

Export Week drives importance of localisation home

After a jam-packed programme with many high profile speakers sharing real insights and advice to existing and emerging exporters, [Export Week](#) in Durban, sponsored by TIKZN, has come to an end.



Lester Bouah

Trade Invest KwaZulu-Natal's executive manager for export development and promotion, Lester Bouah, has coined it a success. "This year's Export Week was exceptionally well attended with participant figures on each day surpassing our expectations in some cases by 50%. There were many highlights from the week, including discussions on the impact of BREXIT on KZN based exports and investment and insights on BRICS with a particular focus on China and India. Healthy panel discussions on Day Two of Export Week also produced real case studies and discussions around emerging markets in Africa with representatives from the countries of Zimbabwe, Ghana, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia contributing.

Localisation key to growth

But, in particular, one big take away from the full week of discussions was the need for our province to really encourage localisation and industrialisation. More manufacturers based in KZN need to investigate the opportunity of not only capitalising on manufacturing raw materials for products but, in addition, to see how they can be more involved from start to finish in the whole supply chain – right down to the assembly of products before they are exported,"

stated Bouah.

Bouah and many of the experienced speakers believe that the key to the growth of the region and country's economy lies in companies taking a more aggressive interest in localisation. They believe it will not only bolster revenue generation for locally based companies who take advantage of this opportunity, but it will also have a direct impact on job creation.

"Exporting is crucial to the country's economic health. Yet, only a small percentage of potential exporters take advantage of these opportunities. Since the Export Week started five years ago we have seen substantial growth in the interest of emerging exporters who have attended the week. This year's turnout has been the best by far, which gives us hope that more people are starting to change the way they think about business and the opportunities presented to them through exporting. It is critical for more local businesses to think globally," further explained Bouah.

Export week KZN is an annual programme of Trade and Investment KwaZulu-Natal that was developed to recognise, promote and assist with the growing of KwaZulu-Natal's export businesses and industries. The 2016 Export Week that was co-located with [African Ports Evolution](#) and [African Rail Evolution](#), also celebrated companies and individuals who have excelled in their fields with awards being presented to winners at the inaugural Women in Transport Awards and the sixteenth KZN Exporter of the Year Awards held at the Durban International Convention Centre.