

No, Guardian/Observer, trade with Japan hasn't 'slumped' since Truss deal

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This report has been co-published with our affiliated organisation, Brexit Facts4EU.Org. We are most grateful for their original research into the raw data which backs what follows.

Goods exports have risen in the two years since the deal was signed

Their lead story today paints a misleading picture to attack Brexit

This morning, the front page of the Observer (Sunday's version of the Guardian) leads with the big headline: "*Brexit blow: exports to Japan slump after 'landmark' free trade deal*". We respond with the up-to-date trade figures from the ONS, which tell a different story.

[The Rebuttal Unit of CIBUK.Org](#) and Brexit Facts4EU.Org has been gearing up all year to take on the well-funded Rejoin organisations and to counter the propaganda.

This covers the two-year period since Liz Truss signed the trade deal with Japan in October 2020.

Summary

UK goods exports to Japan have increased in the last two years, in £'s millions



- Oct 2019 – Sep 2020 : £5,967
- Oct 2020 – Sep 2021 : £6,220
- Oct 2021 – Sep 2022 : £6,248

[Source: Office for National Statistics, accessed 27 Nov 2022.]

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Note: In the few hours available in the early hours of this Sunday morning since the Observer's article appeared we have not been able to look at services, but in any case the export figures for services lag behind those for goods by many months and will not yet be available.

A failure to understand international trade

Anyone with experience in international trade (actually doing

it, rather than producing academic reports about it) will tell you that it takes time to expand into new markets.

Firstly the directors of a company must decide there is a potential market for their goods or services. Then they have to review the new trade deal and tariff and quota arrangements, possibly seek support from the Dept for International Trade, maybe participate in a trade fair organised by that department, and decide to invest time, effort and money into an export sales operation.

When it comes to Japan, there is the language factor to consider. Whilst many Japanese speak some English it is not a naturally easy language for them. If you want to make an impact it's best to have a Japanese language version of at least some of your webpages. When it comes to services – something in which the UK excels – this is especially true.

None of this happens overnight. Then there are the logistics to consider for goods exports – the transportation, shipping, and delivery of goods and employing a Japanese import agent, for example.

The Observer/Guardian goes on to attack the repeal of EU laws

Following their theme of “Brexit bad, Rejoin good”, in their article the Observer goes on to criticise the Government's plans to repeal all the anti-competitive EU laws which still remain on the UK's statute book, more than six years after the British people voted to leave the European Union.

On Prime Minister Rishi Sunak they wrote:-



“However, he is now facing calls from officials to drop plans that would automatically tear up EU-derived laws by the end of next year.

“The Observer has been told that the ‘Brexit freedoms’ bill is putting such a burden on civil servants that even working through weekends has not left them enough time to examine all the implications of the plan.

“Officials are having to comb through current laws because of a ‘sunset clause’ in the retained EU law bill, under which any law not “reviewed or revoked” by the end of 2023 will be removed.”

– The Observer, 27 Nov 2022

Some readers might observe that civil servants are merely being asked to do their job, which is to implement government policy.

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