



Press Release

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Accountants Urge Government to Take More Active Role in Stimulating Growth

The Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies (CCAB), the umbrella body for the UK accountancy profession, has called on the UK Government to actively pursue growth with a 'long term' industrial strategy. In an assessment of the Coalition Government's progress, based on interviews with senior accountants in business, finance and the public sector, the CCAB has also raised concerns about the damage being done to the UK's long term economic prospects by the language of austerity. (The assessment can be downloaded [here](#)).

Those senior business and finance leaders who contributed to the assessment said:-

The economy is currently 'treading water' with little sign that it a sustainable recovery is in place. A lack of confidence among both businesses and consumers is seen as a main constraint to growth and the general consensus is that there are no easy answers to the problems facing the UK economy.

Politicians should stop talking down the economy as the overwhelming focus on austerity is seen as holding back a favourable climate for growth. There needs to be greater vocal support for businesses and promoting confidence as well as a longer-term approach to the economy, which would provide the confidence and certainty needed to enable investment and strategic planning.

Accountants have a critical role to play in advising businesses, especially SMEs, as well as training future business leaders.

In response, the CCAB has urged Government to:-

Set out a long-term industrial strategy with clear plans for particular sectors – in particular, it believes Government should identify what can be done to target developing export markets and where possible, should develop policy on a cross-party basis to give business certainty beyond the election cycle.

Remove barriers to hiring and provide incentives for businesses to take on young people - it would like to see more done to tackle the regulatory burden of hiring and to give businesses greater incentives to offer opportunities to young people.

Promote a clear pipeline of investment projects and work in partnership with the private sector to identify priorities – it wants more done to promote key projects within the National Infrastructure Plan to business, helping businesses to plan their own investment and boost jobs.

Consider a range of short term measures which could help ‘unblock’ the economy – it called on the government to ensure that the Red Tape Challenge is being used effectively to deliver quick reforms on those issues which have the most significant impact on business.

Commenting on the report, the CCAB said that: “The accountancy profession recognises the role it can play in boosting economic growth, as advisors and leaders of business, and as a partner to government in developing evidence based policies to boost growth. We look forward to working with policymakers to help address the issues identified in this report.”

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CCAB’s core purpose is to promote sustainable growth in the UK economy through the UK accountancy profession.

CCAB has five members – ICAEW, ACCA, CIPFA, ICAS and Chartered Accountants Ireland - and provides a forum for the bodies to work together collectively in the public interest on matters affecting the profession and the wider economy. The accountancy profession forms a central part of the professional and business services sector which contributes £166 billion to the economy each year (15% of UK GDP).

Professional qualified accountants have a key role to play in the economy with over 240,000 accountants employed in the UK. CCAB’s credibility stems from its insight into all areas of finance and accounting, from finance director and audit partner to management accountants, professional advisers, public sector finance leaders and entrepreneurs. CCAB’s members work through the financial value chain in all sectors as key decision makers and business leaders within the UK and around the world.