



Exporters and change

Exporters live in a volatile world. Not just currency change but political change also can have a big impact on their prospects.

Those exporting to the Britain and Europe watched the recent Brexit referendum with trepidation, with no way of knowing what the outcome would be.

With predictions of economic collapse there were fears that New Zealand exports could be severely affected.

So far, it would appear those fears were largely unfounded.

This week the first UK official data for the period following the Brexit vote came out, more positive than expected - share prices, retail sales, manufacturing, construction and employment levels were all up, and the fall in sterling had pushed up UK exports too.

While a slowdown in the UK economy is still expected further down the track, that data will be reassuring.

Meanwhile, economic data from the EU suggest not much has changed, with growth in the Eurozone limping along as in the past.

So far, the environment for exports to the UK and EU remains largely the same.

New Zealand exporters have had assurances from both Britain and the European Union that there will be no change in access for New Zealand's goods or people until new conditions are negotiated.

Work towards a New Zealand-EU a free trade deal continues, and New Zealand will look to negotiate a deal with the UK once it is in a position to do so.

MFAT has established a taskforce to work on a strategy for engaging with both the UK and the EU.

And our exporters continue their work, engaging with those markets and seeking the best access possible for their wine, fruit, meat, dairy and other goods.

The EU, currently including Britain, is a significant trade partner for New Zealand.

It's our third largest export market after China and Australia. Its northern hemisphere position means we can provide value by being a counter-seasonal producer of fresh food. And its size and wealth allows for much growth of New Zealand export business.

The UK, once it has formally disengaged from the EU, will also offer new market opportunities for New Zealand exports.

Political change can be good for exports.

Contact [Catherine Beard](#)