

Doing Business in France

France is home to world leading companies in many innovative industries and is the third largest recipient of foreign direct investment, offering new opportunities for UK companies. France's strategic location at the heart of Western Europe is well served by a highly developed transport and communication network.

France or "L'Hexagone" is an ideally placed export market for British companies. Many UK companies are already exporting to France successfully and in 2012 British companies exported over £21.03 billion of goods and services to France.

What are the Opportunities?

France is an open and highly competitive market, with opportunities in most sectors, especially for small and medium-sized business. The French place a premium on non-price factors such as design, quality, delivery and after sales service. UK goods and services are generally held in high regard, but must be of high quality and competitively priced.

- Capital Goods: Aerospace, Oil & Gas, Marine, Building & Construction, Automotive, Railways and Process Engineering, Security and Defence, Healthcare, Environment, Chemicals, IT, Telecoms, Electronics, Biotech and Pharmaceuticals
- Consumer: Food & Drink, Fashion
- Services: Financial, Business Legal Services, Creative Industries, Education & Training

Some examples:

- France has world-leading construction, engineering, energy and utilities groups, which understand the UK and its strengths well (EDF, GDF-Suez, Alstom, Vinci, Bouygues, Airbus, Veolia, St Gobain, Thales...)
- A major healthcare market worth over €200bn, the second-largest market for medical technologies after Germany
- An ICT market worth over €100bn and ambitious programmes on highspeed broadband and digital access to public services
- France is the UK's second overseas market for food and drink, over £1.3bn. Marks & Spencers is back in France.

Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical sector in France

Ranking world's number three in sales (€50bn), France is also Europe's number one for drug manufacturing with 220 production sites. The number of biopharmaceutical companies operating in France has increased over the past decade and the domestic industry is well developed with many companies focusing on the development of novel drugs.

Opportunities

Numerous opportunities arise from potential new drivers of future growth, such as:

- New relationships, with increasing pharma partnering with Contract Research Organisations (CROs) and Contract Manufacturing Organisations (CMOs), and with biotech SMEs, alongside increased collaboration between industry and academia;
- Increasing complexity of manufacturing bio-pharmaceuticals: France is catching up fast with 27 biomanufacturing sites, including Sanofi's biolaunch site in Paris area;
- Growing convergence and changes in Information Technology, creating opportunities for novel approaches to patient treatment and care: vast variety of opportunities in telemedicine and e-healthcare;
- Emerging technologies arising from advances in biology, such as platform technologies, micro & nanotechnologies and stratified/personalised medicine

Source: UK Trade & Investment (<http://www.ukti.gov.uk>)

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