



# Quick Glance

**Quarter 4  
2018**

## Firms report UK sales slightly down but exports slightly up

The results of the Doncaster Business Insight Survey in the fourth quarter 2018, show a mixed picture for businesses across the borough during the ongoing uncertainty surrounding Brexit.

Indeed, 45% of firms reported feeling prepared for whatever the outcome of the Brexit deal / no deal, alongside a high percentage saying they felt neither prepared or unprepared.

In terms of key results over the last three months, on balance, Doncaster firms reported UK sales are at slightly lower levels but export sales are slightly higher. More positively, on balance, more firms forecast increased overseas sales and orders in the next quarter.

There was a drop in the percentage of businesses experiencing difficulties in recruiting but of those who did, it continued to be for higher skilled and professional jobs. The picture for recruitment looks more positive for Q1 2019 as on balance more firms expect employment to increase.

## Hot topics

### Brexit

**How prepared do you feel your business is whatever the outcome of the Brexit deal / no deal?**

45% of firms reported feeling prepared as opposed to unprepared for Brexit with or without a deal.



Very prepared 7%, Prepared 38%, Neither prepared nor unprepared 38% Unprepared 9%, Very unprepared 7%

**How knowledgeable / informed do you feel about the consequences of Brexit for your business?**

The majority (44%) of firms felt either uninformed or very uninformed about the consequences of Brexit for their business.



Very informed 7%, Informed 25%, Neither informed nor uninformed 24%, Uninformed 21%, Very uninformed 23%

### Which form of road /rail connections to Manchester would most benefit Doncaster and your business?

There was an even response of firms most wanting improvements to the A628 road, M62 and rail links.



The majority of firms (54%) said improved links would have some positive impact on business but over a third (38%) felt the impact would be negligible.



### What is the main local regulatory issue facing your business?

**37%** of firms said the biggest local regulatory problem was getting to speak or an email to the right person.

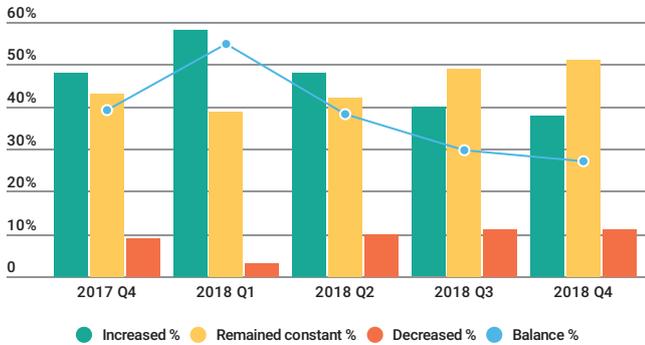
**23%** of firms want regulators to be more visible about the support they can offer.

**22%** want them to provide a more consistent approach.

## Domestic sales



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



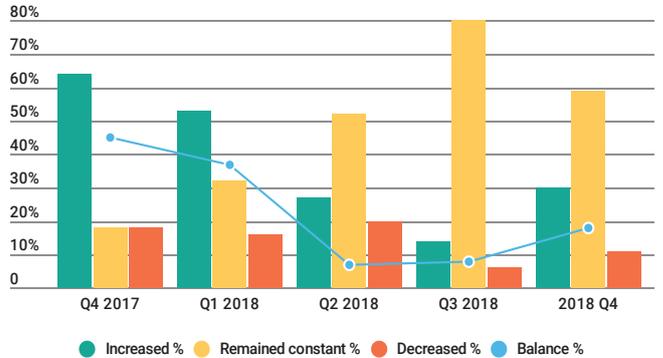
**This quarter:** On balance, UK sales are at lower levels compared to last quarter.

**Year on year:** The downward trend in the balance of UK sales has continued but the positive balance shows that more firms have seen increased rather than reduced sales.

## Overseas sales



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



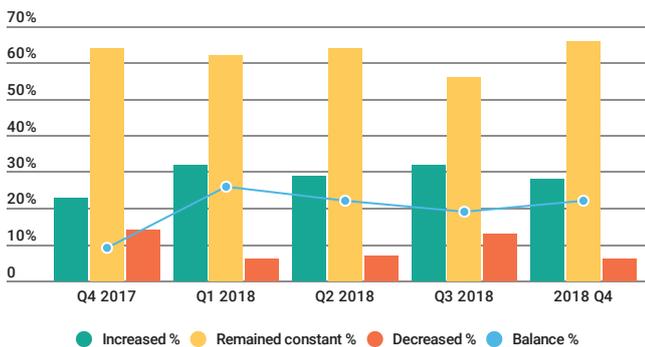
**This quarter:** On balance, export sales have improved slightly.

**Year on year:** Although on balance export sales are at lower levels to last year, they are still positive with more exporters reporting increased rather than decreased sales.

## Employment growth



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



**This quarter:** On balance, there has been a slight increase over in workforce.

**Year on year:** Employment growth is at higher levels compared to the same period last year.

## Recruitment Skills Gap

If you experienced difficulty finding suitable employees, for which of the following categories: Skilled manual/Technical, Professional/Managerial, Clerical, Semi/Unskilled



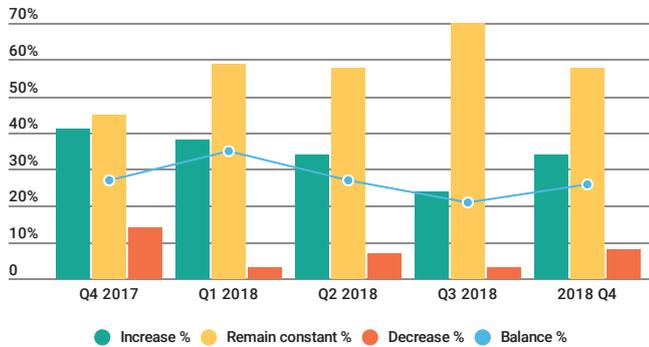
**This quarter:** The category most difficult to recruit to continued to be higher skilled and professional jobs.

**Year on year:** Firms had more difficulty recruiting for clerical work than this time last year.

## Employment expectations



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

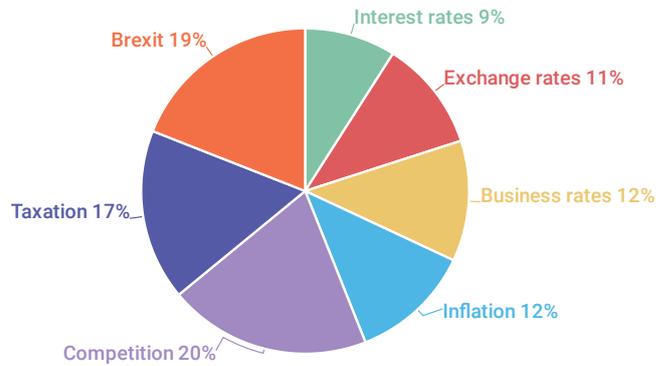


**This quarter:** On balance, more firms expect employment to increase over the next 3 months.

**Year on year:** Employment expectations are at very similar levels to the same period last year.

## 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

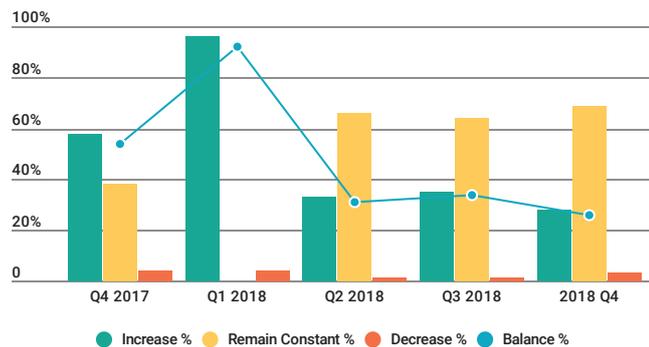


**Results show:** Firms reported that of the factors listed, Brexit and competition were the two primary issues that were seen as more of a concern than 3 months ago.

## Price



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

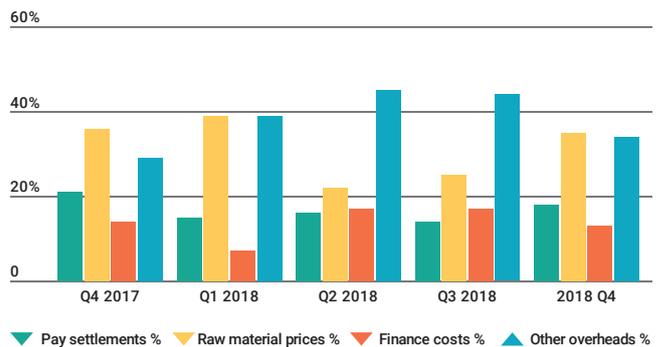


**This quarter:** On balance, expectations of future price increases have decreased, with a higher proportion of businesses expecting prices to remain constant.

**Year on year:** There has been a large decrease in the proportion of businesses that expect prices to increase.

## Price Pressures

Is your business currently suffering pressures to raise its prices from any of the following? Pay settlements / Raw material prices / Finance costs / Other overheads



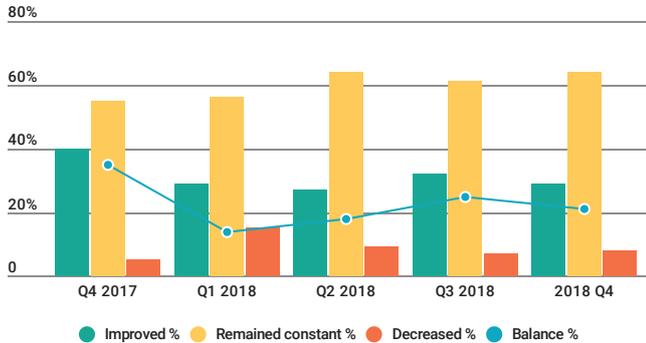
**This quarter:** Firms reported that pressure from pay settlements and raw material prices has increased compared to last quarter.

**Year on year:** Price pressures are broadly similar to last year, with a small reduction in pressure from pay settlements and an increase in pressure from other overheads.

## Investment



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



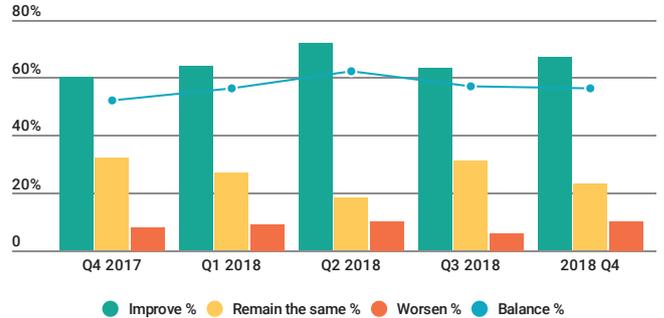
**This quarter:** On balance, investment plans for training have decreased.

**Year on year:** Over the last year, investment in training has remained relatively stable.

## Profitability



Over the next 12 months, do you believe profitability will Increase / Remain constant / Worsen



**This quarter:** On balance, expectations of increased profitability over the next 12 months are the same as last quarter.

**Year on year:** Compared to the same period last year, there has been a slight increase in expectations of increased profitability over the next 12 months.

## 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.

## We ask. You say. We do

For the full report visit [doncaster-chamber/dbi-results](http://doncaster-chamber/dbi-results)

## Dates for your diary 2019

### Surveys

Take the survey every quarter during the following periods:

Q1 - 18 Feb to 11 March

Q2 - 20 May to 10 June

Q3 - 26 Aug to 16 Sept

### Roundtables

Join us to discuss the hottest business issues.

#### 23 January

Doncaster's present and future transport

#### Friday 14 February

Fixing the fundamentals