



Florida: The Gateway to the Americas

A Strategic Trade Brief for British Manufacturers and Exporters – May, 2025

Executive Summary

Florida's robust economy, strategic location, and comprehensive trade agreements, notably the UK-Florida Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), position it as an ideal launchpad for British companies aiming to penetrate the U.S., Latin American, and Caribbean markets. The State's dynamic retail sector, expansive shopping mall network, and dedicated support structures—such as the Made in Britain Trade Centre—further enhance its appeal for British exporters across manufacturing, consumer goods, fashion, food and drink, technology, and advanced industries.



Florida : “The Gateway to the Americas”

Florida is widely known as the “Gateway to the Americas” due to its geographic proximity, cultural ties, and commercial connectivity to Latin America and the Caribbean. Miami and Fort Lauderdale serve as pivotal trade hubs, offering world-class port and airport infrastructure, customs Free-zones, and bilingual talent pools that facilitate seamless distribution across the Western Hemisphere.



UK–Florida Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Signed in November 2023, the UK–Florida Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) established a groundbreaking framework to promote trade and economic cooperation between the United Kingdom and the State of Florida. As of May 24, 2025, the MOU continues to actively support British businesses with direct access to Florida’s government-backed initiatives. Key industries prioritized include aerospace, clean energy, fintech,

semiconductors, AI, life sciences, legal services, and agricultural technology. British exporters benefit from reduced regulatory friction, joint research opportunities, and a platform to resolve trade barriers.

Resources:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-and-florida-trade-and-economic-co-operation-memorandum-of-understanding>



Florida's Economic Landscape

Florida's economy reached a GDP of \$1.4 trillion in 2025, with a 5.4% year-over-year growth. The State is home to over 3 million small businesses and hosts regional headquarters for multiple Fortune 500 firms. Florida continues to invest heavily in workforce development, innovation hubs, and clean tech manufacturing. Key economic drivers include:

- Advanced manufacturing: \$63B sector with British-compatible standards.
- Life sciences: Over 1,400 firms, research hospitals, and R&D institutions.
- Construction: Driven by population growth and real estate development.
- Tech & innovation: Expansion in AI, aerospace, and cybersecurity.

Source: Enterprise Florida, IBISWorld (2025)



Florida's Retail Industry: A Magnet for British Consumer Brands

Retail sales in Florida surged to \$669 billion in 2024, with projections showing further increases in 2025. Miami, Orlando, Tampa, and Fort Lauderdale are top-performing cities, home to international shopping centers and premium outlets that attract both tourists and local consumers. With over 86,000 active retail outlets, the State offers significant opportunities for British lifestyle, fashion, wellness, and food & drink brands seeking U.S. expansion.

Sources: Florida Retail Federation (2025 forecast)



The Made in Britain Trade Centre: Supporting British Exporters

The Made in Britain Trade Centre in Fort Lauderdale acts as a physical and strategic bridge for British SMEs to enter and grow in the American marketplace. In partnership with Broward County, it provides:

- Local brand representation to U.S. buyers
- Showcase participation at trade expos like the Florida International Trade & Cultural Expo (FITCE) in October every year before the main holiday shopping season in the USA
- Annual participation of the “Brit Boat” in the Seminole HardRock WinterFest Boat Parade (13 December 2025) to promote Britain and British brands during the hottest Sales Season of the year - televised to over a million people.
- Onboarding to the MadeInBritainBrands.com e-commerce platform to sell to US buyers and wholesale distributors
- Guidance on FDA/USDA compliance, customs, and logistics

The Centre’s mission is to offer cost-effective market entry for British manufacturers through professional consultancy and real-world buyer connections.



Logistics and Access to the Americas

Florida boasts world-class infrastructure vital for global trade. As of 2025, it features:

- 14 deepwater seaports including PortMiami and Port Everglades
- 21 commercial airports including Miami International and Orlando International
- Extensive interstate highway and rail systems
- Foreign Trade Zones that reduce import duties

Over \$10 billion has been allocated to port, airport, and logistics hub improvements since 2021, enhancing Florida's status as the logistics capital of the Southeastern U.S.

Sources: Florida Department of Transportation, Select Florida, U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics (2025)



Conclusion

Florida stands as the most strategic and welcoming gateway for British exporters into the Americas. With its pro-business policies, state-level trade cooperation, and booming consumer base, it empowers British companies to enter the U.S. with reduced risk and maximum opportunity. The Made in Britain Trade Centre offers essential on-the-ground support to launch and scale operations, while infrastructure, sector diversity, and regulatory facilitation complete a powerful platform for transatlantic growth.

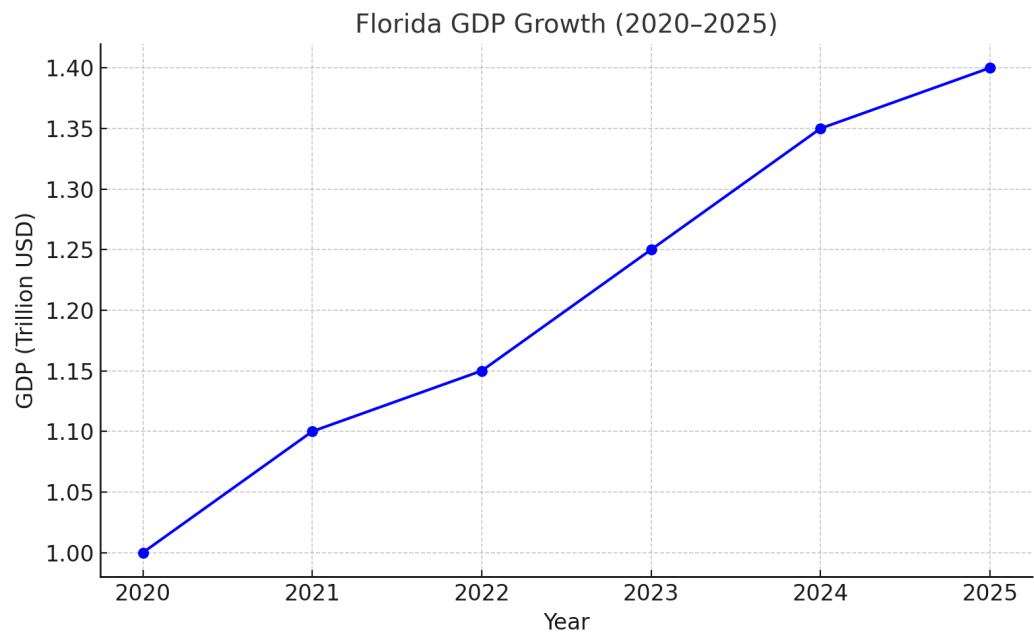
For tailored support, contact the Made in Britain Trade Centre via

www.tradewithbritain.com - info@tradewithbritain.com

Appendices: Visual Insights and Market Trends

1. Florida GDP Growth (2020–2025)

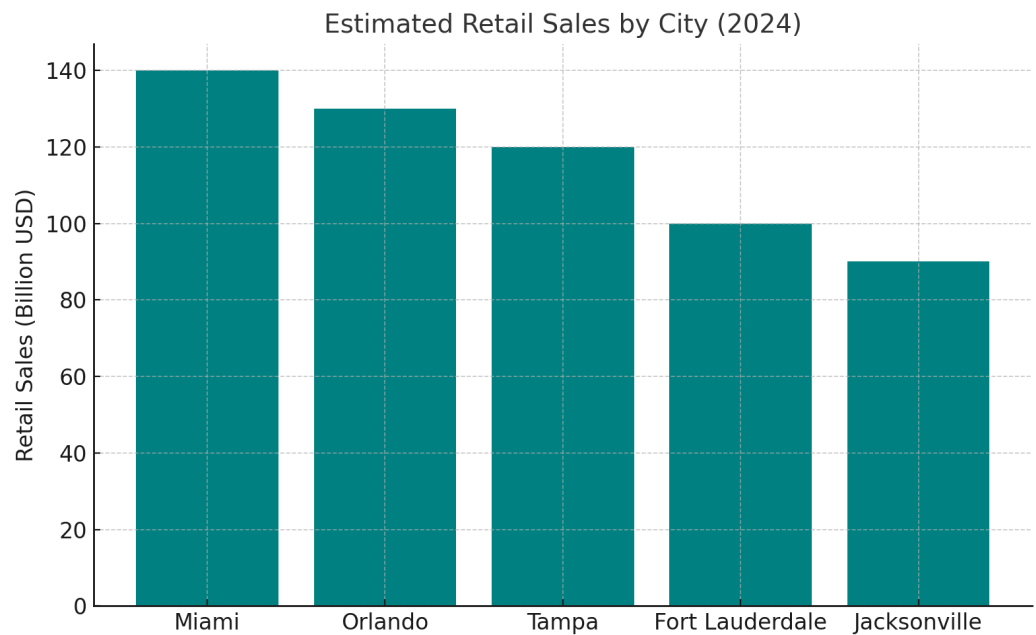
Florida’s GDP has steadily increased from \$1 trillion in 2020 to an estimated \$1.4 trillion in 2025, illustrating consistent economic expansion.



Source: Enterprise Florida; IBISWorld, 2025

2. Estimated Retail Sales by City (2024)

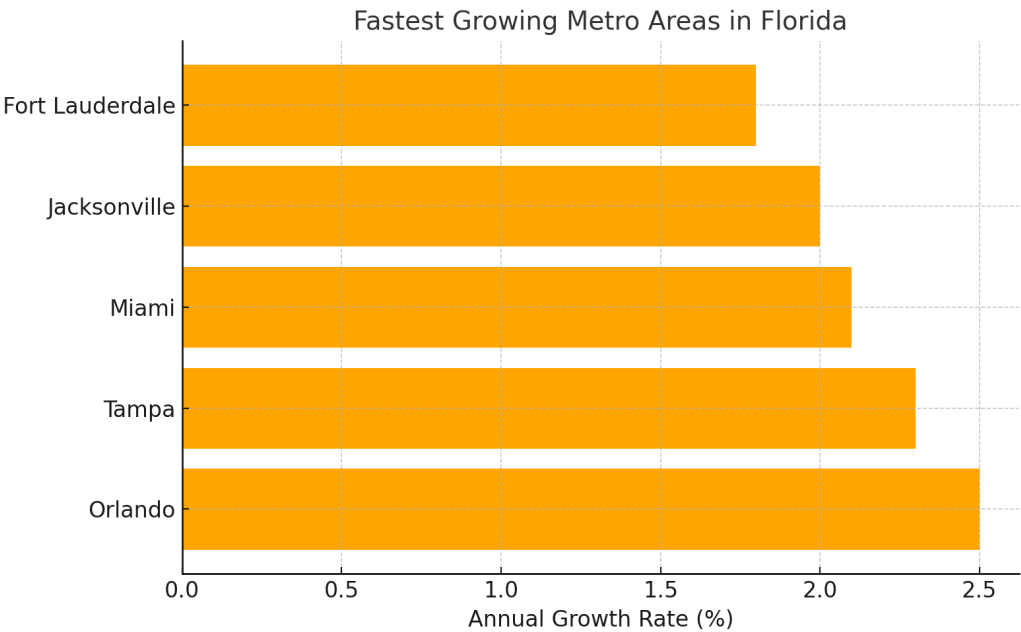
Key cities like Miami, Orlando, and Tampa represent major consumer markets for British exporters, with total retail sales across the state reaching \$669 billion.



Source: Florida Retail Federation; 2025

3. Fastest Growing Metro Areas in Florida

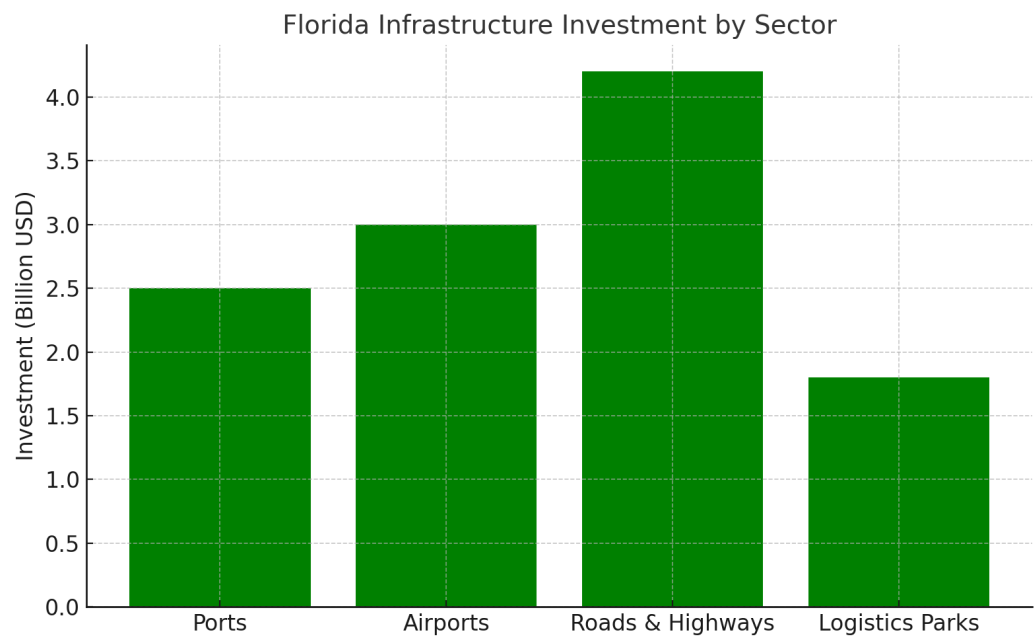
Population growth in urban centers like Orlando and Tampa drives retail demand and infrastructure expansion—critical for exporters.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Enterprise Florida, 2025

4. Florida Infrastructure Investment by Sector

Florida’s multi-billion dollar investments in ports, airports, and logistics parks directly support international trade and supply chain efficiency.



Source: Florida Department of Transportation; Select Florida, 2025