



# Microsoft Ireland overtakes Google as the country's top exporter

Colm Kelpie

MICROSOFT Ireland has been named as the largest exporting company on the island, pushing Google off the top spot, a report has found.

The value of exports from the top five exporting companies surged almost a quarter compared with the same period last year.

Microsoft's export turnover surged 21pc from €15bn in 2014 to €18.2bn in 2015, according to the latest top 250 Exporters in Ireland and

Northern Ireland report from the [Irish Exporters Association](#), in association with specialist bank Investec.

Jobs Minister Richard Bruton praised the contribution of exporters throughout the crisis.

"Our exporting companies, both Irish and multinational, have delivered extraordinary achievements over the past four years, with year after year of record export results, and record levels of job-creation," Minister Bruton said.

The data is produced by Investec using its manufacturing and services Purchasing Managers Indices reports, which shows a generally strong performance across both sectors.

The manufacturing PMI for August was slightly more downbeat than what had been the norm, with manufacturing expanding at its weakest level in a year and a half, with output, new orders and employment rising at a softer rate.

Microsoft was followed by Google Ireland with export turnover of €17bn, Medtronic Ireland with export turnover of €16.7bn, Johnson & Johnson

in Ireland with an exporter turnover of around €10.5bn and industrial company Ingersoll Rand, exporting about €9.8bn worth.

In Northern Ireland, the top exporting companies include Newry-based Glen Electric, with an export turnover of £845m; Caterpillar (NI) at £795m; and Craigavon-based Moy Park, Northern Ireland's biggest private sector employer, with an export turnover of £750m.

Simon McKeever, Irish Exporters' Association chief executive, said exporters have and continue to play a significant role in the recovery.

However, he cautioned the Government against any moves in the Budget that could hinder the sector.

"While there have been some favourable developments such as quantitative easing in our largest single trading partner, the UK, and a continued strong dollar, that have helped make Irish exports more competitive, the success has also been built on strong foundations of quality, innovation and an underlying cost competitive proposition,"

Mr McKeever said. "However, a weak sterling and dollar will not remain a constant and we need to grow exports in more diverse markets in tandem with ensuring our competitiveness is not comprised by pressures on wages and other input costs in what remains a crucial stage in Ireland's economic recovery," he added.

"Any measures that are taken in the forthcoming pre-election budget that weaken our national competitiveness will not be received well by the exporting businesses in this country."

James O'Connor, managing director of Microsoft EMEA Operations Centre, said the tech giant has been in Ireland for three decades and has 1,200 people working in a range of areas including R&D, engineering, finance, legal services, sales and marketing.

"Over that time we have contributed significantly to the economy in Ireland and, through our citizenship activities have helped to increase access to personal computing across all parts of society," Mr O'Connor said.



# IRELAND'S LEADING EXPORTERS

New figures from the Irish Exporters' Association show that Microsoft Ireland has overtaken Google as the country's largest exporter, with its export turnover increasing by 21% to €18.2bn.

## TOP 10 OVERALL EXPORTERS (BY VALUE OF EXPORTS)



## FOOD AND DRINK SECTOR (TOP FIVE)

- 1 Kerry Group ..... €5.2bn
- 2 Total Produce ..... €3bn
- 3 ABP Food Group ..... €2.4bn
- 4 Ornuia (Irish Dairy Board) ..... €2.3bn
- 5 Glanbia plc ..... €2bn



## LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR (TOP FIVE)

- 1 Medtronic Ireland ..... €16.7bn
- 2 Johnson & Johnson Ireland ..... €10.5bn
- 3 Actavis (Warner Chilcott plc & Allergan plc) ... €9.5bn
- 4 Pfizer Global ..... €7bn
- 5 Kerry Group plc ..... €5.2bn



## IFSC COMPANIES (TOP FIVE)

- 1 Hannover Re (Ireland) ..... €1.9bn
- 2 AAReal Bank AG ..... €1.65bn
- 3 Citibank Europe plc ..... €1.58bn
- 4 Depfa Bank ..... €1.25bn
- 5 Canada Life International ..... €1.2bn



## NORTHERN IRELAND (TOP FIVE)

- 1 Glen Electric ..... £845m
- 2 Caterpillar (NI) Ltd ..... £795m
- 3 Moy Park Ltd ..... £750m
- 4 Dunbia ..... £650m
- 5 Bombardier Aerospace Europe ..... £545m



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- Richard Bruton, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (below)



Source: Top 250 Exporters in Ireland and Northern Ireland report by Irish Exporters Association (IEA), in association with Investec