

# Flanders Announces More Action to Support UK Companies to Access the EU

*As new poll shows that 95% of UK business decision makers surveyed already find Flanders support services helpful*

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*Dirk Verlee, Trade and Investment Counsellor at Flanders Investment & Trade*

[Trade](#) (FIT) has launched [Startup.Flanders](#), a platform that provides targeted services for investors in the region. It positions Flanders (the northern region of Belgium) as an innovative hub for international start-ups. The announcement coincides with the results of a [poll](#), published today, that found that 95% of UK business decision makers surveyed using FIT (trade and promotion agency for Flanders) report that they already find support services in Flanders ‘helpful’<sup>1</sup>, with more than half (52%) finding them ‘very helpful’.

Startup.Flanders is Flanders’ central platform for

information about service packages, research and data (a ‘one stop shop’). It guides users to numerous programmes, initiatives, events, tools and subsidies for Flanders-based and international start-ups. The team and community can:

- Set you up with the right people and ecosystem players to speed up your ambitions.
- Advise you how to take your next step and scale your start-up internationally.
- Provide services and partners that help spur your growth, technological skill and success in Flanders and around the globe.

Research carried out among more than a thousand business decision makers in the UK in May 2023 by Censuswide<sup>2</sup>, found that just over half (52%) had used<sup>3</sup> FIT’s services and of those 95% reported that they found the service ‘helpful’<sup>1</sup> and more than half (52%) described the service as ‘very helpful’.

The announcement of Startup.Flanders. closely follows on from the launch of Gateway2Britain last month, an innovative open logistics platform that will bring visibility and transparency for trading with Flanders into one place. Gateway2Britain aims to make trade between Flanders and Britain as frictionless as possible.

A report, "Foreign control in the Flemish Economy in 2023", also published last month by the Flanders Department of Economy, Science & Innovation, reported that there were 362 UK companies already based in Belgium and 6,554 foreign owned companies in total in Flanders. This foreign investment is responsible for the creation of more than EUR 57.7 billion in gross added value.

Dirk Verlee, Trade and Investment Counsellor at Flanders Investment & Trade, based at the Belgian Embassy in London, explained the background to the latest initiative: "The poll shows that we've successfully developed a reputation with British companies for making their lives easier. I'm very proud of my team for this achievement. However, we are never complacent; our aim is to develop the very best start-up ecosystem, particularly for tech companies. We want to attract the most innovative British start-ups. We believe that Startup.Flanders and Gateway2Britain, together with all the geographical, transport, tax and cultural advantages of the region, make Flanders highly attractive for British companies wishing to establish a presence in the EU."

If you are a startup based in the UK and are interested in exploring opportunities in Flanders you can contact one of FIT team who will be happy to answer any questions you have.

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