

FOUR COMPANIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND WIN PLACES ON LEAGUE TABLE OF FASTEST-GROWING INTERNATIONAL SALES STARS

Published this weekend, the 11th annual **Sunday Times HSBC International Track 200** league table ranks Britain's mid-market private companies with the fastest-growing international sales.

The four companies headquartered in **Northern Ireland** are **all new entrants to the league table**. These stars have grown their international sales by an average of 46% a year over the last two years to a total of £116m. Together they employ more than 700 people.

Northern Ireland's top-ranked company is County Antrim-based car and farm equipment dealer **Wilson's of Rathkenny**, which recorded international sales of £1.6m in 2018, on total sales of £31.1m. This company was founded in 1964 to sell farm machinery, and has since expanded into car dealerships for Nissan, Kia, Seat and Vauxhall. Agricultural vehicles, such as forklift tractors and lawnmowers, are the main driver of international sales, which grew at an average annual growth rate of 69% over its last two years.

County Antrim is also home to **Uform** (No.180), a kitchen door supplier based in County Antrim. Founder Eamon Donnelly began selling kitchens when he was 17 before setting up the company in 1993. International sales reached £10.6m in 2019, growing at an average of 33% per year over two years, on total sales of £34.9m.

County Down-based **MJM Marine** provides specialist joinery and fit-out services to customers including Norwegian Cruise Lines, Royal Caribbean and Carnival Corporation. The company's international sales grew an average of 36% per year over two years. It was founded in 1983 by chairman Brian McConville, and in 2018 completed its first project in China and also opened an office in Poland. McConville also owns **Mivan**, a joinery firm based in County Antrim, which will be working on the REV Ocean research superyacht this year.

The companies in Northern Ireland appear alongside well-known British brands based across the UK including **Mountain Warehouse**, which opened 21 shops abroad last year; **BrewDog**, which was valued at £1bn in 2017 and now has nearly 100 bars worldwide; and **Charlotte Tilbury Beauty**, the London-based cosmetics and skincare brand, which ships to 76 markets.

International Track 200 star alumni include **Skyscanner**, **Specsavers**, **Lush** and **Endava** – which first featured on the league table in 2012 with exports of £3.6m, floated on the NYSE in 2018 and is now valued at more than \$2.5bn.

The league table programme is sponsored by **HSBC**, **DHL Express** and **Oracle NetSuite**, and compiled by **Fast Track**, the Oxford-based research and networking events firm.

Amanda Murphy, Head of Commercial Banking, HSBC UK, commented:

"The Sunday Times International Track 200 shows the strength, ambition and resilience of companies across the UK and we are delighted to be sponsoring again this year. At HSBC UK, we take great pride in recognising the contribution these businesses are making to driving growth across the UK. The four new entrants in Northern Ireland are making a significant contribution to employment, driving prosperity and growth and are the sort of businesses we are pleased to support every day."

Private companies in Northern Ireland with the fastest-growing international sales – ordered by rank

Rank	Company Activity	HQ location	Average annual int'l sales growth over 2 yrs	Int'l sales (£m)	Total sales (£m)	Staff	Year end	Comment
50	Wilson's of Rathkenny Car and farm equipment dealer	Ballymena	69%	1.6	31.1	83	Dec 18	Supplies the Irish Republic with agricultural vehicles such as forklift tractors and mowers
108	Mivan Joinery and fit-out	Antrim	46%	11.6	29.0	170	Dec 18	Refits cruise ships worldwide for customers including Tui and Royal Caribbean
155	MJM Marine Specialist joiner	Newry	36%	92.5	97.7	272	Dec 18	Led a multimillion dollar refurbishment project for the Norwegian Joy cruise ship
180	Uform Kitchen door supplier	Toomebridge	33%	10.6	34.9	182	Apr 19	Supplies more than 1,000 kitchens a week to retailers in the UK and Ireland

The national picture

The average international sales growth for the 200 companies was 64% a year, to a total of £10.3bn on combined total sales of £22.1bn. Together they employ 124,000 staff, having added 38,000 employees to their workforce over the period.

London is the most popular location for company headquarters with 79, followed by the southeast (36). There are 19 companies in the northwest, and 18 in the northeast (including Yorkshire). Of the remainder, 15 companies are based in the Midlands, 11 in the southwest, eight in Scotland, seven in the East of England, four in Northern Ireland and three in Wales.

The full league table is published as a ten-page supplement with the business section of The Sunday Times on 16 February, both in print and in the tablet edition, and on www.fasttrack.co.uk.

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Notes for editors

Fast Track has published league tables of the UK's top-performing private companies with **The Sunday Times** for the past 23 years. The company was founded and is run by Dr Hamish Stevenson, who also holds an associate fellowship at Green Templeton College, Oxford University.

League table criteria

Companies had to be registered in the UK and be independent, unquoted and ultimate holding companies. They are ranked according to the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of their international sales over their latest two financial years.

Total sales had to be between £25m and £1bn, and international sales at least £1m in the latest financial year. Companies with sales of less than £25m are covered by our sister SME Export Track 100 league table.

The research was carried out by Fast Track principally between August and December 2019. Data on international sales can be limited. Companies filing abridged accounts are not required to disclose any geographical breakdown of sales, while firms that file full accounts can choose to not disclose a geographical breakdown of sales if it is prejudicial to their interests.

See website for full qualification criteria: www.fasttrack.co.uk

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