



Black Country Chamber of Commerce  
Quarterly Economic Survey

Q3 2017





## ABOUT THE QES

The Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) is a survey conducted each quarter, the results of which contribute towards and are compiled by the British Chambers of Commerce to form one of the largest independent economic surveys of businesses in the UK.

As the most authoritative national business confidence survey, and the first to be published each quarter, the results of the QES are closely watched by both HM Treasury and the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, thereby helping to inform decisions that impact upon matters such as interest rates and business policy. The survey itself has reliably anticipated the onset of two recessions since the early 1990s before they began and continues to act as a reliable indicator of national and regional economic performance. Moreover, fluctuations in prices or a downturn in demand are important economic indicators that are flagged up first by businesses on the ground, so the QES is an essential mechanism for decision-makers to understand the economy, not just in the City of London, but in the regions too.

The Black Country Chamber of Commerce uses the results of the survey to inform upon detailed economic performance and trends throughout the local region and beyond. In Q4 2016, the survey covered approximately 7,000 businesses employing, therein highlighting that it provides a holistically representative picture of UK commerce and industry.

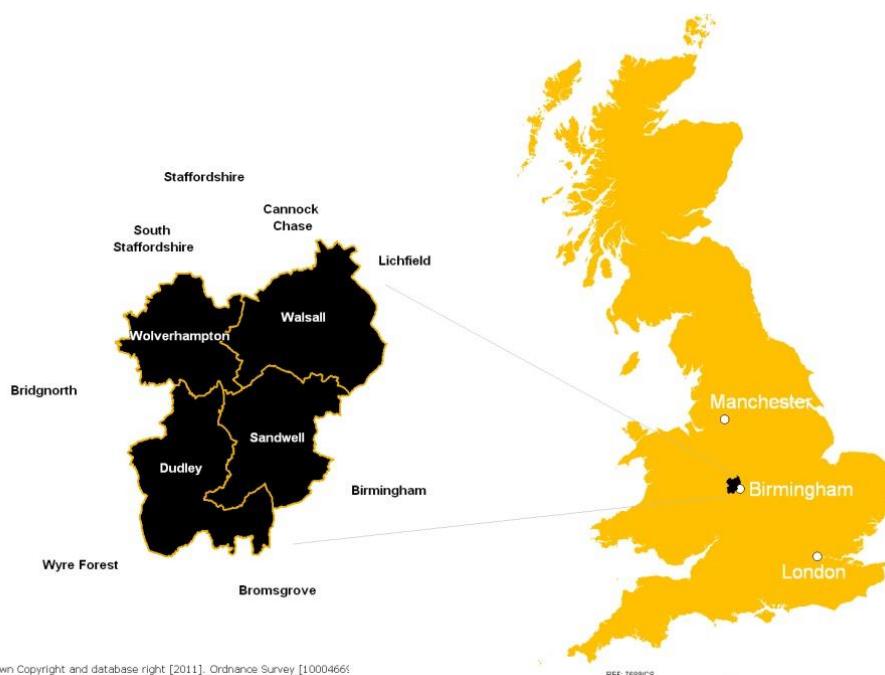
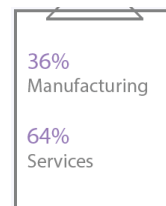
## METHODOLOGY

The Q3 2017 survey was conducted between **21<sup>st</sup> August and 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017** and businesses from across the Black Country, including all members of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, were invited to respond.

The survey was completed by **156 businesses**: **56** from the manufacturing sector and **100** from the services sector.

N.B. The balance figures referred to throughout this report are ascertained by calculating the percentage of respondents who reported either increased or constant levels of performance in each respective area, and then subsequently subtracting the percentage of those who reported a decrease.

Please note, this report is made available to all local media organisations, Black Country MPs, MEPs, local authorities and businesses.

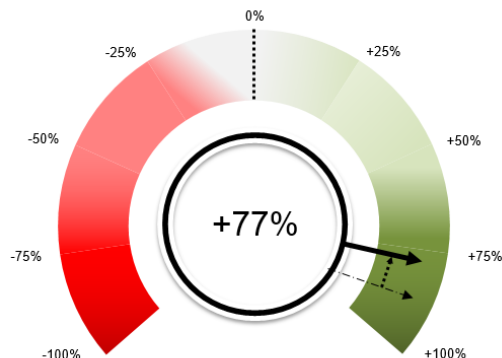


## QUARTERLY ECONOMIC SURVEY (QES) KEY FINDINGS Q1 2017

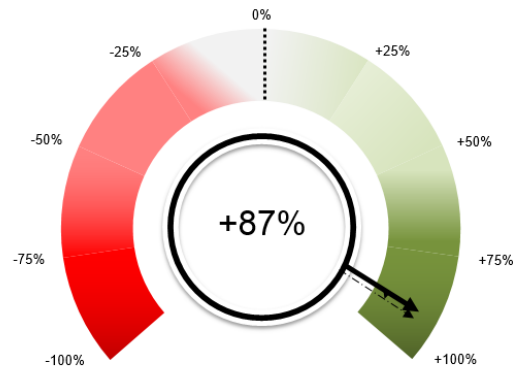
Each quarter, the Black Country Chamber of Commerce conducts an economic survey that aims to assess business performance throughout the region. In Q3 2017, there was an upturn in export sales for both the manufacturing and service sectors, whilst domestic sales saw a decrease on the previous quarter. The current strength of the pound could have had an impact on rising exports.

### AT A GLANCE

#### Domestic Sales

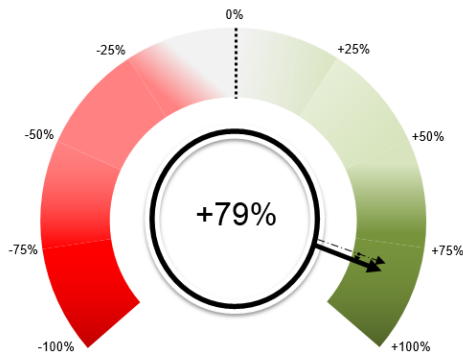


...of manufacturers reported either improved or constant domestic sales in Q3 2017, down from +85% in Q2 2017.

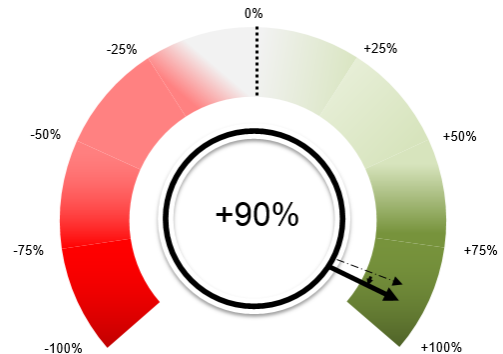


...of services firms reported either improved or constant domestic sales in Q3 2017, down from +88% in Q2 2017.

#### Export Sales

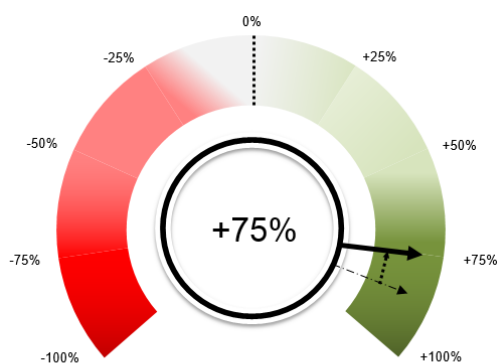


...of manufacturers reported either improved or constant export sales in Q3 2017, down from +80% in Q2 2017.

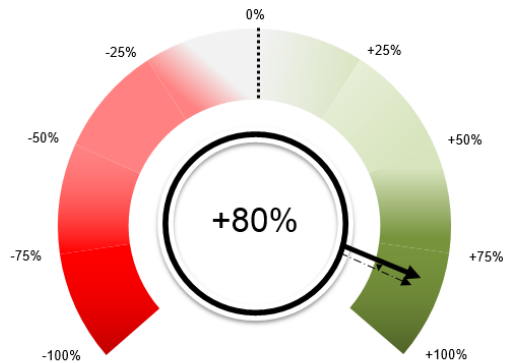


...of services firms reported either improved or constant export sales in Q3 2017, up from +85% in Q2 2017.

#### Cashflow



...of manufacturers reported either increased or constant levels of cashflow in Q3 2017, down from +82% in Q2 2017.

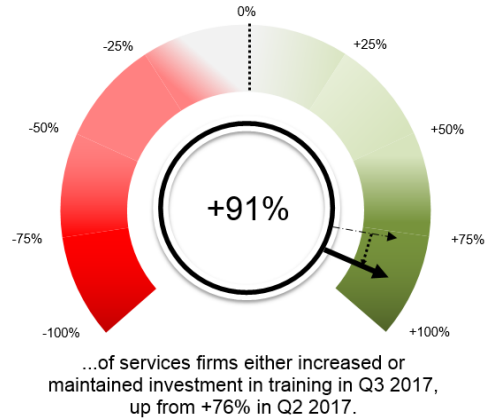
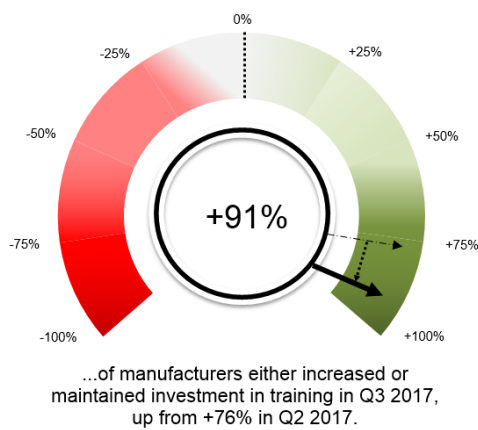


...of services firms reported either increased or constant levels of cashflow in Q3 2017, down from +82% in Q2 2017.

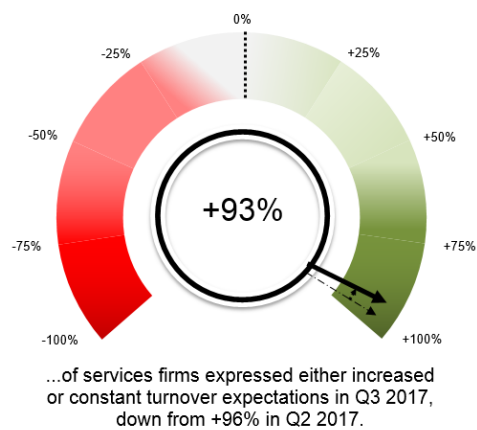
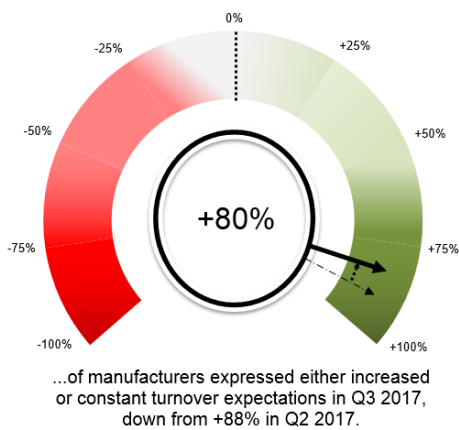
## LOOKING AHEAD

In Q3 2017, the forward looking indicators for both manufacturers and service providers point to an increase in investment intentions for training. In addition, business confidence relating to profitability has seen a marked increase amongst manufacturers. However, whilst Black Country businesses have recorded growth in the face of recent headwinds, upfront costs and volatile market conditions continue to add to the uncertainty many are feeling. Therefore, it's vital that these concerns are addressed in order to allow the region to truly flourish in a post-Brexit Britain.

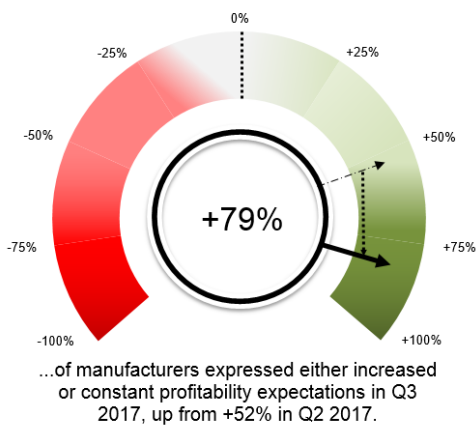
### Investment Intentions (Training)



### Business Confidence (Turnover)



### Business Confidence (Profitability)





**NOTES**



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