

Scotland: A Trading Nation

Discussion Paper - Expansion in market and exploitation of export opportunities

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Discussion Group Overview

Improving the export capacity and capability of Scottish businesses is one of the key actions that will support the achievement of our economic goals. As detailed in *A Trading Nation* the Scottish Government has set out plans to capitalise on available resources and knowledge to improve our export performance. This includes support to attend overseas exhibitions, trade missions and learning journeys, market development visits, engagement with importers, distributors and potential overseas partners.

This session will enable participants to discuss where potential opportunities have been identified and what businesses can do to exploit the identified gaps. It will provide a chance for business leaders to discuss the actions set out in *A Trading Nation* and to share their insight on how these resources should be targeted to successfully exploit opportunities in-market.

Background

Scotland's reputation as an inclusive, outward facing global citizen makes us an attractive trading partner. It is important to capitalise on this valuable international profile and to continue to build international relationships. *A Trading Nation* outlines how to best target resources to deliver a step change in Scotland's export performance. A range of data has been considered to ensure that the countries and sectors prioritised are those which are most likely to deliver growth.

As detailed in *A Trading Nation*, Scottish Development International will strengthen and realign current export support networks to focus on the priority export markets which show the strongest potential for near term growth, building on the in-market specialist model championed by Food and Drink. Further actions have been formulated based on evidence including stakeholder consultation to identify what will make a difference to Scottish businesses. *A Trading Nation* confirms that delivering our ambitions, particularly support in-market, will require a "One Scotland" approach, leveraging all of our networks and those of our partners to support Scottish businesses in to new markets.

Actions in *A Trading Nation*

As well as refocusing our efforts in the 15 priority markets in which the bulk of future opportunity is concentrated the Directorate for International Trade and Investment will monitor emerging markets and be ready to act once opportunities ripen. They will work with SDI and the Scottish Government's own network of external offices to better leverage DIT support, including in emerging markets where we currently have no SDI presence.

SDI will help improve in-market intelligence and export support effort by realigning our overseas network resources to match identified opportunities. We will better harness our overseas networks and diaspora. For example by expanding the Scottish Government's network of Trade Envoys; creating new in-market specialist roles and expanding the GlobalScot programme in target markets.

We will also develop a comprehensive programme of Ministerial visits overseas with a trade and investment focus. Resources will be coordinated so as to offer the best bespoke support dependant on business needs. Refocusing public sector resources on our export strengths and in markets with growing demand for Scottish products and services should result in improved export performance. Improving support to existing exporters means that we can help them be even more successful in new markets and generate more value for individual businesses and the wider Scottish economy.

Suggested Discussion Questions

How can your business and the Scottish Government work together to exploit the export opportunities laid out in *A Trading Nation*?

What should be included in the next version of *A Trading Nation*?

On what initiatives do you think resources should be best targeted to provide the most useful support for your business to export?

What support and advice do you value most from overseas contacts? How do you think we could better get this advice to you?