The Creative Group has signed two memorandums of understanding with the Jordanian government in Aqaba for a new recreation centre and a 500,000 square metre international sports city, together they will create 400 jobs.

To strengthen commercial relationships, boost trade between the two countries and unlock investment into Jordan, the UK government and Government of Jordan will also launch a new partnership to improve the investment climate in Jordan.

The UK's Department for International Trade will place a trade and investment expert in the Jordanian Embassy to support Jordanian companies looking to export or invest in the UK and British companies hoping to invest or export to Jordan.

The Department will also be providing direct support to His Excellency the Minister for Investment and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply on their economic transformation programme, with a particular focus on trade and investment.

This unique partnership will increase bilateral trade between the two countries and help create jobs and ensure economic stability.

UK Export Finance, the UK's Export Credit agency, has doubled its capacity for Jordan to £1.25billion. This additional support will help UK exporters and their Jordanian buyers access finance for projects in the country.

The UK-Jordan trade relationship is already worth more than £370 million a year [latest figures, for the four quarters to the end of Q3 2018.]

This follows the Prime Minister's visit to Jordan in 2017, where she made a new and ambitious offer of partnership to support and strengthen Jordan's resilience in the long-term, which the whole of government is behind.

Strathclyde University

This deal is a 3 + 2 articulation agreement between University of Strathclyde and Middle East University Jordan (MEU) to provide high-quality and recognised training for the next generation of Jordanian pharmacists in all aspects of pharmacy. Students will spend three years at MEU and then two years at the University of Strathclyde. The teaching at MEU in Year 2 and 3 will follow SIPBS curriculum. It is hoped that MEU will launch the program for recruitment for the September 2019 intake.

Creative Group

The Creative Group (CG) have signed an memorandum of understanding to be the

master lease holder and main contractor for the design and development of the Aqaba International Sports City, which is a 500,000 sq meter site next to King Hussain Airport. The site will showcase 10 sports and become a warm-weather training hub for the region. It is estimated that the project will create over 300 jobs. The MoU was signed in September 2018 and discussions are on-going. The group has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Jordanian government to establish a cinema and shopping complex in Aqaba. The group has a 10 year master lease on the site and are now trying to find a local operator to run the facility. The MoU was signed in September 2018 and CG have now received a copy of the final contract. This project has a huge economic local impact as it also provides valuable entertainment facilities. The company estimates that the site will create over 100 full and part time jobs for local Jordanians. The property has already been built and is ready to move in.

Jaguar Land Rover

Jaguar Land Rover is investing in the creation of the first regional Training Academy for high-end car mechanics. The new facility could eventually train 48 level 2 mechanics per year where level 2 mechanics constitute 70% of a dealership's workforce. It will not only fill a large labour/market gap for the region, it will also do so in a way that benefits both Jordanians and refugees. While the local Jordanian dealership (Mahmoudia Motors) is investing in the real estate, the equipment and the cost associated to trainees, JLR global is financing the four Master Trainers to run the facility.

Lyndon Water Limited

Lyndon Water Limited will be implementing a project in the south of Jordan that will integrate phyto-desalination of brackish water with Aquaculture and Aquaponic production. First phase of the project will cover 300 hectares, and create 140-200 jobs, producing water, Aquaponics and Aquaculture products (combining fish farming and growing plants without soil).