

NO STONE UNTURNED

Chamber of Commerce International Comparisons

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Foreword

In order to compare the support systems available to the private sector in competing economies I asked officials, supporting my review, to survey practice overseas. My enquiries coincided with similar work by the Minister of State for Trade and Investment, Lord Green.

The findings from UK Trade and Investment are too detailed to include in my report¹ but I believe the evidence from our research should be available. One observation. It is interesting how little awareness exists in this country of just what our companies are up against. One caveat. In the time and with the resource available to me I do not claim – and nor would officials – that this is a comprehensive or detailed survey of the full picture. It is an interesting and revealing snapshot.

I hope this paper helps stimulate an informed debate about how best to use chambers of commerce to create a strong and sustainable business support environment, drawing on international best practice.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to show my personal gratitude to all those who have contributed to this piece of work.



The Rt Hon the Lord Heseltine of Thenford CH

¹ No Stone Unturned; In Pursuit of Growth,
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/docs/n/12-1213-no-stone-untuned-in-pursuit-of-growth>, 2012

Introduction

- 1.** Chambers of commerce are present in one form or another in all advanced economies. This paper identifies and explores the different chamber models that exist in competitor countries, and compares this against the capability of chambers here in the UK. The content has been compiled through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research, both primary and secondary, and includes information gathered on visits to France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden.
- 2.** What has been striking from the research is the collective history of the chambers of commerce as business-led institutions set up by businesses to represent and support each other. They have been remarkably resilient organisations which have stood the test of time, despite the challenging conditions they have faced both past and present. They have, particularly overseas, an incredibly strong brand. There will be few businesses that do not know the name at the very least. For this reason alone, it makes great sense that, if we want to internationalise the economy, we should orientate business support around the chambers and build upon the value of their brand in the global arena.
- 3.** What also emerges is that, in other countries, the private sector and government have co-invested in these institutions over a long period of time. We are behind in this regard having chosen a more laissez-faire approach. As a result, businesses in these countries seem to be at an advantage in having a simpler and better understood routes to business support and overseas export markets. In the UK, by contrast, we have a plethora of business support organisations. Many of these organisations provide high quality services but overall, we lack the cohesiveness of business support provided in other countries.
- 4.** All countries have their own historic and cultural traditions. Although we should never assume that a model which works elsewhere can be successfully transplanted here, there is clearly much we can learn from. The challenge is to choose the best elements and adapt them to meet our own needs and traditions. We are not alone in reviewing the role of chambers of commerce, both France and the Netherlands have recently reformed their chambers of commerce, in both cases strengthening and streamlining chamber functions.

Section One – Background

Origin of chambers²

5. Chambers of commerce are historic, grassroots institutions set up to represent the voice of business. Originating in Marseilles, France, in 1599 to regulate the proceeds of tax on cargo processed at the port, they were officially recognised across France in 1650. It was Napoleon who founded the public law model for chambers seen today in France, Germany and the Netherlands. Other public models also emerged across Africa, the Middle East, and Asia³, adapting for the most part from European models.
6. The first organisations with the formal title chamber of commerce in the English speaking world were in Jersey in 1767, shortly followed by New York in 1768. These stemmed from pressures at the time for business institutions to help resolve trade issues such as debt, disputes and insurance and happened alongside the wider formalisation of global market and banking systems.
7. English speaking chambers continued to develop and evolve but not under a single template like France and Germany, rather through evolution responding to local conditions. The 1900s saw rapid change primarily in response to global conditions (economic and conflict). It was in this period that chambers began to develop into the types of organisations we see today in the UK.
8. The world had few working international structures in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. There was no system of rules to govern trade, investment, finance or commercial relations. In 1919, a handful of entrepreneurs decided to create an organisation that would represent business everywhere. They founded the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) calling themselves ‘the merchants of peace’. It forged international rules, mechanisms and standards that are used today throughout a vastly more complex world than that of 1919. Today the ICC network covers 120 countries, representing 40 million businesses, and holds the highest level of consultative status with the United Nations. It is a classic example of the private sector filling gaps without waiting for governments.
9. The status and position of UK chambers changed fundamentally with the creation of the welfare state after World War Two. This development undermined the status and role of chambers as the state significantly increased the size and remit of its institutions, taking

2 For a full history of UK chambers of commerce from origins to present day see R. Bennett, ‘*Local Business Voice*’, Oxford Press, 2012

3 More details can be found in Fedotov, I (2007) *Organizational and Legal Models of Chambers*, Center for International Private Enterprise Business Associations Study

on functions that would otherwise fall to the private sector and the chambers. This relationship can still be seen today in the UK, with a centralised government dominating the funding of business services and, as a result, a tendency to overpower the ability of business institutions to coordinate and respond to challenges.

Unique characteristics of UK chambers of commerce

- They have an unrivalled international status. They have foreign counterparts and are supported by an International Chambers of Commerce that helps broker international trade agreements and arbitrates disputes across national boundaries. Importantly, UK business will often be dealing with chamber members in other nations so having this commonality helps break down cultural barriers.
- They are locally based. The services that they provide are aimed at businesses in the locality that they service. Chambers are multi-sector organisations that accept members without sector restrictions. They are therefore different to the sector-based organisations and the national business lobby groups.
- Chambers offer a recognised vehicle for business engagement. They are independent, business-led and democratically elected entities with synergies to Local Enterprise Partnerships, local, national and international government.
- Chambers are remarkably resilient organisations that have stood the test of time. They have existing infrastructure and service delivery capabilities all of which can be built on. In the UK, UK Trade and Investment already contracts out trade services with chambers in seven of the nine English regions.
- Chambers are built on a volunteerism model. Many local business people freely volunteer their time to chambers. This is an important dimension that sets the chambers apart from many other bodies and should play an increasingly important role if we want to unlock business to business mentoring.
- Chambers have an established youth chamber structure to help build young people's understanding of business and give them hands on experience of enterprise and the business world. This could offer a helpful platform to engage young people in schools.

Public and private law chamber models

- 10.** Chamber systems can broadly be split into public law (compulsory membership) and private law (voluntary membership) models. Public law, compulsory membership models generally prevail in continental Europe; private law, voluntary membership models in Scandinavia, the UK and other English speaking countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Some mixed models also exist, such as in Japan and Thailand, with public law status but voluntary membership. For the purposes of this paper, we have examined the advantages and disadvantages of compulsory versus voluntary chamber membership and how the UK compares internationally.
- 11.** Debates over whether the UK private law, voluntary membership system should convert to a compulsory membership system more akin to the European continental model date back to when chambers were first established in the UK⁴, mostly due to concerns that other European countries were gaining a competitive advantage.
- 12.** Public and private law models can be broadly differentiated by the following characteristics:
- > Terms of membership
 - > Sources of funding
 - > Volume of services
 - > Relationship with government.
- 13.** A study⁵ of the activities of chambers in 194 countries undertaken between 2000 and 2003 identified that two thirds of all chambers are based on public law models.

Table 1: Numbers of countries with public and private law chamber systems

Chamber status	Private law	Public law	No chambers	Total
Country count	72	119	3	194
Percent	37.1	61.3	1.5	100

⁴ P.259, R. Bennett, *Local Business Voice*, Oxford Press, 2012

⁵ Fedotov, I, *Organizational and Legal Models of Chambers*, Center for International Private Enterprise Business Associations Study, 2007

Public law models

Public law models tend to have the following features:

- Compulsory business membership
- Protection of chambers' names
- Clearly defined geographical territory
- Limited self-governance
- Delegated public functions
- Formal advisory status with government
- Guaranteed financing
- Hierarchical structures
- Government supervision

14. Public law models tend to benefit from delegated public functions and compulsory membership both of which generate significant resources to engage and support businesses on a large scale. Services vary from country to country and are dependent on the resources available, but traditionally include: education (mainly vocational); the provision of economic information; advisory services; technical assistance; and commercial arbitration.
15. Compulsory membership does not necessarily mean that all businesses are members. In Germany there are 3.6 million business enterprises that are statutory members of local German Chambers of Commerce (IHKs) but there are membership exemptions for some businesses including trades people, freelancers and farmers.

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of public law models⁶

Characteristics	Advantages	Disadvantages
Compulsory membership	Wide business coverage	Not all companies want to be members
Protection of chambers' names	Prevention of potential abuses of chamber brand	Prevents competition
Clearly defined geographical territory	Less duplication	As above
Limited self-governance	Close relationship to government	Potential for government interference
Delegated public functions	Certainty of role over time	Tension between delivery and representation functions
Official advisory status vis-à-vis government	Guaranteed access to authorities and formal participation in law making ⁷	Government interference and pressure
Public financing	Guaranteed funding	Tendency to be over-reliant on government
Chamber hierarchy	Organised interaction with different government levels	Risk of bureaucracy
Government supervision	Public accountability	Government interference in chambers' affairs

- 16.** As well as being able to engage and support businesses on a comprehensive scale, another key advantage of the public law system is that government and the private sector both invest in the same system, making it easier to build capability over the long term.

⁶ Adapted from Fedotov, I, *Organizational and Legal Models of Chambers*, Center for International Private Enterprise Business Associations Study, 2007

⁷ P.261, R. Bennett, *Local Business Voice*, Oxford Press, 2012

Private law models

Private law models tend to have the following features:

- Voluntary business membership
- Lack of statutory protection of chambers' names
- Freedom to choose geographic territory of activity
- Self-governance
- Less hierarchical
- Limited delegated public functions
- Lack of formal advisory status with the government
- Financial independence of chambers
- Lack of government supervision

- 17.** Private law, voluntary membership models have an advantage in that the companies who want to join do so because they are attracted by the service offering not because they are forced to be chamber members. However, this means that chambers have to work much harder to pull businesses in, drawing limited resources away from delivering services. It also means that chambers do not have the benefits of special status and can suffer from failures in the competitive market such as lack of service coordination.

Table 3: Advantages and disadvantages of the private law model⁸

Characteristics	Advantages	Disadvantages
Voluntary membership	Freedom of business to choose whether it engages	Limited business coverage. Chambers suffer from small memberships ⁹
Freedom to choose its territory of activity	Fewer barriers to new market entrants	Potential for unnecessary competition in representing business interests
Self-governance and free election of management	Freedom to select which services to provide	Risk of misalignment and poor coordination with government service delivery
No delegated public functions	Freedom from government interference	No steady revenues generated by delegated functions
Limited advisory status		Less ability to influence government
Financial independence	Performance of services solely in the interests of chamber members	Limited membership fee revenues
No hierarchy or a single national chamber ¹⁰	Enables chambers to reflect the grassroots	Inconvenience and inconsistency for business
No government supervision	No government interference	Government activities can be misaligned

⁸ Adapted from Fedotov, I, *Organizational and Legal Models of Chambers*, Center for International Private Enterprise Business Associations Study, 2007

⁹ P.698, R. Bennett, *Local Business Voice*, Oxford Press, 2012

¹⁰ In the UK, The British Chambers of Commerce Act as the national umbrella body

Comparison of public and private law models

18. It is common for both public and private law models to have their status enshrined in law. In Europe, the UK chambers are an exception in not having either.

Table 4: Typical public duties under private and public law systems

Public duties	Private Law		Mixed	Public law		
	UK ¹¹	US ¹²		Japan	Germany	France
To promote the economic interests of local businesses	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
To provide information, advice and support to businesses	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
To issue trade documentation	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
To manage the business register	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
To own and manage infrastructure, other facilities and amenities	X	X	X	X	✓	X
To provide training and manage training institutions	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
To hold short training courses, improve business skills and conduct related examinations	X	X	✓	X	X	X
Business arbitration and credit worthiness tests	X	X	✓	X	X	X
To promote an improvement and development of the tourist industry relating to commerce	X	X	✓	X	X	X

Source: Taken from legislation in Japan, Germany, France and the Netherlands

11 The only legislation governing the UK Chambers is the *Company and Business Names (Chamber of Commerce Etc) Act 1999*, which protects the chamber name

12 The US does not have legislation outlining public duties

- 19.** The difference in levels of business engagement across different countries and chamber systems can be stark. Finland, Sweden and the UK have a noticeably low membership count, but it is when you examine the UK figure against the total business population that the UK stands out as being proportionately weaker than other competitors. There are 4.8 million enterprises¹³ in the UK broadly similar to the Japanese and German economies¹⁴. Taking Japan as a comparator with a similar voluntary chamber membership model, UK chamber membership is 8% of Japanese membership.

Table 5: Comparisons of chamber membership at a country level

	Voluntary membership model	Compulsory membership model
		Membership totals
UK	104,000	
US	3,000,000	
Sweden	11,000	
Finland	18,000	
Japan	1,300,000	
Germany		3,600,000
France		2,200,000
Netherlands		2,300,000

Source: All figures provided by respective chambers of commerce

- 20.** The following table gives examples of the difference in income, membership and expenditure between six major industrial cities across both voluntary and compulsory membership systems.

13 BIS: Business population estimates for the UK and regions, 2012

14 When numbers of self-employed individuals are taken out of the total figure

Table 6: Comparison of chambers across six major industrial cities¹⁵

Chamber	Annual Revenue (2011)	Membership (2011)	Expenditure (2011)
Birmingham (voluntary membership)	£10.6m	2,909	£10.6m
Chicago (voluntary membership)	£4.2m	Not available	£3.9m
Osaka (voluntary membership)	£36.3m	28,941	£33.9m
Munich (Compulsory membership)	£65.2m	366,771	£56.5m
Milan (Compulsory membership)	£103.1m	347,666	£102.6m
Lyon (Compulsory membership)	£100.4m	71,000	£93.9m

Source: Figures provided by respective chambers

- 21.** The three private law, voluntary membership chambers have an average annual turnover of £17 million. The corresponding public law, compulsory membership chambers have an average of £90 million. Of the voluntary membership chambers, Birmingham has 10% of the membership base of Osaka.

Overseas chambers

- 22.** Many national chamber systems have overseas counterparts. France, Germany, the Netherlands, UK, US and Japan all have overseas chambers. In all cases their overseas chambers operate on a voluntary membership basis. In this regard, overseas chamber models make an interesting comparator to the UK system.

¹⁵ Currencies converted into sterling

Section Two – Country comparisons

1. United Kingdom

Domestic Chambers

- 23.** UK chambers of commerce operate under a private law, voluntary membership model with four components:
- > The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) – national umbrella body for affiliated chambers
 - > 51¹⁶ local chambers affiliated to the BCC
 - > 500-600¹⁷ local, non-affiliated chambers
 - > 63¹⁸ non-affiliated, overseas chambers

British Chambers of Commerce

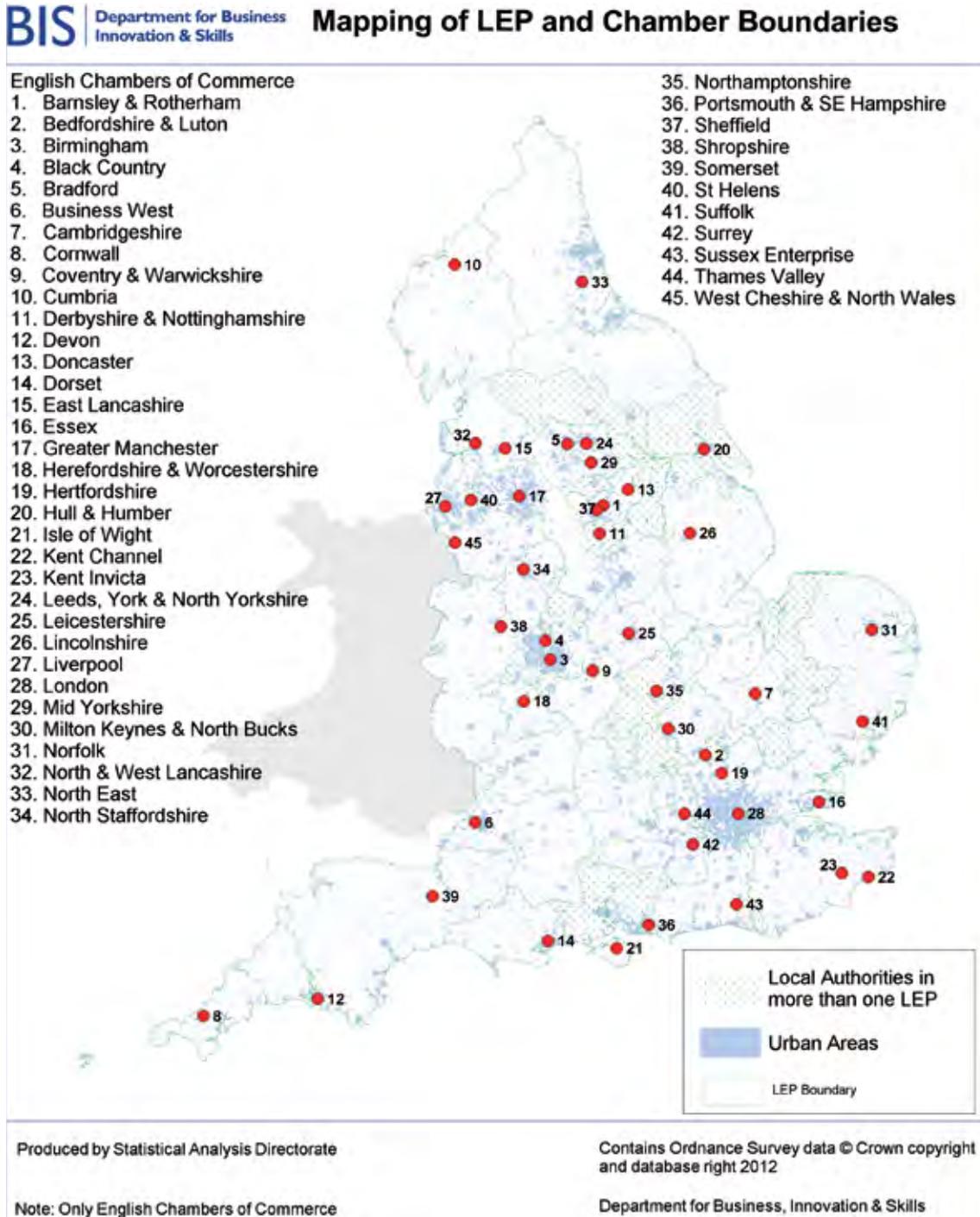
- 24.** The BCC acts as the interface between the 51 affiliated chambers and government and accredits the affiliated chamber network. It has two small headquarters based in London and Coventry comprising a total of 37 staff. The BCC represents the voice of its members at the local, national and European levels. As well as support from the International Chambers of Commerce, the BCC is supported at the European level by the Council of British Chambers in Europe, representing British chambers of commerce throughout Europe.

¹⁶ Including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

¹⁷ P.28 and P.689, R. Bennett, *Local Business Voice*, Oxford Press, 2012

¹⁸ <http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/business/trading-internationally/international-contacts.html>, 2012

Chart 1: Map of Local Enterprise Partnerships and chambers across England



Source: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

- 25.** Generally, chambers have evolved around metropolitan areas where the largest clusters of business are located¹⁹ as shown in the grey areas in the map above. For this reason chamber and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) boundaries do not always match. In some cases one chamber serves more than one LEP, for example the North East Chambers of Commerce, and in other cases there is more than one chamber in one LEP area as in Liverpool. However, chambers are frequently represented at Board level on the LEPs or are represented on working groups reporting to the LEP Boards, providing business advice and international trade and investment expertise.
- 26.** The BCCs core purpose is to represent the voice of business, enhance and protect the chamber brand and generate income for the chamber network. The BCC is currently driving a programme of improvement through the chamber network, the ‘best of everything everywhere’ campaign. As a result, from 2013, all affiliated chambers will provide a standard accredited service offer, even if it means other chambers delivering services on their behalf. Part of this effort includes ensuring that there is complete affiliated chamber coverage of the English regions. In this regard, two regions, Devon and Cheshire, which have in the past been without affiliated chamber coverage, will have affiliated chambers by December 2012.

Affiliated Chambers

- 27.** All affiliated chambers are accredited to the BCC. The affiliated chamber network has approximately 2,500 staff with a business membership of 104,000 businesses employing 5 million people. Each chamber is independent of each other and the BCC and accountable to its members, reflecting the grassroots nature of these institutions. Typically, the larger city chambers such as Birmingham and Manchester are more multi-functional, delivering a range of government services as well as representing the voice of business. As a result, they tend to have larger incomes and capability than other chambers in the network. Income in these larger chambers is from mixed sources, both private and public.

Table 7: Breakdown of income: Birmingham Chambers of Commerce

Income stream	2011 £000	2010 £000
Membership and patrons	1,206	1,000
Public funded activity	5,235	4,937
General services	3,913	3,537
Rental Income	331	425

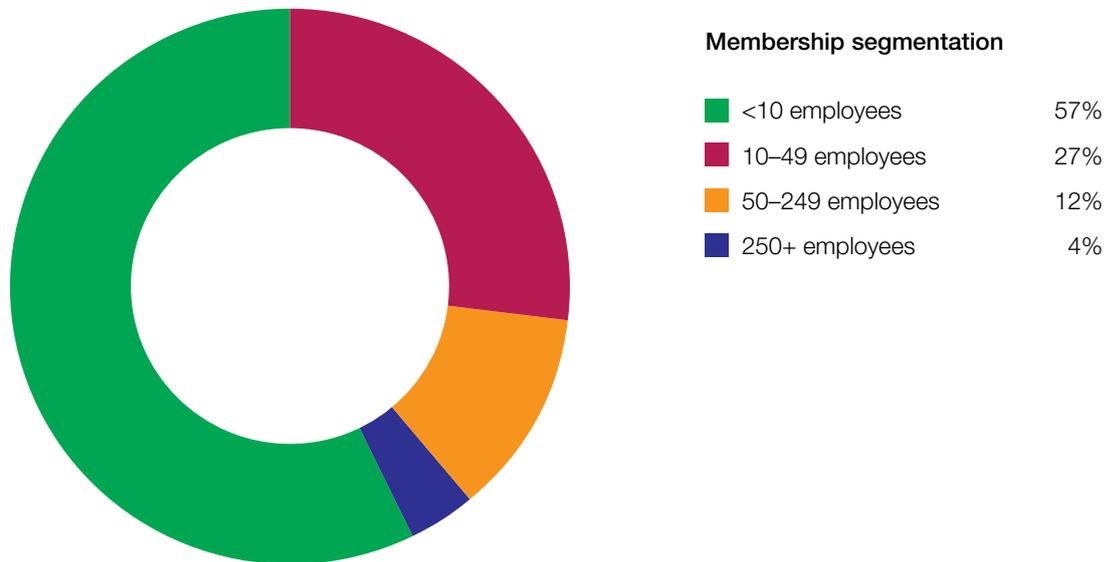
Source: Birmingham Chambers of Commerce²⁰

19 P. 688, R. Bennett, *Local Business Voice*, Oxford Press, 2012

20 <http://www.birmingham-chamber.com/Attachments/BCI-2011-accounts-FINAL.aspx>, 2012

- 28.** Whilst the majority of chamber members are small companies, membership coverage is proportionately largest amongst mid-size companies (firms with 50–249 employees) reflecting the lead status these companies often have in local economies²¹.

Chart 2: Affiliated membership profile, 2011

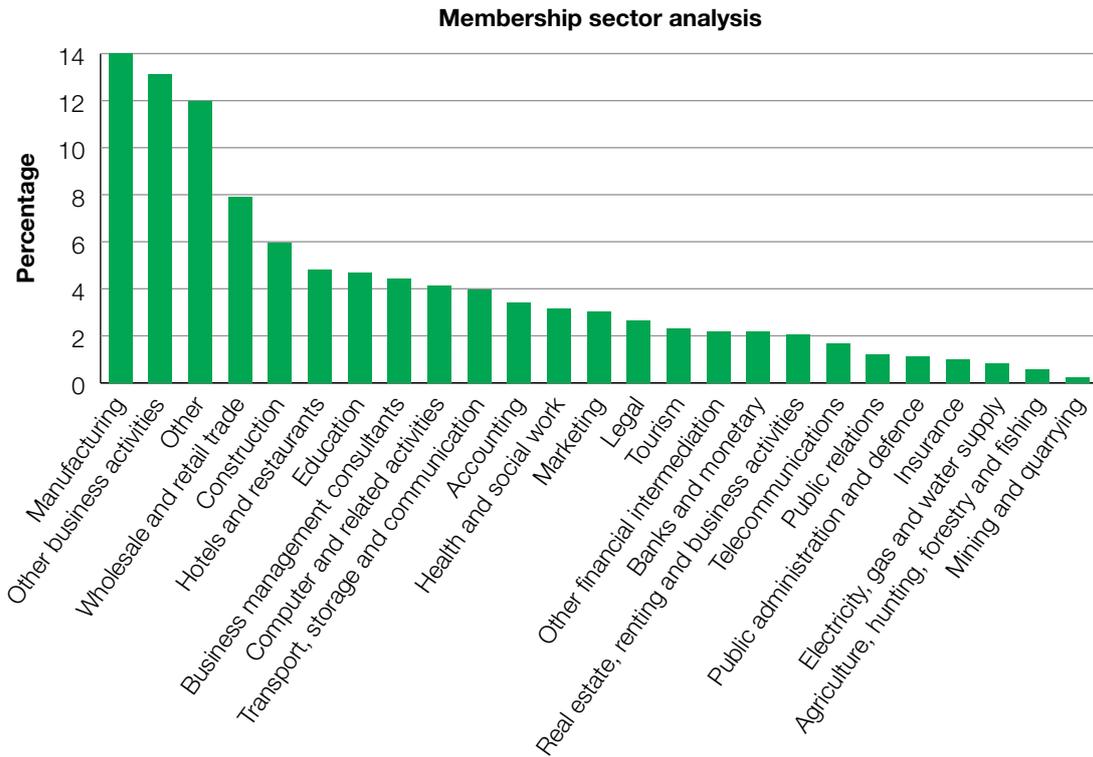


Source: BCC

- 29.** Affiliated chamber membership is also largely concentrated in the traditional high employment sectors such as manufacturing, retail and construction as shown by the chart below.

²¹ <http://discuss.bis.gov.uk/midsizereview/>, 2012

Chart 3: 2011 breakdown of affiliated chamber members across sectors



Source: BCC

Service delivery

- 30. Affiliated chambers deliver a range of different business services depending on the priorities of local chamber members. Services typically cover lobbying activities, business support, networking and in most areas trade (see Business West, Annex A). In all English regions except the South East and London, affiliated chambers deliver export services on behalf of UK Trade and Investment. In some cases one chamber will be delivering services for another for instance Bradford Chamber provides international trade services to Leeds, York and North Yorkshire Chamber.
- 31. Chambers do not just engage at the local level. There are examples where chambers collaborate and pool expertise and resource across larger geographical areas. For example, in the North West region 17 Chambers (both affiliated and non-affiliated) have come together under a consortia to provide trade services across the whole region.

Table 8: Typical affiliated chamber trade service offer

A typical trade service offer by a chamber would include:

- > UKTI international trade advisor services for small and mid-size businesses
- > Export documentation
- > Export training
- > Market research and intelligence
- > Credit checks
- > Translation services
- > Letter of credit management
- > Agency and distribution agreement service
- > Matchmaking services
- > Export clubs, ambassadors, mentors
- > Public procurement advice and tender services
- > Trade missions, inward missions
- > Overseas trade fairs
- > Events
- > Enterprise Europe network.

Source: UK Trade and Investment

Non-affiliated chambers

- 32.** There are approximately 500-600 non-affiliated chambers, which are all independent of each other, as well as the BCC. Non-affiliated chambers have no formal interface with national government. They are typically very local in nature representing chamber members at either borough or local high street level and generally represent micro to small businesses. Most focus primarily on strengthening business networks although some deliver business support services.

Case study: Merton Chamber of Commerce

Merton Chamber of Commerce (MCC) is a limited company and non-profit making organisation set up in 1992. Merton is not a typical non-affiliated chamber in that it has built its business model on delivering publicly funded business support services rather than relying on income from membership fees. Working closely with the London Borough of Merton to support the delivery of its economic development strategy, the Chamber offers a one stop shop for local businesses and services. The Chamber has a direct engagement with 2,500 businesses and wider relationship with all 8,500 business ratepayers in Merton. MCC offers a package of support for new start-ups, a business support line and a business centre – a hub for support and information for new and existing businesses²².

Source: Merton Chamber of Commerce

London chamber network

33. The London picture is a microcosm of the national and international challenge. The capital has 18 local, chambers located across the London boroughs²³. There is one affiliated chamber, the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), which has four affiliated local chambers²⁴. The LCCI has approximately 2,500 members with the local network having approximately 6,000–7,000²⁵ members in total. Together, both networks engage approximately 2.4% of the total 400,000 VAT registered businesses in London²⁶.
34. London has a particularly complex landscape with a plethora of alternative business support agencies and bodies and illustrates just how difficult it can be for businesses to navigate and find the right support.

22 <http://www.mertonchamber.co.uk/index.php>, 2012

23 Further details can be found at: <http://londonlocalchambers.co.uk/>

24 The four affiliated members are: Croydon; Ealing; Hammersmith & Fulham; and Docklands & East London

25 Estimated figure provided by the London Chamber of Commerce Forum

26 By contrast, the Paris Chambers of Commerce has coverage of 400,000 businesses

Table 9: Non-chamber delivery agencies offering business support in London

Agency	Service
National organisations	
Business Link/GOV.UK	Digital and hotline
Grant Thornton	Managing the delivery of the Growth Accelerator programme (high growth companies) and Manufacturing Advisory Service (manufacturing companies)
Pan London Organisations	
London and Partners	Helping international businesses locate and grow in London
London First	Business membership group offering lobbying, campaigning and networking events
Greater London Enterprise	Delivers trade services for UK Trade and Investment
British Library	Some business advice including help with intellectual property
Universities	Business start-up support
Greater London Authority	Delivering 'Compete For' and Mayor's recent business 'boot-camps'
Local organisations	
West London Business	Lobbying, business networking and events, information, market intelligence
South London Business	Business support and advice, business award programmes, events
North London Business	Investor development for north London boroughs
East London Small Business Centre	Helping small businesses start up and grow
London Boroughs	Some provide advice and support and some funding

Source: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

- 35.** In the past, there have been limited or no formal links between the non-affiliated chambers and the LCCI. However, the London Chamber of Commerce Forum (LCCF) was founded in 2010 to act as an informal forum to encourage closer working arrangements and a more unified voice. The LCCF is run on a voluntary basis, but steps are now being taken to move to an ‘affiliation’ approach between the LCCI and local borough chambers. The indications are that this network would like to see an improved role for chambers across the capital, including more of a role in engaging small businesses in the delivery of business support services.

Appetite for change

In a 2012 poll of 100 South East London Chamber of Commerce members:

- > 60% of members stated that it is important for the chambers to increase membership to include all businesses in the catchment area
- > 81% of members thought that businesses should be made aware of the benefits of chamber membership when they register their accounts at Companies House or pay business rates.
- > 75% of members said that the chambers should have the capability to deliver government services for example skills, trade or brokerage
- > When asked what would incentivise businesses to become chamber members 77% said networking opportunities, 47% said access to business support networks, 34% said access to information, 33% said price/affordability, 28% said access to free seminars and 19% said access to local government procurement.

Source: South East London Chamber of Commerce

Overseas chambers

- 36.** British Chambers overseas (called bi-lateral chambers or BritChams) are self-funded, independent member organisations operating under the national laws of the countries in which they are located. They are not affiliated nor are their functions and roles overseen by the BCC.
- 37.** The UK overseas chamber picture is a patchwork. There are 63²⁷ bi-lateral overseas chambers 34²⁸ of which are in Europe. More broadly, some countries have bi-lateral chambers, others business councils, business groups or a combination of these. All are independent of each other, the BCC and local chambers in the UK. UK overseas chamber services tend to focus on information sharing, signposting, and networking with much less focus on service delivery. There are some notable gaps where there is no chamber presence, most strikingly in India and South Africa.

27 <http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/business/trading-internationally/international-contacts.html>, 2012

28 <http://www.cobcoe.eu/membership/members-of-cobcoe/>, 2012

- 38.** There are examples of collaborations between UK and overseas chambers. For instance, UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) Jakarta is helping the British Chamber of Commerce in Indonesia to develop relationships with UK regions, such as London, the North West and North East. There are also examples of strong UK bi-lateral chambers such as South Korea, Taiwan or Japan. In these countries, bi-lateral chambers have developed a capability to deliver services alongside more traditional activities such as networking and work closely with UKTI and the Foreign Office. However, links between overseas chambers, the BCC and regional UK chambers generally tend to be weak.

Table 10: A typical overseas chamber offer

Standard overseas chamber offer	Other activities offered in some chambers (but not all)
Networking events	Office space rental
Provision of speakers	Language classes
Publications	Visa support
Discussion groups	Discounts from fellow members
	Training workshops
	Trade missions
	Legal advice
	Credit reference
	Joint UKTI events
	Referral of membership
	Co-location with UKTI and Foreign Office
	Briefing for visiting delegations
	Room hire for UK businesses
	Promotion of chambers in Overseas Market Introduction Service reports ²⁹

Source: UK Trade & Investment

- 39.** What is striking in comparison with other leading chamber systems is the division of labour in the UK system. In the UK, UKTI play a much larger role in the delivery of services than equivalent government trade bodies in France, Germany or the US. Such countries tend to have a greater integration between their trade promotion bodies and overseas chambers, with a clearer demarcation of roles, more systematic cross-referral of clients and a larger proportion of services delivered by chambers instead of government. As a result, these countries tend to have larger, more organised business networks overseas.

²⁹ OMIS is UKTI's Overseas Market Introduction Service

See: <http://www.ukti.gov.uk/export/howwehelp/overseasmarketintroductionservice.html>, 2012

Table 11: British overseas chamber capability in Brazil, Russia, India and China

Bi-lateral chamber	Member numbers	Number of staff	Service offer
British Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Brazil	240	14 staff, 3 branches	Networking events, working groups, publications, membership support
The Russo-British Chamber of Commerce	350	18 staff in 3 offices (London, Moscow, St. Petersburg)	Events, panel discussions, networking, sector specific events, market research, language training, visa support, online health and safety training
India British Business Groups	600 (combined)	Not available	Meeting forums and networking events, issue-specific events
China-Britain Business Council (CBBC)	1,349 (combined membership)	CBBC has 9 offices in the UK, 11 offices in China	CBBC is contracted to deliver UKTI services including hot desks, inward investment services, employment support, cultural training, translation and interpretation, visa services, company check services, sourcing services
British Chambers of Commerce in Shanghai and British Chambers of Commerce South West China		BCCC has offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Chongqing	Chambers organise networking, events, provides publications, members directory, promotion and advertising support and a privilege club

Source: UK Trade & Investment

2. United States of America

Domestic chambers

- 40.** The US Chamber of Commerce operates under a private law, voluntary membership model. It has a four tier system:
- > The US Chamber of Commerce – national umbrella body
 - > State chambers
 - > 7000³⁰ local chambers
 - > 115 AmChams – US Chambers of Commerce overseas.
- 41.** The US Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest voluntary membership system with a direct membership of 300,000 businesses and a further 3 million businesses through its various affiliates at state and local levels. The US Chambers of Commerce has revenues of approximately \$200 million annually largely driven by membership fees and focus on lobbying more than service delivery. In 2009, the US Chamber of Commerce spent \$144.5 million on lobbying operations.
- 42.** The US Chamber of Commerce is not a governing body, chartering agent, or a regulatory agency for chambers of commerce, and has no say in how chambers decide to run themselves. Any community can organise and support a chamber of commerce. More than 96% of US chamber member companies have fewer than 100 employees.
- 43.** The chamber works with more than 1,500 volunteers from member corporations, organisations, and the academic community who serve on committees, subcommittees, task forces, and councils to develop and implement policy on major issues affecting business. State and local chambers primarily focus on lobbying at the state and local level, arranging business networking opportunities, trade shows and the provision of commercial and economic information. The state and local chambers do not deliver business support services on behalf of government.

³⁰ <http://www.uschamber.com/chambers/accreditation>, 2012

US Chambers of Commerce accreditation system

The United States Chamber of Commerce accreditation is the most comprehensive system of its kind and set up to promote excellence and best practice. There are over 800 chambers that have participated in the program since 1964, among which 223 remain accredited. It takes nearly a year to receive accreditation and accreditation lasts for five years. Applications are reviewed by US Chamber staff, an independent accrediting consultant and the US Chamber Accrediting Board.

Local chambers are given star ratings on a 3, 4 or 5 star basis based on the quality and range of services on offer. State chambers are also given rankings: either accredited or accredited with distinction. The US Chamber of Commerce holds a directory of all accredited chambers.

Source: US Chambers of Commerce³¹

Overseas chambers

- 44.** There are 115 American Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AmChams) located in 102 countries and affiliated with the US Chamber of Commerce. Through four regional organisations in Asia, Europe, the Gulf Countries, and Latin America/the Caribbean, the AmChams represent the concerns and interests of the business community at the highest levels of government and business in trade policy development. The system works on three levels:
- Bilateral business councils work to advance commercial relations between the United States and key markets around the globe, including Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, India, Korea, and Pakistan
 - The Centre for International Private Enterprise, an independent, non-profit affiliate of the US Chamber, helps emerging nations develop free market and democratic practices
 - TradeRoots, the US' only sustained grassroots trade education programme, supports free trade legislation and helps chambers, communities, and governors assist small and medium-size companies expand into the global marketplace.
- 45.** AmCham's principal objective is to promote activities that would encourage and stimulate investment by US companies, support on-going business operations of its members and encourage bi-lateral trade between the country concerned and the US. To this end, they work with the US Foreign Commercial Service (UKTI equivalent), which has 128 offices in more than 75 countries. It supports US companies by offering trade counselling, market intelligence, business matchmaking and commercial diplomacy.

31 <http://www.uschamber.com/chambers/accreditation>, 2012

Table 12: US overseas chamber capability in Brazil, Russia, India and China

Chamber	Member numbers	Number of staff	Service offer
American Chamber of Commerce for Brazil-Rio de Janeiro American Chamber of Commerce for Brazil-São Paulo	7500 combined (2500 Rio, 5000 São Paulo)	Approx. 380 in Brazil in 13 offices Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Brasília, Campinas, Curitiba, Goiânia, Porto Alegre, Recife, Ribeirão Preto, Salvador, Uberlândia and Vitoria	Rio de Janeiro: events, courses, trade missions, trade fairs, connecting members with business partners, networking, interaction with government officials and providing technical information. Also, associated with the Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America (located in Washington, DC) São Paulo: thematic discussion committees; task forces on issues concerning taxation, regulatory standards, intellectual property and innovation, events, exhibitions and lectures with private and public sector leaders from the US and Brazil; visa assistance; trade missions and conflict arbitration
American Chamber of Commerce in Russia	800	19 staff in Moscow 14 staff in St Petersburg	US and Russian government relations, lobbying, access to decision makers, legislative and government information, dissemination of business and political information, visa processing, networking, briefings with business leaders and key policy makers, chief executive forums, seminars and roundtables, events, trade missions, information on running a business in Russia and market intelligence reports

Chamber	Member numbers	Number of staff	Service offer
American Chamber of Commerce in India (AMCHAM – India)	500	Staff numbers not available Offices in New Delhi with five Regional branches in Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai	Joint Indian/US business forums, meetings with US Embassy officials hosting delegations, working groups, lobbying, networking, surveys, publications ³² , Newsletters, position papers, press support, events, briefings and seminars Also a full member of the Asia Pacific Council of American Chambers of Commerce and promotes links with AmChams in neighbouring countries and participates in business delegations to these countries
American Chamber of Commerce in China	Approx. 2,600 members	40 staff in Beijing with 3 staff in Tianjin, 2 in Wuhan and 1 in Dalian	Industry/issue working groups, visa support, networking and events, meetings with US and Chinese officials to discuss challenges and opportunities facing US firms doing business in China, lobbying, information, business support services, publications, chamber-sponsored public-private partnership programmes in the aviation, energy and healthcare sectors, inward investment support and trade missions

Source: AmChams

³² www.amchamindia.com, 2012

3. Japan

Domestic chambers

- 46.** The Japanese Chambers of Commerce operate under a public law³³, voluntary membership system (sometimes referred to as a mixed model³⁴). Every self-employed person or legal entity running a business in the chamber district is eligible for chamber membership. The chambers operate under a three tier structure:
- > Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) – national umbrella body
 - > 514 local Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCIs)
 - > 79 Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry overseas (JCCIs).
- 47.** There are 514 CCIs covering every major city with approximately 1.3 million members nationwide making up approximately 33.7%³⁵ of all businesses in Japan. The JCCI overseas budget is approximately £40.9 million per annum and small when compared to some of the budgets of individual CCIs. For instance, the Tokyo CCI, one of the oldest (founded in 1878) and largest CCIs in Japan has 76,534³⁶ member companies and an annual budget of approximately £78.6 million.
- 48.** Japanese chamber income derives from a combination of membership fees, service delivery and government funding. The Government provides funding for services such as small business advice and support. On average, government funding accounts for approximately 20% of chamber revenue.
- 49.** Both the JCCIs and the CCIs are influential lobbying organisations and maintain very close relationships with government. CCIs are involved in regional development, environmental planning, technology development, city planning, promotion of local industry as well as the promotion of foreign trade. With regard to the latter, chambers organise trade missions, participate in international trade fairs, disseminate information and settle business disputes.
- 50.** As in France, Germany and the Netherlands, the Japanese chambers manage business registration. Other public functions include administering skills tests for an estimated 960,000 people per annum and nurturing and enhancing three core business skill sets; business management, internet skills, and foundation business skills. CCIs also play a central role in facilitating local-to-local international exchange through nationwide events.

³³ They are created and operated under a special government law called the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Law (1953)

³⁴ Fedotov, I (2007) *Organizational and Legal Models of Chambers*, Center for International Private Enterprise Business Associations Study

³⁵ Estimated figure provided by British Embassy in Japan

³⁶ March 2011 figure

Overseas chambers

51. There are 79 JCCIs³⁷. The Chambers work with the Japanese External Trade Organisation (JETRO), the Japanese UKTI equivalent, to support overseas businesses and promote foreign direct investment in Japan. They also feed into and inform Japanese trade policy providing both research and market intelligence. JETRO has 70 offices outside Japan including 20 in Europe.

Major activities of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (JCCIs)

- > Issuing certificates of origin
- > Receiving foreign dignitaries
- > Sending and receiving economic missions
- > Managing bilateral and multilateral economic committees
- > Hosting business networking events
- > Trade support to SMEs
- > Trade information services
- > Strengthening linkages with Japanese CCIs overseas
- > Promoting exchange between diplomatic missions and CCIs in Japan

Source: Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry³⁸

52. Alongside the JCCIs, JETRO undertakes a number of activities to support the development of overseas markets, including participation on overseas trade fairs, support for individual firms via a mentoring scheme and providing e-learning courses on trade and contract law issues as well as in-person courses and seminars. They also offer a website to allow firms to search for international business partners and encourage 'regional tie-ups' (links between centres of excellence in Japan and overseas). JETRO is also planning to launch a scheme which will send approximately 100 staff a year from SMEs overseas on internships so they can gain more international experience.

37 April, 2011 Figure

38 <http://www.jcci.or.jp/english/activities/international-activities.html>, 2012

Table 13: Japanese overseas chamber capability in Brazil, Russia, India and China

Chamber	Member numbers	Number of staff	Service offer
Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Brazil	336	10 in São Paulo	Market research, publications, networking and events
Japanese External Trade Organisation in Russia (there is no Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Russia)	No formal membership	Offices in Moscow and St Petersburg	Information not available
Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in India	312 Located in Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan	No figure available One office in Delhi	Facilitating trade industry and commerce between India and Japan, economic cooperation and strengthening the relationship between India and Japan
Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in China	Around 4,460 members in 2012	5 members of staff in Beijing No total figure available Offices in Beijing, Dalian, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hong Kong	Provision of information, facilitating dialogue between Japanese and Chinese companies, administering industry groups on trade, finance, transport and distribution

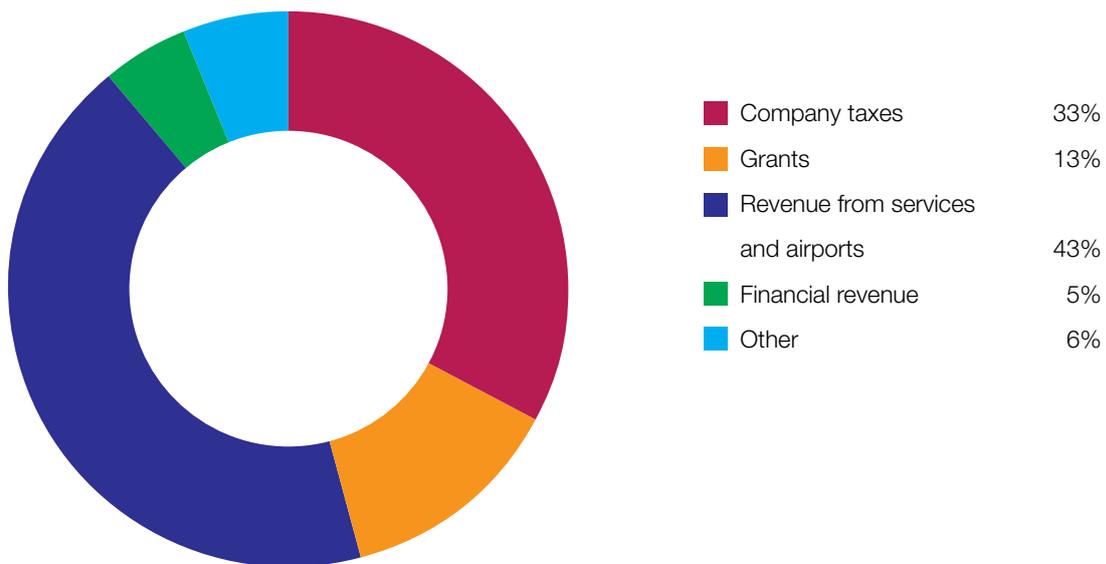
Source: All from figures British Embassy, Tokyo

4. France

Domestic chambers

- 53.** The French Chambers of Commerce and Industry operate under a public law, compulsory membership model with a four tier system:
- > Chambers of Commerce and Industry France³⁹ (CCI France) – national umbrella body
 - > 22 Regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCIR) – linking government and local chambers together at the regional level
 - > 121 local Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCIs)
 - > 107 overseas chambers – partially overseen by the Union of French Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UCCIFE).
- 54.** French chambers of commerce have a national turnover of €3.9bn, 28,000 employees and 4,150 specialist advisers. CCIs manage the business register, export promotion, training programmes and the management of business schools, ports and airports. The CCIR coordinates the activities of local CCIs at the regional government level. CCI France provides guidance, support and advice, audits local CCIs, develops national strategy and manages national and European projects. UCCIFE coordinates the overseas chamber network across 77 countries.
- 55.** French CCIs are unique in their ownership and management of ports and airports and generate 43% of their income from these activities.

Chart 4: French chambers of commerce and industry funding sources

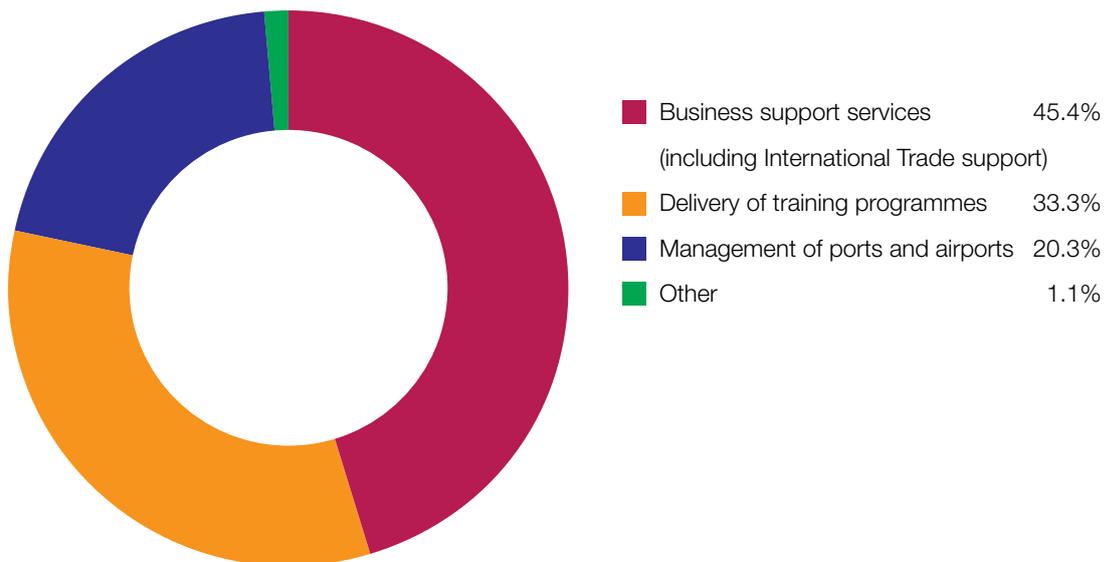


Source: UK Trade and Investment

³⁹ Previously known as the Association of French Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ACFCI)

- 56.** The main activities of the CCIs include:
- > Providing economic research and analysis
 - > Regional marketing
 - > Advice for start-ups and managing the formalities of business creation
 - > Running training programmes and business schools
 - > Managing infrastructure such as local ports and airports (not including Paris). The Chambers manage 31 airport hubs (either alone or in partnership), 33 domestic ports and 60 seaports
 - > Nearly half of CCI resources are devoted to business support services including international trade and in particular the development of French exports.
- 57.** The delivery of training programmes takes up close to a third of the chambers' resources with the courses provided typically being business administration and accountancy for start-ups, language training, IT, marketing, human resources and apprenticeship.

Chart 5: Percentage of staff employed per activity across French chambers



Source: UK Trade and Investment

- 58.** Management of ports and airports makes up approximately 20% of all CCI staff. This is a high profile activity seen as vital in many parts of France where connections to the capital and major international hubs is considered essential for business development and inward investment. For instance, low-cost airlines are keen on creating profitable new links to cheap provincial airports with the economic gain often enough to justify the CCIs assuming the costs of the airline advertising.

- 59.** Like the US chambers, the French chambers have a star rating system where chambers are rated on the range of services on offer making it easier for business to know what services they are getting. CCI France has also made a significant investment in IT infrastructure to enable CCIs domestically and overseas to be working from one IT platform making coordination of activities simpler. There are currently 80 chambers now linked across the network.

Overseas chambers

- 60.** UCCIFE has partial oversight of the overseas chamber network connecting 107 chambers in 77 countries with a membership of 30,000 businesses and providing a menu of services that all overseas chambers offer.
- 61.** While the overseas chambers are independent and self-funded, they have a close relationship with the Government. They receive government funding for some of the activities promoted by the UCCIFE, for example, facilitating secondments to French companies overseas.
- 62.** Ubifrance, the French equivalent to UKTI, offers a range of products and services aimed at helping French based companies in the development of export markets. It focuses on providing knowledge-based products and services, from business information to consultancy and monitoring services. UbiFrance has a presence in 58 markets, and has a service agreement with some of the overseas chambers in countries where they do not have their own offices. UbiFrance relies on the chambers to recruit potential exporters, as it does not have its own network of advisors based in France. By 2014, UbiFrance is scheduled to set up regional one stop shops for potential exporters bringing together the CCIRs, UbiFrance, and a range of other bodies.

Table 14: French overseas chamber capability in Brazil, Russia, India and China

Chamber	Member numbers	Number of staff	Service offer
The French Chamber of Commerce, India	455	16	Market analysis and research, key contacts, competition analysis, trade missions, trade fairs, business centres, commercial management support, assistance for local branch set up, HR management support, recruitment and communication services, and publications
The French Chamber of Commerce in Brazil	936	24	As above
The French Chamber of Commerce in Russia	330	16	As above
The French Chamber in China	1,379	42 staff across 5 offices with 6 satellite offices	As above

Source: CCI France

5. Germany

Domestic chambers

- 63.** The German Chambers of Commerce and Industry⁴⁰ operate under a public law, compulsory membership and three tier system:
- > National association of German chambers (DIHK) – national umbrella body
 - > 82 local chambers of commerce and industry (IHKs)
 - > 117 overseas chambers (AHKs).
- 64.** IHKs are entirely private sector funded underpinned by compulsory membership for German businesses. There are 82 IHKs across Germany with 7,000 specialist advisors offering expert business advice across a range of technical areas and supported by 400,000 business volunteers. Notably, German chambers present themselves as ‘one family’ making it much simpler for business to access business support and overseas trade opportunities.
- 65.** The DIHK is the central organisation representing the interests of business vis-à-vis national and European government, trade associations and employer federations. The DIHK acts as a two way clearing house for policy development between the local and national level and has no legal authority over local chambers.

Dusseldorf IHK

The North Rhine-Westphalia region has 1.1 million inhabitants, 82,000 member companies and 700,000 employees. The Dusseldorf IHK provides the following services:

Public tasks: Vocational training, issuing of trade documentation, qualifying insurance brokers

Business support: Expert advice on urban land use planning, start up support, advice on international markets, legal affairs and taxes, energy efficiency, innovation and technology transfer, trade missions, publications, market analysis and networking

Lobbying: City of Dusseldorf master planning, cutting red tape and regional and local marketing.

Source: IHK Dusseldorf

⁴⁰ Germany also has a ‘craft’ chamber system (HWK). There are 53 Chambers in the craft network. The network operates under public law with compulsory membership for skilled craft enterprises. The chambers are confederated at national level through the German Confederation of Chambers of Skilled Crafts (DHKT)

- 66.** As well as trade support, IHKs play a key role in delivering vocational training, for example⁴¹:
- > The German chambers have an intake of approximately 400,000 apprentices per annum with approximately 1 million apprentices in the system in any one year.
 - > Provision of in company vocational training programme (45,283 trained and 323,888 employees and business people participating in training events)
 - > Managing training contracts (854,717)
 - > Conducting examinations in partnership with teachers, employees and employers (356,514) and ensuring uniform examination criteria.

50 international market specialisms – North Rhine-Westphalia region

In the North Rhine-Westphalia region of Germany each of the 16 local chambers share overseas market specialisms. This approach strengthens collaboration and capability across the whole regional network.

IHK Aachen	Mexico, Hungary
IHK Amsberg	Croatia
IHK Bielefeld	Bahrain, Iran, Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia
IHK Bochum	Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia
IHK Bonn	Belarus
IHK Detmold	Estonia
IHK Dortmund	Azerbaijan, Serbia, Czech Republic
IHK Dusseldorf	India, Israel, Japan, Korea, Russia, Ukraine, USA
IHK Duisburg	Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania
IHK Essen	Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile
IHK Hagen	Canada, Latvia, Poland
IHK Koin	China, Kazakhstan, Taiwan, Turkey, Vietnam
IHK Krefeld	South Africa, Thailand
IHK Munster	Malaysia, Singapore
IHK Siegen	Slovenia
IHK Wuppertal	Slovakia

Source: IHK Dusseldorf

⁴¹ 2011 figures

Overseas chambers

- 67.** Unlike the domestic network where membership is compulsory, the German Chambers of Commerce overseas (AHKs) operate on a voluntary membership basis. AHKs fulfil three different functions:
- > Representing German economic interest overseas
 - > Serving their membership
 - > Delivering business support services.
- 68.** There are 117 AHKs with 1,330 staff in 80 countries all of which operate on a voluntary membership basis and are part funded by government. The DIHK has a special task to assist AHKs and acts as the official institution of German foreign trade promotion abroad⁴². The AHKs typically work on a 75:25 (private sector, government) resource model. The Economic Ministry supports the AHK network with around €33.5 million per year. The Government provides funding to the DIHK which then allocates the funding across the global AHK network. Services are charged at full cost recovery.
- 69.** The German AHKs are centrally managed by the DIHK and share a private delivery organisation (DEinternational) all of which helps ensure the German chamber offer is consistent across overseas markets. There is also a clear division of labour with Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI), the German equivalent to UKTI, with AHKs often being co-located with the GTAI. The GTAI is a much smaller operation than UKTI, acting primarily as an information provider with the AHKs providing business support services. The GTAI does not deliver services for companies overseas, as this is done by the AHKs (through DEinternational).

⁴² *Representing trade and industry: The German Association of Chambers of Industry and Commerce, Deutscher Industrie-und Handelskammertag e.V., 2008*

Table 15: German overseas chamber capability in Brazil, Russia, India and China

Chamber	Member numbers	Number of staff	Typical service offer
AHK Brazil	1,700	106 staff. 13 offices supported by an office in Frankfurt	Hosting delegations, sourcing and sales, translation, contract negotiation support, analysis of delivery capacity and credit rating of suppliers, legal and investment consultation, recruitment, training and vocational training support, organisation of trade fairs and events, media and communication and visa support
AHK Russia	833	34 staff. 3 offices in Moscow, St Petersburg and Novosibirsk	As above
AHK India	6,000	110 staff, 6 offices in India, a liaison office in Düsseldorf, 18 IHKs in Germany and an office in Brussels	As above
AHK China	1,900	170–180 staff in China (excluding Taiwan). 45 staff in Beijing with other offices in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Taipei	As above

Source: DIHK

Annex A: Business West

- 70.** To set up AHKs in new overseas markets, the DIHK establish a branch office (called a Delegation) in the respective market. This is used as a platform for identifying German businesses operating in the market and indigenous businesses exporting to Germany. A network or business club is then developed with both sets of businesses. Eventually, the DIHK Delegation and network are merged to establish an AHK. This process typically takes 5–7 years with the aim of being 75% funded by the business network by the end. DIHK remain as a major shareholder and play a core role in identifying the executive team and advising on standards with Ambassadors represented on the AHK Boards.
- 71.** Business West⁴³ is a partnership between three affiliated chambers of commerce (Bristol, Bath and Gloucestershire) and covers the areas of Bath, Bristol, Swindon, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. The network has a membership of 6000 businesses, employs over 190 staff and has a turnover of £20 million⁴⁴.
- 72.** Business West’s goals for 2015 include increasing membership to 10,000 businesses, helping create 100,000 jobs, expand the range of services on offer and strengthening the voice of local business.

Business West’s current service range includes:

Policy and representation	Business solutions
Public/private partnership working	Office space
Driving and supporting LEPs	Peer-to-peer networking
Corporate citizenship	Conflict resolution
Local and regional business voice	Intellectual property asset management
Surveys and polls	Agricultural support
Agenda setting and influencing	Environmental solutions
	Advice for start ups
	Finance for business
	Growth coaching and mentoring

43 For geographical location Business West is no.6, ‘Mapping of LEP and Chamber Boundaries’, p. 16

44 <http://www.businesswest.co.uk/about> , 2012

Membership	Export solutions
Business leadership	Export strategy implementation
Master-classes and seminars	International trade events and training
Representation and lobbying	Export consultancy
Business information and advice	Overseas market visits
Raising business profile	Export documentation
Networks and connections	Access to international partners
Discounted export documentation	Inward investment services
Access to business services and funds	Overseas market research

Source: Business West⁴⁵

45 Taken from Business West All About Us (promotional material)

Annex B: Glossary

ACFCI	Association of French Chambers of Commerce and Industry
AHK	German Chamber of Commerce overseas
AmChams	American Chambers of Commerce overseas
APCAC	Asia Pacific Council of American Chambers of Commerce
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BAB	British American Business
BCC	British Chambers of Commerce
BCCC	British Chambers of Commerce in China
BCCJ	British Chambers of Commerce in Japan
BCCK	British Chamber of Commerce in Korea
BiSEA	Britain in South East Asia
BMCC	British Malaysian Chambers of Commerce
CBBC	China-Britain Business Council
CCI	Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CCIR	French regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry
CIPE	Centre for International Private Enterprise
DHKT	German Confederation of Chambers of Skilled Crafts
DIHK	Deutscher Industrie und Handelskammertag
GTAI	German Trade and Invest
HWK	Craft Chambers of Commerce
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
IHK	German Chambers of Commerce and Industry
JCCI	Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
JETRO	Japan External Trade Organisation
LCCF	London Chamber of Commerce Forum
LCCI	London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
MCC	Merton Chamber of Commerce
OMIS	Overseas Market Introduction Service
SME	Small and medium size business
UCCIFE	Union of French Chambers of Commerce and Industry
UKTI	UK Trade and Investment

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