

Small Businesses Struggle To Access Support For Exporting From The Government

Contributed by Federation of Small Businesses
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New research revealed last week (3 July) shows more than three quarters of UK small businesses (78%) struggle to access support for exporting from the Government. The FSB believes there is a strong opportunity for export growth, if Government assistance and information is made easier to access.

The survey also shows how FSB members, who get government support, find it effective but, a third (33%) of FSB members currently find it difficult to access Government support for exporting. A further 45 per cent are unsure of how to get assistance with their exporting ambition.

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The FSB has long called for the Government to provide the right support and to recognise how the needs of small firms are different to big businesses. The FSB would like to see a more tailored and streamlined approach which will make it easier and quicker to access the information.

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The FSB's Small Business Summit Day (3 July) at the International Festival for Business in Liverpool will highlight the importance of small businesses and bring together potential clients from a number of overseas markets. With a quarter (26%) of FSB members citing finding overseas customers a challenge, the IFB event makes it possible for more companies to take their first step in exporting.

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The survey found that a quarter of (23%) of small firms export goods and services, with the most significant markets being for manufactured goods (55%) and services (37%). Those in the FSB membership who export are feeling confident about the future with more than a third (36%) expecting to see the value of their exported goods increase in the next three months.

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John Allan, National Chairman, Federation of Small Businesses, said:

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"Our research shows that, despite best efforts, our members continue to be frustrated in their attempts to expand overseas. It is vital that UK's small firms receive the right support, not just their medium-sized or larger counterparts, and that it is maintained for the long term.

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"Our export survey also shows why it is so important to hold events such as the International Festival for Business. With a quarter of small businesses facing difficulty in finding customers abroad, events like this place British industry in the shop window."

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