



Quick Glance

**Quarter 2
2018**

Doncaster firms optimistic about future turnover and profit

This is the first time the long-standing Quarterly Economic Survey, run by the Chamber of Commerce, has come under the umbrella of Doncaster Business Insight. The results for Q2 2018 indicate that over the last 3 months, rates for domestic sales and orders, overseas sales and orders and employment growth are down. However, there is high optimism for future turnover and profitability over the next 3 months.

A skills shortage (particularly for higher skilled / professional positions) continues to be an issue that correlates to the regional and national picture. More than 9 out of 10 responding firms think Doncaster is a 'good' or 'fair' place to do business. There is strong business support for improving Doncaster through its ambition to become a university city/town and to work on economy boosting projects relating to leisure/culture, improved infrastructure and education.

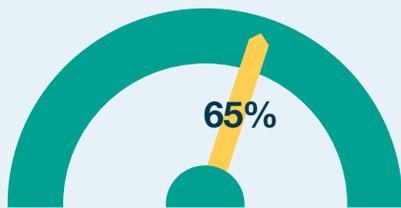
Hot topics

How beneficial would a rail link at Doncaster Sheffield Airport be to:



The economy

97% of firms reported a rail link at Doncaster Sheffield Airport would benefit the economy.



Your business

65% of firms expect it to have a positive impact on their business.

Do you agree with the ambition set out for Doncaster to become a university town/city?



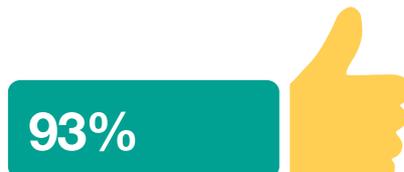
87% of firms are supportive of the ambition for Doncaster to become a university town/city.

Does your business have a strategy/plan to address/improve mental health in the workplace?



70% of firms reported they have no strategy or plan in place, or plans to put one in place.

How do you rate Doncaster as a place to do business?



The majority (60%) of respondents consider Doncaster to be a 'good' place to do business, 33% rate it as fair and 7% as poor.

What's the next big idea for Doncaster?

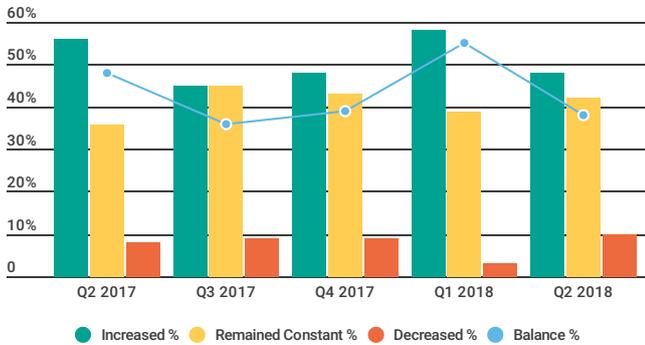


The highest number of firms said Doncaster should focus on being a leisure/cultural destination. Followed by improving infrastructure and education.

Domestic sales



Over the past 3 months UK sales/custom/bookings have: Increased / Remained constant / Decreased



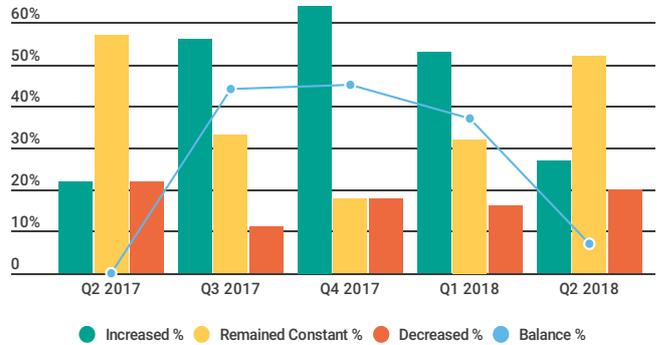
This quarter: On balance, fewer firms reported an increase in sales compared to last quarter.

Year on year: On balance, UK sales are at lower levels compared to the same period last year.

Overseas sales



Over the past 3 months overseas sales/custom/bookings have: Increased / Remained constant / Decreased



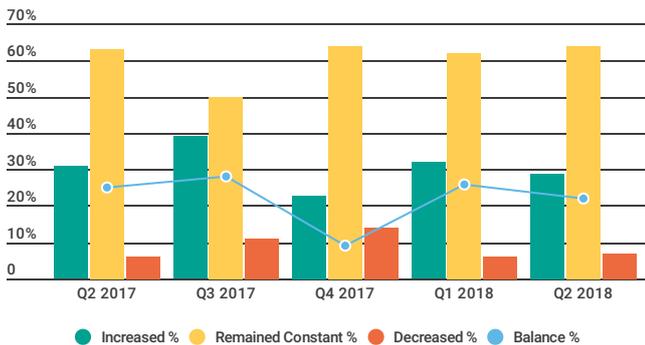
This quarter: On balance, there was a large reduction in the proportion of firms reporting increased export sales.

Year on year: On balance, export sales have slightly improved.

Employment growth



Over the last 3 months has your workforce: Increased / Remained constant / Decreased

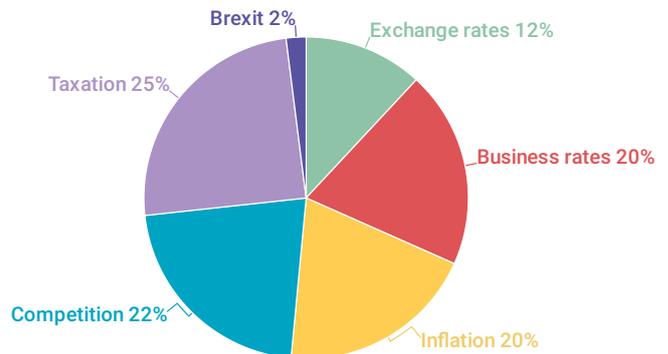


This quarter: On balance, the percentage of firms reporting employment growth has slightly decreased.

Year on year: There is a slight decrease in the proportion of firms trying to recruit.

Business challenges

Please indicate which of these following factors are more of a concern to your business than 3 months ago: Interest rates / Business rates / Competition / Exchange rates / Inflation / Taxation / Other

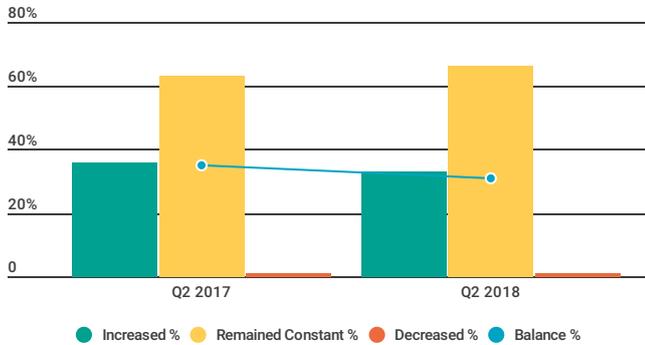


Results show: Doncaster firms are more concerned about taxation and competition followed by inflation and business rates. Brexit and political uncertainty appear to be of limited concern.

Price



Over the next 3 months, do you expect the price of your goods/advanced orders/services to: Increase / Remain the same / Decrease

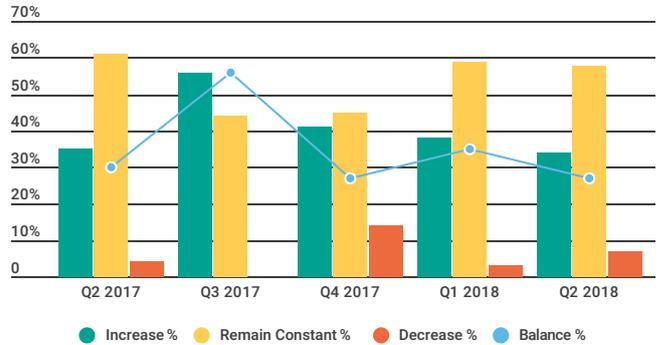


This quarter: A high majority of firms expect prices to increase or remain constant over the next three months.
Year on year: The balance of results are similar to the same period last year.

Employment expectations



Over the next 3 months, do you expect your workforce to: Increase / Remain constant / Decrease

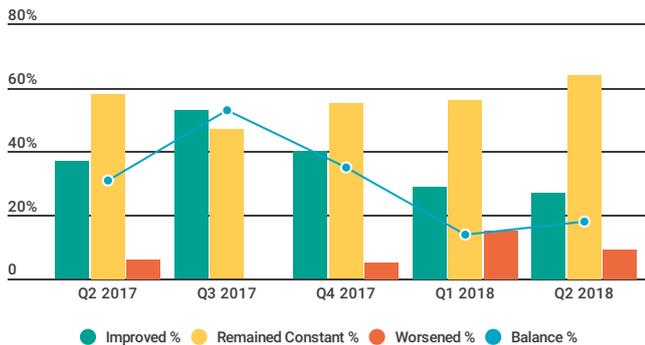


This quarter: On balance, there has been a reduction in the proportion of firms expecting to grow their workforce.
Year on year: On balance, businesses expect employment to increase in the next 3 months but at a slightly lower level than for the same period last year.

Investment



Over the past 3 months, investment plans for training have: Increased / Remained constant / Decreased

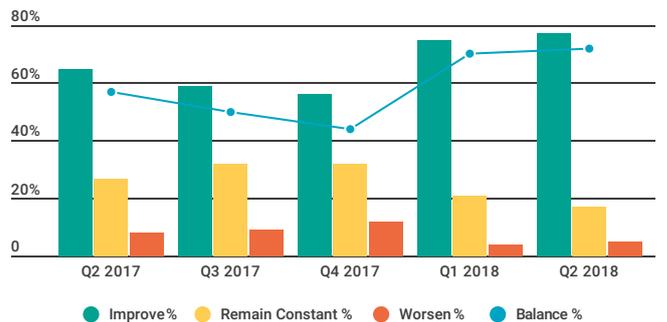


This quarter: The overall trend for investing in training increased, on balance, since the previous quarter.
Year on year: The trend for investment in training has, on balance, reduced over the last year.

Turnover



Over the next 12 months, do you believe turnover will: Improve / Remain the same / Worsen



This quarter: On balance, a high proportion of firms expect turnover to increase over the next year.
Year on year: On balance, there has been a large increase in the proportion of firms expecting turnover to increase over the next 12 months.

Doncaster Business Insight Roundtables

Key stakeholders attended monthly Roundtables to discuss a topical business matter, share their business needs, and form working relationships; here's what Doncaster firms said:

Logistics

What are your views on the Transport for the North's draft Strategic Transport Plan?

"It's of paramount importance that Doncaster is recognised as a Significant Economic Centre in the plan."

"The deliverability of the plan is dependent on construction firms having access to staff with the right skills; the plan needs to say more about this."

"It would be helpful if multiple transport schemes could be given the green light at once rather than the usual 'drip-drip' of announcements; this would create credibility with business."

Place

Do you agree with the ambition set out for Doncaster to become a university city/town?

"There needs to be a business focus and employer engagement with both large firms and SME's - business skills training will help improve the skills shortage."

"Businesses don't realise the skills and education training courses/ programmes already available across Doncaster."

"The Doncaster 'offer' needs to be exciting if we want to attract and retain talent."

Health

Does your business have a strategy/plan to address/improve mental health in the workplace?

"Businesses are keen to consider a revised workplace charter to address mental health in the workplace."

"Doncaster business stock is largely SME's. People need to be mindful of not pushing themselves too far, there is an element of self-management required."

"There needs to be more joined up working between health sector organisations (public and private) - there is a lot of willingness to work together."

Register for forthcoming Roundtables at doncaster-chamber.co.uk

About Doncaster Business Insight

Doncaster Business Insight captures a regular snapshot of business sentiment on the local economy and hot business matters through a quarterly survey, monthly roundtable and quarterly breakfast briefing.

The results and feedback given by Doncaster firms help inform Doncaster Chamber, Doncaster MBC, local, regional and national policy makers and influencers to ensure the local business voice is heard, address any business matters and develop the right policies/structures that support business and the economy.

The results are also fed into the British Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Economic Survey which acts as a significant economic indicator for national and international organisations including the Bank of England.

Dates for your diary 2018

Take the survey every quarter during the following periods:

Q3

27 August to
17 September

Q4

6 November to
27 November

We ask. You say. We do

For the full report visit doncaster-chamber/dbi