

New Automotive Council International Competitiveness study published

A new report, published by the Automotive Council, ranks the UK's strengths and attractiveness for automotive investment against other European and global countries and places the UK's automotive productivity in top position in Europe. The UK's strong performance reflects a culture of constant improvement in the industry and a trend towards more efficient processes adopted since the global financial crisis – as well as the shift towards high-value manufacture of premium vehicles. The UK also ranks highly for collaboration between industry and academic bodies – essential in spearheading excellence in research and innovation. Labour flexibility is identified as another area where the UK excels – providing flexibility with working patterns and managing labour demands, vital in a precision, just-in-time industry such as automotive. But while the UK receives strong marks in these fields, the report concludes that it fares less well in other areas such as availability of engineers. It also scores below competitor countries for skills, hourly labour rate, and R&D tax relief for larger companies. However, government engagement with industry has played a vital role in the recent success of the UK automotive sector. The report also states that a continued strong dialogue and consistent policies are both essential to ensure this success continues and that potential investors can be confident in the UK's future position. (Source: [UK Automotive Council](#))



Update on government action: vehicle emissions testing programme

Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport, gave a written statement to Parliament on government's action regarding the vehicle emissions testing programme. He states that government has undertaken a number of steps to carry out an independent investigation into:

- establishing whether the use of defeat devices goes wider than the VW Group
- gathering evidence to restore public confidence, improve the understanding of the real world emission performance of vehicles, and strengthen government's ambition and influence in pushing the EU to move to a comprehensive real world testing regime

The Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) has secured assurance from all automotive manufacturers outside the VW Group for whom it has issued emissions type approvals that defeat devices have not been used and government has begun a wider testing programme to understand the real world driving emissions performance of a broader selection of vehicles in the UK. (Source: [DfT](#))

EEF and Government in joint drive to get more manufacturers exporting

EEF, the manufacturers' organisation, and government have joined forces in a drive to get more UK manufacturers exporting. The two have launched a free guide designed to make more manufacturers aware of the benefits and opportunities of exporting and the wealth of government support available to help them. The guide - Britain's Global Adventure: the Export Opportunity – has been published to coincide with the launch of Exporting is GREAT – government's export campaign. The guide explains the benefits to companies of exporting and the positive impact export growth will have for the wider UK economy. It features four UK manufacturers that

are already successfully exporting who explain in their own words how and why they made the leap, what the benefits have been and how they overcame any difficulties. (Source: [EEF](#))

Innovate UK strategy to help strengthening UK business and boosting growth

Innovate UK has published a strategy to help the UK prosper from the value that good design can bring to innovative business. The new strategy on design in innovation sets out to accelerate UK economic growth through a wider take-up of the benefits of good design across industry. The strategy says Innovate UK will:

- advocate the use of excellent early-stage design and raise awareness of the value of design in innovation
- bring together design and technology communities, both nationally and locally
- fund high-quality, early-stage 'design foundations' activity in its priority areas to inspire better ideas for subsequent development
- invest in design across its portfolio as an allowable cost within collaborative funded projects
- support knowledge sharing and capability building in design, including through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) and secondments

(Source: [Innovate UK](#))

Motoring Services Strategy consultation published

The Department for Transport has published a consultation about setting the strategic direction of the three motoring services agencies in the UK should take over the life of this Parliament. It will inform the strategy which the department intends to publish in the spring of 2016. Government is now seeking views on the whole range of the agencies' activities. In addition to a number of specific consultation questions, respondents are invited to make observations and suggestions concerning agencies. The consultation is available [here](#).

Deadline for submissions is 8 January 2016.

(Source: [DfT](#))

SMMT presentation at Aston University Europe event

Mike Hawes, CEO of the Society of Motor Manufacturers, gave the keynote address at an event at the Aston Centre for Europe, Aston University. The event, "Staying in the fast lane? Britain's Auto Industry in Europe" saw other speakers including:

- Richard Burden MP, Shadow Transport Minister and Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Motor Group (APMG)
- Tony Burke, Unite the Union
- John Leech, UK Automotive Sector Leader, KPMG Automotive Industry and the EU
- Alex Story, Director, Business for Britain
- Stuart Young, Head of Automotive, Wragge, Lawrence, Graham & Co.
- Neil Winton, Automotive journalist

The event allowed attendees to assess the automotive industry's relationship with the EU, competitive pressures, regulatory frameworks and support for future growth.

(Source: [Aston University](#))

Week ahead

Commons Committees

Tuesday 17 November

- European Scrutiny Committee (11:30am, room 15) – UK Government's renegotiation of EU membership

Wednesday 18 November

- European Scrutiny Committee (9:45am, Thatcher room) – UK Government's renegotiation of EU membership
- Treasury Committee (2:15pm, Wilson room) - The economic and financial costs and benefits of UK membership of the EU

Lords Chamber

Wednesday 18 November

- European Union Referendum Bill: Report Stage