

# Going global for growth

How UK businesses are  
adapting to grow amid  
volatile world trade



In association with:



Department for  
Business & Trade



HSBC UK

Opening up a world of opportunity



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# Foreword

This is the third annual 'Going global for growth' report, charting UK businesses' approach to overseas trade and expansion.

2024 was a year of faltering economic domestic growth and continuing geopolitical shocks, so I was curious to find out how UK businesses are responding. Far from retreating to more cautious positions, our new research shows they remain as ambitious and adaptable as ever in seeking overseas markets for their goods and services.

It is true that we have seen a marginal increase in the level of pessimism since we asked businesses about their capex investment plans in the summer. However, more businesses are more optimistic than pessimistic, and we must support that positive outlook if we want to see the UK grow.

This time around, more than 1,500 business leaders shared their thoughts on the global outlook and their strategies for growth.

I was struck by three findings in particular. Firstly, at a time of near-daily news updates about the prospect of new trade barriers, we found UK businesses responding proactively. While the possibility of fresh trade costs is naturally a concern, companies are anticipating the changes in creative ways with the aim of protecting their growth plans.

Secondly, there has been a striking leap in the numbers taking advantage of the UK's free trade agreements. It can certainly pay to follow the evolving FTA landscape – and for some, it is currently more rewarding than turning to the UK's geographically nearest and most obvious overseas markets.

Thirdly, and from a more personal viewpoint, I was encouraged to see a jump in the number of businesses using their bank as a source of advice and support for their international growth plans. Companies are realising that they can benefit by harnessing not just their bank's financial expertise and products, but the market knowledge and connections that can accelerate their progress.

That is especially true of HSBC, with its extensive physical presence in over 50 markets, including all those most likely to be targeted by UK businesses. Our aim is to be a trusted partner clients can rely on to help pinpoint opportunities, manage risk and forge valuable connections on the world stage.

One final insight demonstrates the value to the UK economy from businesses trading overseas. 73% of those international businesses looking to grow believe it will lead to job creation in the UK (compared to 55% of domestic-only trading businesses looking to grow), highlighting the trickle-down benefit that international traders bring to the UK as a whole. This underlines why we need to keep backing global ambitions – particularly those of the 9% of businesses currently considering their first step overseas.

At HSBC UK we are proud to be acknowledged by clients as the bank most capable of supporting UK businesses trading internationally.<sup>1</sup> We stand ready to support UK businesses, regardless of size and experience, in accessing the international opportunities that will deliver their growth ambitions.



**Stuart Tait**  
Head of Commercial Banking,  
HSBC UK

<sup>1</sup> Source: Savanta polling, January 2025

# Key findings

This research is based on responses from more than 1,500 UK businesses, each with an annual turnover of between £100,000 and £1 billion. The survey was carried out in November 2024.



## UK businesses that trade internationally are upbeat and ambitious.

- ◆ Of the UK businesses that trade overseas, 82% expect to grow over the next two years
- ◆ That includes 36% who are seeking significant growth
- ◆ 70% are optimistic about business growth for the next 12 months, compared to 48% of domestic-only businesses
- ◆ Since our research about capex intentions six months earlier, pessimism is up 2% to 14% for internationally-trading UK businesses, and up 7% to 28% for domestic-only trading



## The geographically closest trading neighbours are still a common starting point, but seasoned traders are looking further afield.

- ◆ The EU (72%) remains the most popular overseas trading market, though fewer businesses are trading there than a year ago (-12% vs 2023)
- ◆ The US is second choice (57%). North America as a whole is at 65%, up 5% on 2023
- ◆ China is gaining in popularity (34%). Flows to other promising markets, such as India and ASEAN, are increasing, but much untapped opportunity remains



## Businesses are working creatively to make the most of global trade.

- ◆ 29% (+10% vs 2023) are making use of free trade agreements, with a further 33% planning to do so
- ◆ 32% (+9%) have responded to global challenges by changing the markets they operate in
- ◆ 33% (+14%) are moving operations from the UK to other countries – while 24% (+7%) are bringing services back to the UK from overseas
- ◆ Near-shoring (+9%) and friend-shoring (+5%) of operations have become more common
- ◆ More businesses are looking to make international acquisitions (+7%)



## Companies are anticipating new trade barriers.

- ◆ Tariffs are a concern, especially for those trading in goods (34%), as opposed to services (18%)
- ◆ 50% of those concerned about tariffs are expanding into low-barrier countries in response
- ◆ 41% are looking to assess and diversify their supply chains in anticipation of tariffs



## Many would-be international traders are finding it hard to turn ideas into reality.

- ◆ 9% of businesses are domestic-only but have ambitions to trade internationally
- ◆ The vast majority of those (98%) are still aspiring, or at research or discussion stage, with only 2% actively setting up to trade overseas
- ◆ 35% (+13% vs 2023) now use their banks as a source of advice and support for international trade

# Riding the storms

Despite global instability, the benefits of international trade are vividly underlined by UK businesses' positive outlook on their future prospects.

## **An edge of resilience**

Growth aspirations are thriving among UK businesses, our survey confirms – and they are strongest among those with an international mindset.

82% of businesses that trade overseas plan to grow over the next two years, with 36% aiming for significant growth. International businesses are also more likely to be resilient amid a volatile global picture: 70% remain optimistic about the coming period. Domestic-focused businesses with no international trade are growth-oriented too (62%), but their sentiment about the future is notably more subdued, with only 48% being optimistic.

International intent correlates with growth ambitions, even among those currently serving only the home market: 86% of domestic businesses with international plans are looking to grow.

There is also real value to the wider UK economy from businesses trading overseas. For example, 73% of international businesses looking to grow believe it will lead to job creation in the UK, compared to 55% of domestic-only businesses seeking growth.



### Investment for the future

Business expansion plans abroad take several forms. Finding new buyers and taking advantage of specific business opportunities are the most common reasons for overseas ventures.

2024 also saw a notable increase in businesses shifting their foreign operations to new countries. The proportion of companies practising near-shoring almost doubled to 19%, while the transfer of operations to more friendly territories jumped to the same level; a 5% rise. These trends reflect businesses' adaptations to the supply chain disruptions of recent years and a drive to establish bases in regions considered more stable amid continuing geopolitical uncertainties.

There are signs that more businesses are seeking to add overseas companies to their portfolios. 22% of businesses operating abroad are planning international acquisitions, a jump of 7% over 2023.

“**Many businesses find this an easier way of gaining a market foothold, avoiding set-up costs and retaining the quality of talent in their acquisition rather than needing to recruit.**”



**Cora McLaren,**  
Managing Director of International Subsidiary Banking,  
HSBC

The move towards overseas investment may also reflect a move to build resilience amid growing protectionism – for example, by setting up overseas production as an alternative to high tariffs.



## International strategies

“We’ve opened a subsidiary company in Spain to supply the European market. We are considering a similar move in the UAE.”

– **Hospitality business**

“We used personal contacts to improve market reach, especially in the US market. This has resulted in negotiations on several new opportunities.”

– **Small IT company**



### Collecting the rewards

Businesses are emphatic about the gains they have experienced through trading internationally.

Sales growth is the most obvious payback, reported by 71%. It is a benefit enjoyed by international businesses irrespective of their size or the number of markets they trade in. In addition, 62% say trading overseas has boosted their competitiveness, while 64% see it as beneficial to their customer service.

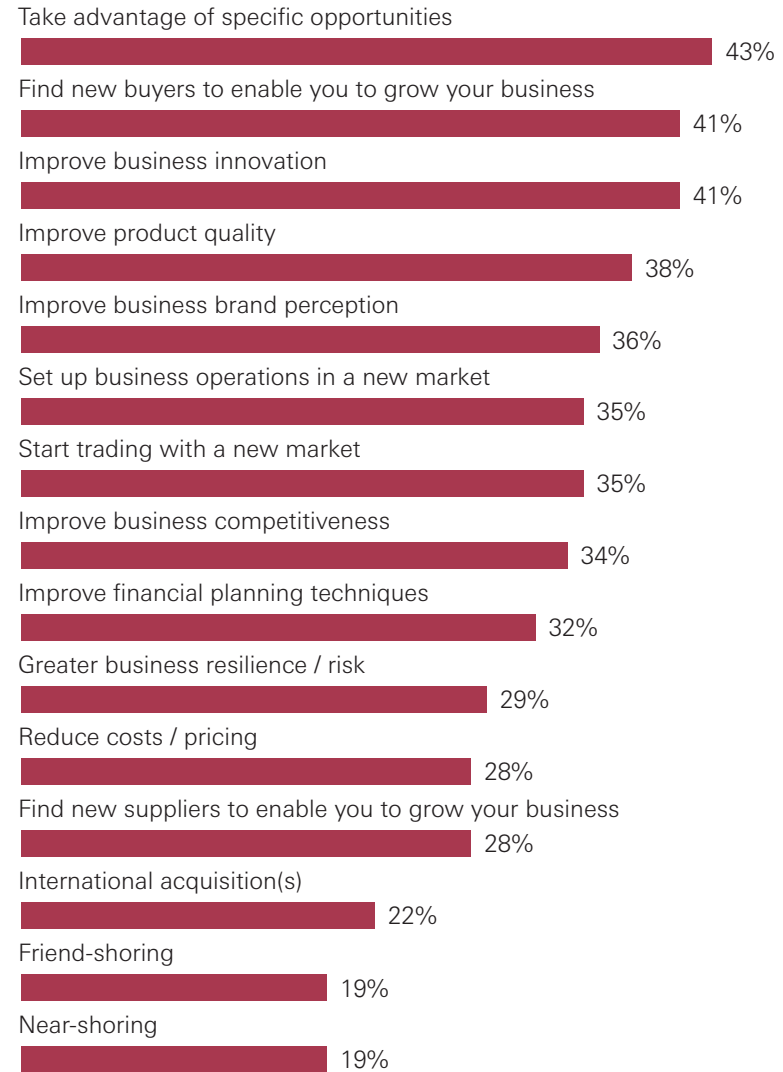
Despite the uncertainties of the current geopolitical picture, 53% say international trade has had a positive impact on their risk management, with only 11% viewing it as having a negative impact. And while costs and inflation remain challenging, 41% have seen a cost benefit to international trade, compared to 20% marking a negative impact.

**“ In the context of the global volatility of the past few years, it’s striking that the benefits of trading abroad continue to shine through. These gains feed through from businesses to the wider economy – which is why we need to support even more businesses to achieve international success.”**



**Stephanie Betant,**  
Head of Global Trade Solutions,  
HSBC UK

### Drivers of international trade



# Cut the cost of doing business overseas



## 1 Choose your market carefully

Market variations and regulatory nuances affect costs in every territory. From tariffs and quotas to product insurance and liability, it pays to assess the complete financial picture before committing to a market – ideally with the help of peers and partners who have local knowledge and experience.



## 2 Join forces

An increasing number of the businesses in our survey are sharing services to save on costs. Strategic partnerships – even with ostensible competitors – can lighten the cost burden of essential functions such as storage and shipping. As one manufacturer told us, “We partnered with a notional competitor in the US. We now co-brand offerings, and they offer a US logistics hub.”



## 3 Gain bargaining power

Make use of your bank’s trade solutions to help you negotiate better payment terms. Services such as export collections and letters of credit remove risk, help ensure timely payment and facilitate access to working capital finance. You might also be eligible for finance and insurance through [UKEE](#), the government’s export credit agency.



## 4 Take control of currency

Using HSBC’s Global Wallet\* can give you a competitive advantage by allowing you to make and accept payments in a number of different currencies. You can also see the FX rate before you transact and know each payment will arrive in full, keeping you in control.

[Global Wallet for SMEs and Digital Business Banking users](#)  
[Global Wallet for Corporates and HSBCnet users](#)



## 5 Hedge for protection

Protect against exchange rate movements that could otherwise weaken your revenues or inflate your cost base. Explore hedging products that help protect against this risk, providing you with more certainty on your cashflow.



\* Global Wallet is available to existing HBUK business account holders. Fees, eligibility criteria and T&Cs apply.



# Deploying the power of digital

Technology is yielding multiple benefits for international business growth for service providers in particular.

## Digital fuels service growth

Global trade is fast becoming digitised, partly through use of technologies that are changing traditional trade processes, but also due to the growth in e-commerce. The introduction of electronic bills of lading, digital invoices, digital customer declarations and even the use of smart contracts have accelerated this transformation.

The UK has distinctive strengths here, as the world's fourth largest service exporter,<sup>2</sup> and with 60% of its total services exports now delivered digitally – twice the OECD and EU averages.<sup>3</sup> The signing of the first global digital trade agreement in 2024 should help UK businesses seize further opportunities in this market, estimated to be worth £4 trillion.<sup>4</sup>

Forward thinking in this field is reflected in the high number of businesses who say they are deploying technology to deliver their offerings in new ways – 73% of international businesses are planning expansion.

Given the nature of digital trade, service providers are more likely to report beneficial impacts from technology than goods providers. They are much more positive (14% higher) about the benefits of digital for costs and competitiveness, and 12% higher around risk and security – perhaps reflecting the increased complexity businesses trading goods have to contend with.

Artificial intelligence is likely to further accelerate the growth of digitally delivered services far beyond baseline expectations, according to WTO forecasts.<sup>5</sup> While many UK businesses are still considering opportunities for the adoption of AI, many are already deriving benefits by using AI to improve everything from data-driven decisions to customer personalisation, according to HSBC UK's recent report on [capital expenditure plans](#).

2 <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/datacentre/dataviewer/US.GoodsAndServicesBpm6>  
3 [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/making-the-most-out-of-digital-trade-in-the-united-kingdom\\_8f31d80b-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/making-the-most-out-of-digital-trade-in-the-united-kingdom_8f31d80b-en.html)  
4 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-joins-groundbreaking-global-digital-trade-agreement>  
5 [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/booksp\\_e/trading\\_intelligence\\_ch0b\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/trading_intelligence_ch0b_e.pdf)



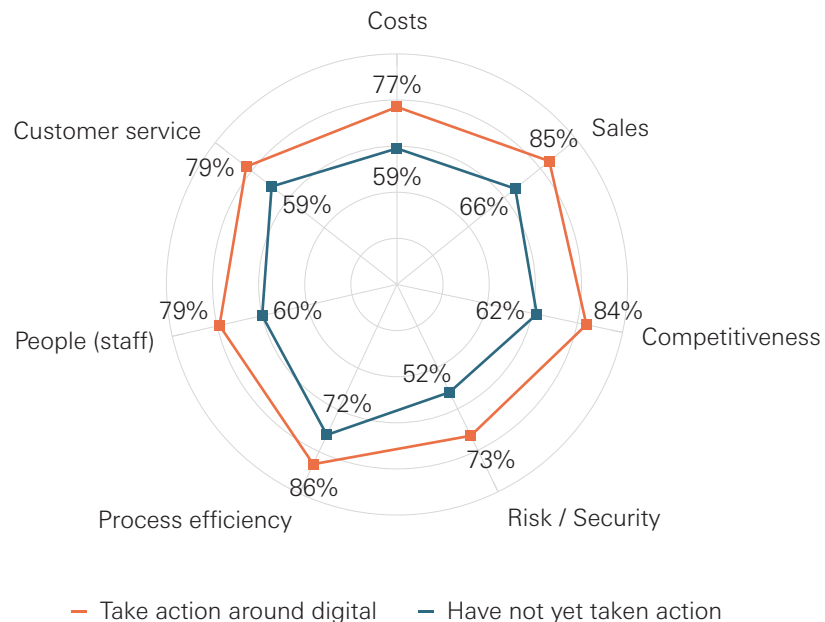
### Technology's key benefits

43% of businesses say they have taken more action to leverage digital to deal with international opportunities and challenges. International trading businesses are more likely than domestic-only businesses to report a positive impact from these actions.

Process efficiency (71%), customer service (70%) and sales (69%) are the highest areas of positive impact. The risk and security impact of digital has the lowest positive rating, but businesses are still more inclined to cite positive impact versus negative impact – perhaps partly reflecting the increasing use of digital to monitor suppliers.

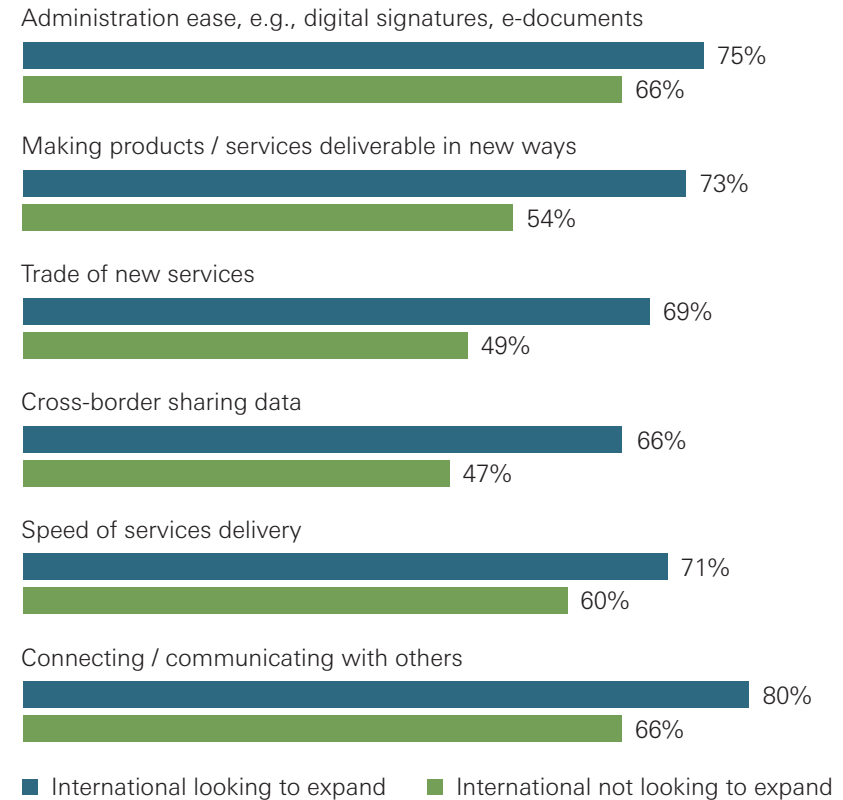
51% of those that have taken action say the impact of digital on their process efficiency has been 'very positive,' compared with 28% amongst those who say they have not taken action. Building clear strategies and action in leveraging digital clearly leads to stronger benefit.

### How digitisation impacts international trade



For those planning further expansion, the biggest area of positive impact is how technology has helped in connecting and communicating with others (80%). It is clear businesses feel digitisation has helped them in ways that go far beyond process administration, enabling them to get products to market in new ways and to deliver services faster.

### Positive impacts of technology



# Rising to the challenge

Trade tariffs have dominated the headlines, but UK businesses are on the front foot in preparing for these and other trade challenges.

## Front foot on tariffs

Rising protectionism, geopolitical tensions and shipping disruption are likely to add to a volatile global trade picture in 2025. However, many UK businesses are anticipating these new challenges, our research suggests.

The trade tensions between the US and China are forcing companies to rethink their strategies and adjust their supply chains. Tariffs are a particular concern for those trading in goods (34%) who would feel a heavier impact, while only 18% of services providers see tariffs as a challenge.

Overall, however, encouragingly few (15%) plan to reduce their trading activity in response. Instead, half of those who see tariffs as a challenge plan to expand into countries with lower trade barriers. This proportion rises to 63% among businesses looking to grow significantly.

41% are responding by assessing the impact on their suppliers and perhaps diversifying their supply chains, with 34% looking to bring more of their supply chain in-house. Raising prices is another obvious response open to businesses: 39% would do this to counter tariffs, which would inevitably pile inflationary pressure onto customers.





### Squaring up to volatility

Businesses still report the subdued outlook for UK economic growth as their biggest hurdle to international expansion: this is cited as a challenge by 34%. The cost of doing business overseas, and the economic climate internationally, are also commonly mentioned as challenges.

However, businesses have become accustomed to a volatile picture in the past few years, and have devised strategies to match. For example, 47% say they have already developed new products, and a further third are considering this.

Increasing flexibility in approach is demonstrated by the 32% of businesses who say they have changed the markets they operate in – up from 23% in 2023. For some, this may reflect the use of third markets to overcome shipping challenges caused by the disruption of trade routes and high freight costs.

There has also been an increase in bringing services back to the UK from overseas – up by 7% to 24%. This chimes with the increase in near-shoring and friend-shoring activity reported in our [‘Riding the storms’](#) section – suggesting that many businesses see value in increasing control and access to their supply base amid global volatility.

However, the reverse trend is happening too, with 33% moving services abroad from the UK – up by 14% on 2023. Cora McLaren, Managing Director, International Subsidiary Banking at HSBC, explains: “Markets such as India are well known for offshore call centres that serve large organisations. But India is now moving up the value chain, alongside other markets, such as the Philippines and Mexico – offering more complex services such as legal and technical support. Highly-skilled workforces and lower cost of labour than in the UK make for attractive outsourcing opportunities.”

Meanwhile, many more businesses are joining forces to share services such as shipping, warehouse space or back-office functions with their peers. 35% of businesses who trade internationally and import have taken action here. While this is a strategy most commonly used by corporates (34%), SMEs are also increasingly looking for the efficiency gain of shared services (30%).



## How businesses are adapting to a shifting trade landscape

“We did a business restructure due to Brexit – shifting focus to certain emerging markets, and moved support functions to India.”

– **Financial services provider**

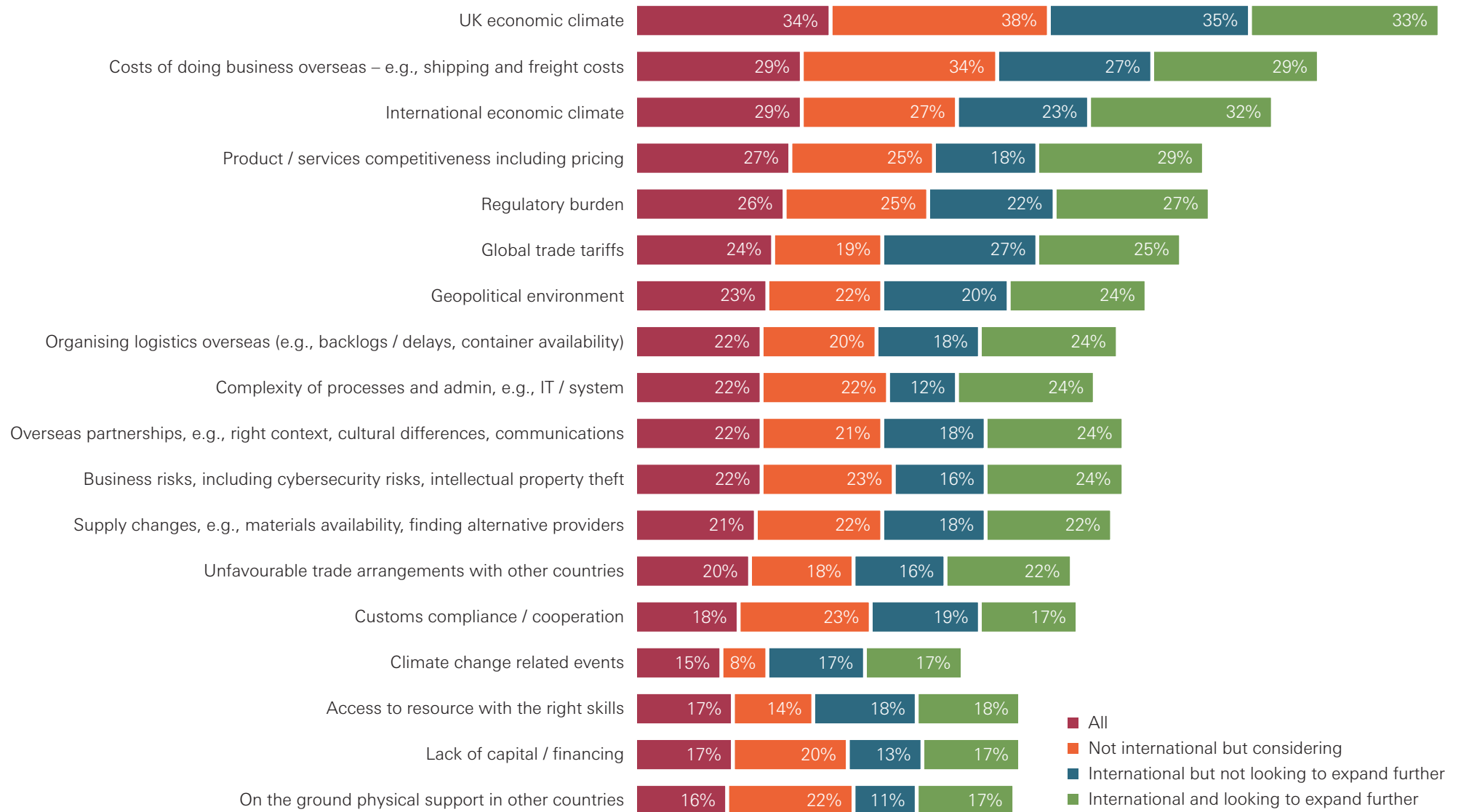
“I shifted some supply chain functions back to the UK, to improve product quality and delivery times.”

– **Construction company**

“We transitioned to local suppliers for key materials, to reduce lead times and costs. For some products, we switched to international suppliers offering better quality or pricing.”

– **IT and telecoms business**

**Challenges for international traders**





# Make the most of free trade agreements



## 1 Follow the FTAs

A free trade agreement (FTA) can turn a promising market into a real contender. The UK has 70 FTAs in force, with more in negotiation. The stability and certainty of costs provided goes beyond transactions, covering labour and product standards and dispute resolution, for instance. Check the current [list of FTAs](#).



## 2 Get across the detail

Get expert support, if needed, to analyse the relevant agreements, which are generally highly detailed. Speak to your HSBC contact or a regional Department for Business and Trade adviser, or seek bespoke legal advice.



## 3 Keep on top of the latest intelligence

Make time to stay across market trends and new developments. Take advantage of resources provided by your trade body. And you can follow news and analysis from HSBC's research team and trade experts to help you make informed decisions.



# Look East as well as West

EU countries and the US are still the reflex option for new and established international traders – but could more businesses benefit from looking east at an earlier stage?

## EU and US top market choices

For most UK businesses, international trade begins in Europe. The EU remains the first port of call for those who have yet to trade abroad, as well as for established traders seeking to expand into further markets. EU countries are a target for 72% of international businesses. However, this has dropped from 84% in 2023, reflecting the challenges that businesses continue to experience in EU trade. At the same time, the US is fast catching up as a prime target market – placing even more focus on the future of UK-US trade arrangements.

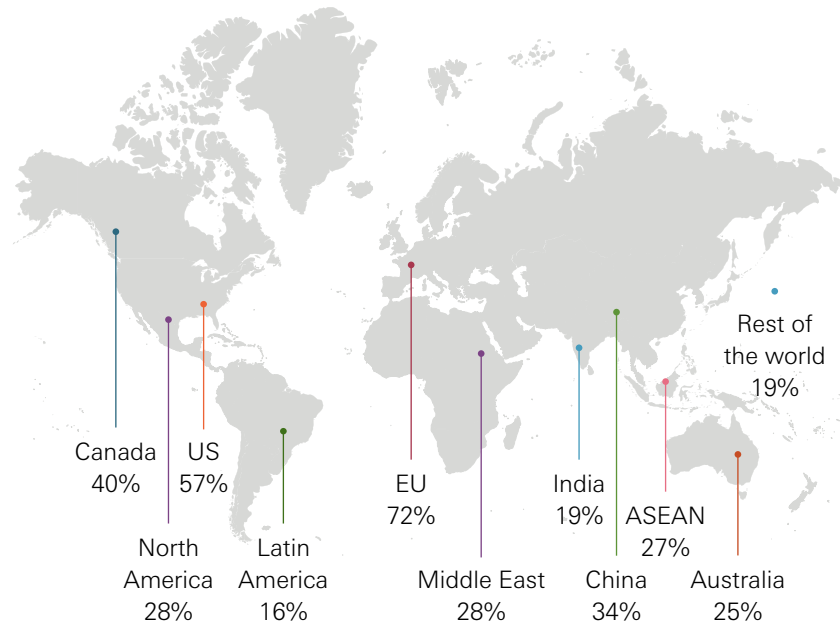
China has increased its prominence: 34% of businesses trading internationally are now active in the territory. The number is higher among those looking to expand their international reach. While China's growth may be falling short of previous highs, its opportunities are clearly still attractive to ambitious businesses.

India is currently among the world's most exciting economies, with growth at 7% in the year to October 2024.<sup>6</sup> It is a long-standing UK trading partner and a significant target among those already trading internationally and seeking to expand (21%), and those operating in at least three or four markets. However, there is huge untapped potential for other businesses to discover Indian opportunities.

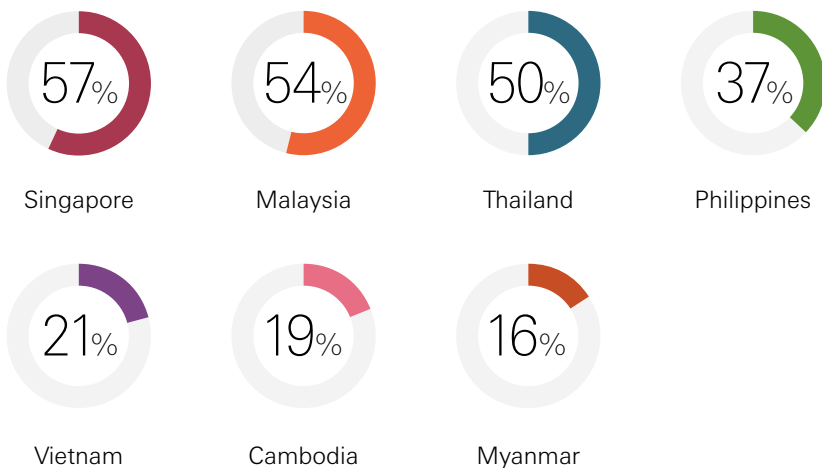
<sup>6</sup> [https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDP\\_RPCH@WEO/OEMDC/ADVEC/WEOORLD](https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDP_RPCH@WEO/OEMDC/ADVEC/WEOORLD)



**Trading markets of UK businesses**



**Favoured markets for businesses considering ASEAN countries**



**Time for a new direction?**

There is a wider pattern that sees businesses follow a well-established route when it comes to global trade. The EU is by far the most popular market for those operating in only one foreign territory (60%). The second choice is the US, with only 14% operating in it as their sole overseas market; however, this rises to 46% for those active in two markets.

Businesses are most likely to break into China and South East Asia (ASEAN) only after establishing themselves in the EU and North America. A third of those operating in three or four markets sell to China, and a fifth to ASEAN countries. Among those active in at least five markets, two-thirds have customers in China and ASEAN. Similarly, only 4% of those operating in two markets trade in India, but this jumps to 45% for those in five or more markets.

Among the ASEAN countries, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand are the most commonly targeted – each offering favourable trading environments, good connectivity and growing consumer demand. In addition, Malaysia and Indonesia both have new governments with highly ambitious growth targets that could provide new opportunities in 2025. However, ASEAN countries are less likely to be considered by first-time international traders, who could benefit from support to access these markets.

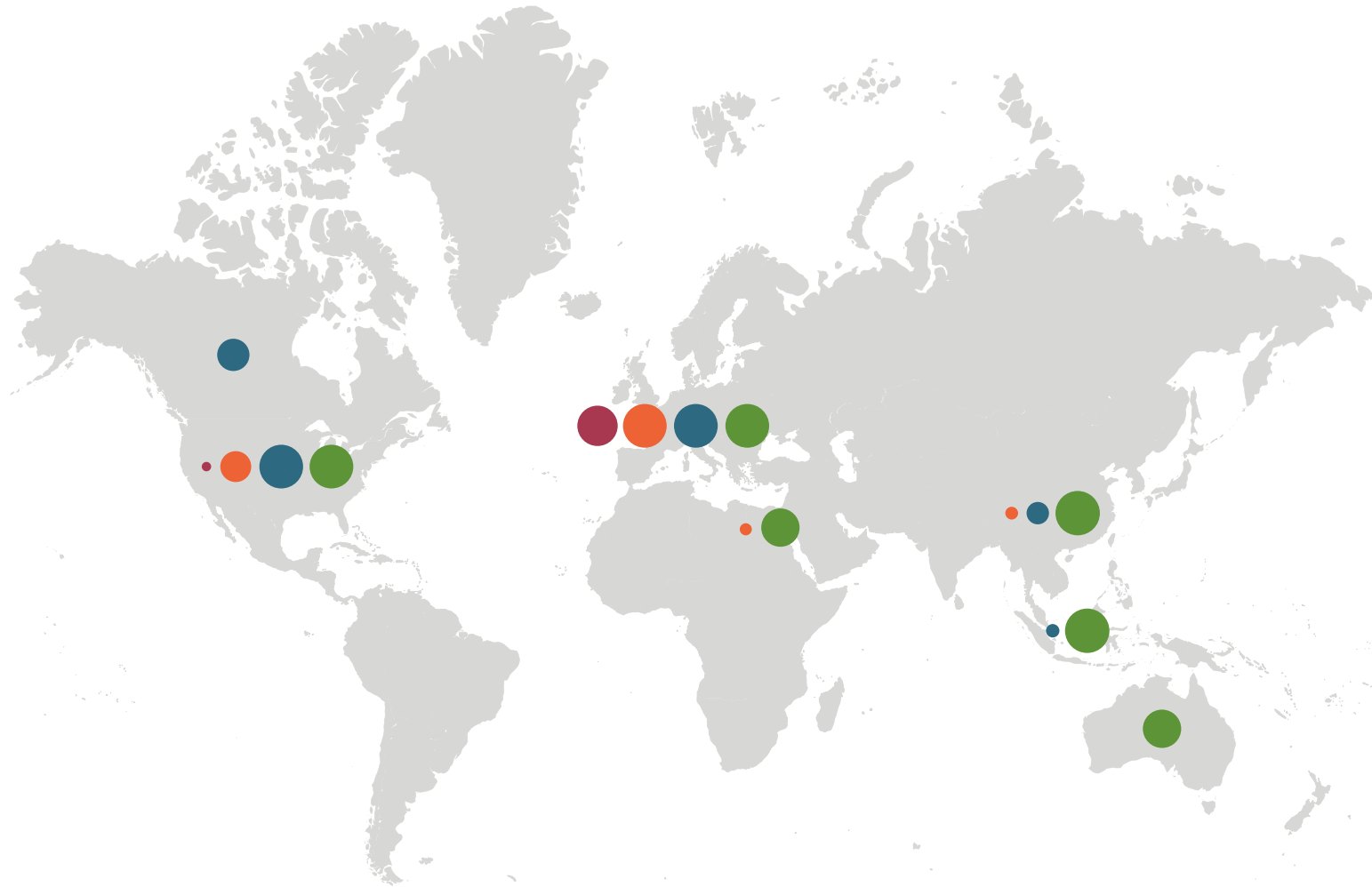
Stephanie Betant, Head of Global Trade Solutions at HSBC UK, sees potential for companies to consider looking east at an earlier stage of their international journeys. “It’s natural for businesses to look to our nearest neighbours, yet the most promising opportunities may sometimes lie elsewhere, especially given weak projected growth in the EU,” she says.

**“ Seeking support from those with a knowledge of less familiar territories can mitigate some of the initially daunting elements of trading in Asia.”**



**Stephanie Betant,**  
Head of Global Trade Solutions,  
HSBC UK

**Businesses' favoured territories, by number of trading markets**



**1 market**

- ◆ Largely **EU (60%)** dependent with **US** a distant second (14%)

**2 markets**

- ◆ Still led by **EU (65%)** but **US** increases significantly up to **46%**
- ◆ **China (19%)** and **MENA (18%)** start to grow in trade

**3-4 markets**

- ◆ **US** joins **EU** as **lead** area of trading partner
- ◆ **Canada** increases sharply to **48%**
- ◆ **China** increases to **a third**
- ◆ South East Asia (**ASEAN**) increases (**1 in 5 trading**)

**5 markets or more**

- ◆ **Two thirds** now trading with **China** and **ASEAN**
- ◆ **57%** with **MENA** and **Australia**



# Seek out Eastern opportunities



## 1 Scope out the potential

The fast-growing ASEAN market is predicted to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2030. Understand the [opportunities in individual markets](#) and the scope of the [UK-ASEAN relationship](#), and get detailed insights on ASEAN countries and other Asian markets.



## 2 Find the right partners

Local partners are critical to help you stake a place in unfamiliar markets. With its extensive network in the region, HSBC is well placed to help you make the right connections.



## 3 Consult the experts

The [UK-ASEAN Business Council](#) promotes two-way trade and investment between the UK and the ASEAN countries. Get involved in their events and networking opportunities. The Department for Business and Trade provides practical advice and support on trading with the ASEAN markets.



## 4 Join a trade visit

Organised in-person trips can demystify new markets while opening up new contacts. In 2024, for example, HSBC brought a group of clients to China, where they had the chance to pitch directly to businesses and meet potential new suppliers.

## Maximising the benefits of FTAs

More businesses are positioning themselves to take advantage of the UK's free trade agreements (FTAs), our survey reveals. Almost one in three businesses are now doing so – a 10% rise on 2023 – while 33% are actively considering this, up by 12%.

Keeping abreast of free trade deals and pivoting to relevant markets can deliver a valuable reduction in trade costs, as well as an alternative to the risk of tariffs. For example, the UK recently joined the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Pact (CPTPP), whose 12 member nations now account for £11 trillion of trade. The CPTPP includes countries such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and some of the ASEAN nations, all of which have a big expansion focus among our respondents.



# Achieving lift-off

Hundreds of thousands of would-be international traders need help to turn ideas into action.

## Stuck at the thinking stage

The urgency of encouraging more businesses to grow internationally is emphasised by the current slow pace of the UK economy and the benefits enjoyed by those with an element of overseas trade. Around 9% of our respondents are domestic-only but considering international trade, which would equate to 450,000 potential new traders. Companies specialising in IT (16%) and health (14%) are particularly keen, reflecting their status as high-growth sectors with strong UK specialisms and high global demand.

However, the vast majority of this cohort are in the very early phases of their international journeys, with only 2% having made practical progress in starting to trade. Inevitably lacking the experience and established networks that international traders accumulate, these companies need the right guidance to launch them beyond UK borders.

For example, domestic-only businesses are much less likely to say they have used industry events and webinars to support their global research – only 23% have done so, compared to 35% of international businesses with further expansion plans.

## Overseas trading or expansion plans

International and looking to expand further



Domestic but considering international



- It's an aspiration at this point
- Started doing some investigations on this
- In discussions about possibilities
- In the process of starting to trade



### Businesses count on banks

Our findings show that those trading internationally are often making use of a number of advice sources, from colleagues and peers to trade bodies and the Department for Business and Trade.

In addition, many more businesses are now turning to their banks as a source of support for international trade – up by 13% vs 2023 to 35%. While corporate businesses are most likely to seek support from their banking partners, there has also been a significant rise in SMEs doing so (33%, up by 12%). There has also been a sharp overall increase in satisfaction with banks’ support for international needs, up from 46% to 62%.

“Banks provide essential tools for trading overseas and managing the financial risks – but good banks are doing much more for their clients,” says Tom Wood, Head of SME Business Banking at HSBC UK. “It’s great news that more businesses are trusting their bank to support them with guidance on entering new markets, and introductions to potential partners and clients there.”

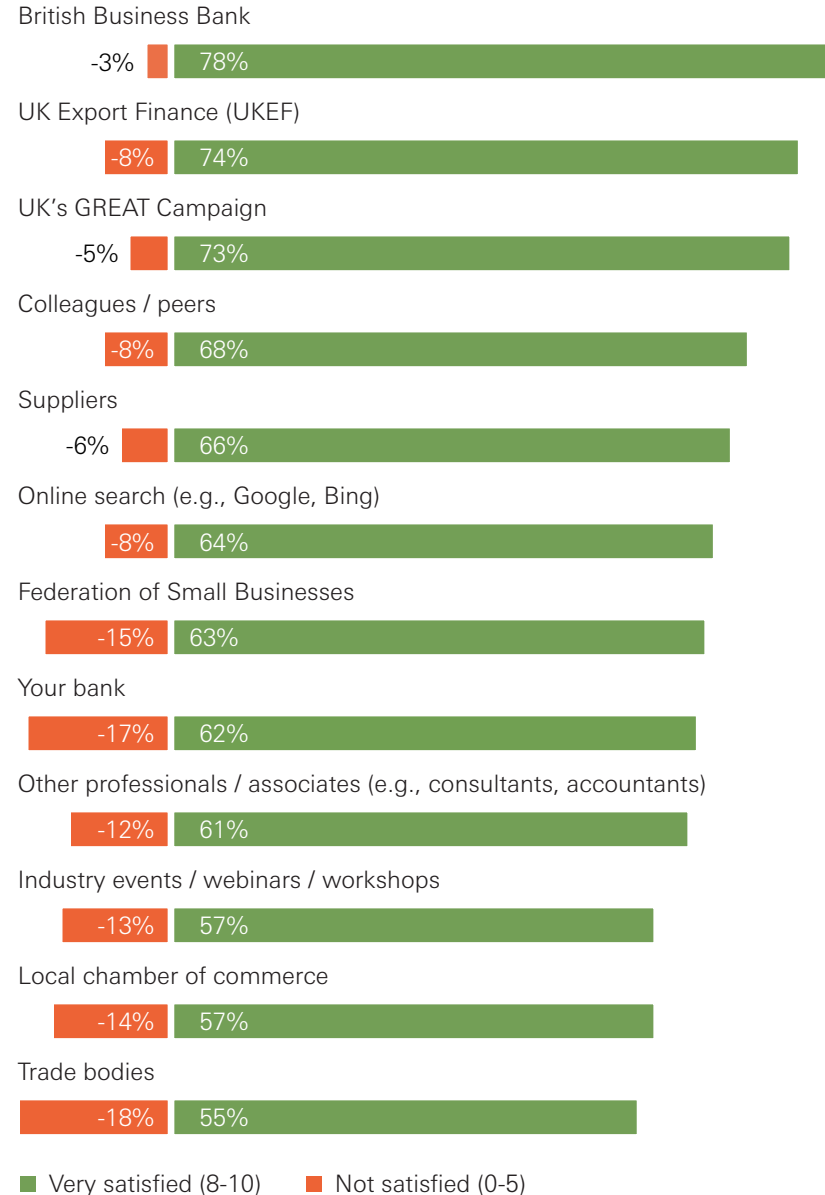
### Sources of support

Encouragingly, there is strong satisfaction with government-backed areas of support, showing how embedded they are becoming in supporting UK businesses.

There are big regional disparities, however. For example, London-based international businesses were more inclined to say they have used government-backed support such as the British Business Bank (30%), UK Export Finance (32%) and Department for Business and Trade (16%), with Southern businesses much lower at 10%, 10% and 5% respectively.

SMEs find it harder than bigger businesses to derive benefits from commonly-used resources. They are much less inclined to be satisfied with the internet as a source of support: 52% rate themselves very satisfied, compared to 76% of corporates. SMEs are also less likely to find industry events, webinars and workshops satisfactory (46%, versus 66% for corporates). A similar difference exists for trade bodies, suggesting more needs to be done to make these relevant to smaller businesses.

### Levels of satisfaction with support







# First steps to international trade



## 1 Think it through

Start by clarifying what you want to achieve through global trade: is it a route to more customers, a more efficient source of materials, or perhaps a way to mitigate seasonality of your domestic business? And how would that work – through an in-country presence, or third-party logistics and distributors?



## 2 Research deeply

Identify target markets with high growth potential for your services. Consider the territories with the best fit, considering market size, language, time zones, and how you would need to go about localising your products and servicing international clients. Use trade expos and local country guides to get a feel for local rules and culture.



## 3 Don't go it alone

Build new relationships and make full use of your existing contacts. Reach out to professional advisers such as your bank to explore questions around financing and currency support, but also to seek potentially valuable connections through their networks. Use free information and training from the Department for Business and Trade to develop your plan and search live opportunities.

# Your global growth partner

Looking to expand internationally? Specialist support, insight and connections that go far beyond off-the-shelf banking products are what set us apart as your global trading partner.

A small business receives an unexpected sales query from Malaysia. A multinational ponders the acquisition of its first US business. A retailer needs to find new manufacturers in Bangladesh.

These may be very different businesses in size and resources, yet HSBC UK was able to find solutions for all three – just as it helps ambitious businesses at every scale to seize opportunities in new markets.

Whether you're a newcomer to international trade or a seasoned overseas trader, you can make use of our secure solutions and specialist market knowledge to trade with confidence. Join forces with us and benefit from the tailored financial products and assistance you need to optimise your cashflow, manage your working capital, make international payments efficiently, mitigate risk and fund your trading activity.

“**It's more important than ever for companies to have a trusted partner who can provide seamless international trade flow and visibility of their funds.**”



**Brandon Roberts,**  
Head of Europe, Digital and Transaction  
Corporate Sales & UK Regional Team,  
HSBC UK



### Insight and connectivity

Successful international growth today requires an understanding of the bigger picture, alongside knowledge of the minutiae of target markets: ever-changing tariffs, regulatory environments and tax regimes, local customer profiles and business practices. With on-the-ground specialist teams in more than 50 markets, HSBC is well placed to help you navigate these local details.

We put our expertise at your disposal, through continuous research, analysis and reporting. Our customer insights keep you up to date with the key macroeconomic trends, currency movements and geopolitical developments affecting trade corridors.

In addition, we can provide valuable connections that clients may not expect from their bank. With a global network of 1.3 million business clients, we may well be able to put you in touch with potential customers, suppliers, advisers or partners in your next market.

### Certainty and security

As this year's research findings demonstrate, continuing geopolitical turmoil remains a natural source of concern for UK businesses with international activities or ambitions.

At HSBC UK we have products and solutions to help alleviate these concerns. The ability to insure an invoice, for instance, can remove the anxiety from a sale to an unfamiliar customer overseas. Our other solutions, including letters of credit and import and export loans, could help you capitalise on new sales opportunities and supply options.

Use our working capital and inventory finance services to mitigate the risk of new customers or international payment terms, and to get paid faster (or support your supply chain by paying them faster). Our solutions help you cut costs and manage currency volatility, while strengthening your strategic relationships with partners.

“**Corporates have become highly resilient amid the global instability of the past few years, and we have unique insight on how to help them navigate those challenges.**”



**Stephanie Betant,**  
Head of Global Trade Solutions,  
HSBC UK

### Speed and seamlessness

Foreign currency exchange is another source of uncertainty for some traders, but it shouldn't be a daunting prospect. HSBC UK business clients can now make international payments as swiftly and simply as domestic ones.

Our HSBC Global Wallet product is an award-winning multi-currency account for flexible, international transacting alongside your everyday banking. HSBC Global Wallet is like having a bank account in other countries and territories, allowing you to pay and get paid 'like a local.' You can hold, manage, receive and pay in a range of currencies using local account information in the destination or originating currency and country. Like our other solutions, HSBC Global Wallet is available to support your growth, regardless of your business size and the current value of your international transactions.

Critically, you can see and approve the FX rate before you transact. Consistent international payment fees remove the worry of unknown costs such as those imposed by corresponding banks.

Our hedging solutions help protect against the risk of exchange rate movements that could otherwise weaken your revenues or inflate your cost base. Operating across all time zones, HSBC provides local coverage through specialist teams, who can execute on your behalf or help structure bespoke solutions. You can also execute independently on HSBC Evolve, our digital execution platform.



### **Simplicity and flexibility**

At a time of global volatility and uncertainty, clarity about the location of your funds at any time has never been more important. Making use of our digital solutions helps eliminate long lead times and enhance security, as well as building data for future analysis and decision-making.

HSBCnet is our flexible banking platform – a dashboard offering total control of your cashflow. It enables you to track every deposit in real time and manage your liquidity in every market, without the need to open foreign accounts in each territory. You can create customised reports to get the precise data you need. And as a single online platform accessed through your own browser, it couldn't be simpler to use.

AI-powered cashflow forecasting enables you to plan ahead, alerting you to pinch points where more cashflow might be required, or highlighting surpluses so you can use them in the most efficient way.

For smaller businesses, our Digital Business Internet Banking platform offers the same ease and functionality as HSBCnet.

**“ From start-ups to large corporates – our products and network are equipped and ready to enable international growth for every customer, of any size.”**



**Tom Wood,**  
Head of SME Business Banking,  
HSBC UK

We facilitated more than \$850 billion of trade across the globe in 2023. Whether you're internationally trading goods or looking to take advantage of fast-growing demand for UK services, trust us to help you target the most promising territories, source the right partners and streamline your day-to-day trade.

Whether you are looking to extend the reach of your international activities, or testing the water for the first time, talk to us about the support we could offer to help you seize global opportunity.



Whether you're expanding into new markets or planning to trade overseas for the first time, we can support your global growth journey with a range of trade, payments and FX solutions.

UNLOCK GLOBAL GROWTH

