

# START-UP TO SCALE-UP: SUPPORTING SMES TO GROW

## THE MANUFACTURING BUSINESS POPULATION IS DOMINATED BY MICRO AND SME FIRMS



**MORE THAN 140,000**  
active manufacturing businesses in the UK

Micro and SME manufacturers account for **99%** of all manufacturers

SMEs account for **1/5** of all manufacturing businesses

The number of micro manufacturers increased by **2,570** between 2020 and 2021



**These businesses are small but powerful**



**38%** of manufacturers are potentially scale-up or fast-growing firms (based on turnover growth)

**23%** of SME manufacturers plan to expand their business into a large business within the next 5-10 years

And across every region and devolved nation micro and SME manufacturers are looking to scale up and simultaneously, level up the UK

## THE BARRIERS SMES FACE



Just under **1/2** of manufacturers say access to skills is the top barrier to growth

This is followed by:

access to overseas markets **27%**

domestic markets **23%**

physical space **18%**

and Finance **17%**



### Finance

**2/3** of SME manufacturers grow by re-investing past profits

**31%** would prioritise investment in developing products and expanding capacity if they were able to access finance



### Space

**18%** of SME manufacturers say they lack the physical space to upscale

**HALF** believe the Government should prioritise infrastructure investment in domestic transport and connectivity



### Trade

**MORE THAN 1/3**

indicated costs associated with tariffs, quotas, taxation and logistics dominate barriers to exporting



### Productivity and leadership

**SMEs**

prefer to invest more in people than in technology when looking to improve productivity

**97%**

believe the ambition and vision of a leader is critical to upscaling a business

## TAKE UP OF SUPPORT REMAINS LOW

Overcoming a lack of awareness



**AN AVERAGE OF 60%**

of manufacturers were unaware of available business support schemes or programmes

The best way to grow



**60%**

believe joining a trade association like Make UK is the most useful step to achieving their growth ambitions

Contact us to find out more:  
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