

Jersey Business Tendency Survey

June 2013

Statistics Unit: www.gov.je/statistics

Summary

In June 2013:

- the **headline all-sector Business Activity Indicator was -8 percentage points (pp)**, implying that the proportion of businesses in Jersey reporting a decline in business activity compared with three months previously was 8 pp greater than the proportion reporting an increase. Almost half of all businesses reported 'no change';
- the all-sector Business Activity Indicator improved in the latest quarter, recording a slightly negative level last seen in September 2011;
- for the **Finance** sector:
 - five of the ten indicators improved in the latest quarter, whilst four of the indicators remained at a level similar to the previous quarter, March 2013;
 - Capacity Utilisation saw the greatest improvement, recording the highest positive level for this indicator to date; the Business Activity, Profitability, Employment and Future Employment indicators also saw improvement on the previous quarter;
 - in contrast, the New Business indicator declined significantly compared with the previous two quarters and Future Business Activity remained at its lowest level to date;
- seven of the ten indicators for the **non-finance** sectors, overall, improved in the latest quarter, although all remained negative; Business Optimism and Future Employment were their least negative for two years, whilst Business Activity was its least negative for more than a year;
- five of the ten indicators for **Wholesale & retail** saw improvement in the latest quarter and a further three saw slight improvement; Business Activity and New Business were the most improved;
- for the **Construction** sector all ten indicators remained negative; Profitability, Input Costs and Capacity Utilisation were the most strongly negative.

Introduction

The Jersey Business Tendency Survey (BTS) was launched in September 2009 in order to provide qualitative information about the Island's economy in a timely manner. The survey enables a set of ten indicators to be produced; the headline indicator is that of Business Activity.

Responses to the survey are used to calculate weighted net balances (WNB), defined as the difference between the proportion of businesses reporting seeing an increase in a particular measure compared to three months earlier and the proportion of businesses seeing a decrease.

Appendix 1 presents the WNB for each indicator for the current quarter, whilst Appendix 2 presents the back series of WNBs since the survey was introduced. A copy of the survey form is contained in Appendix 3.

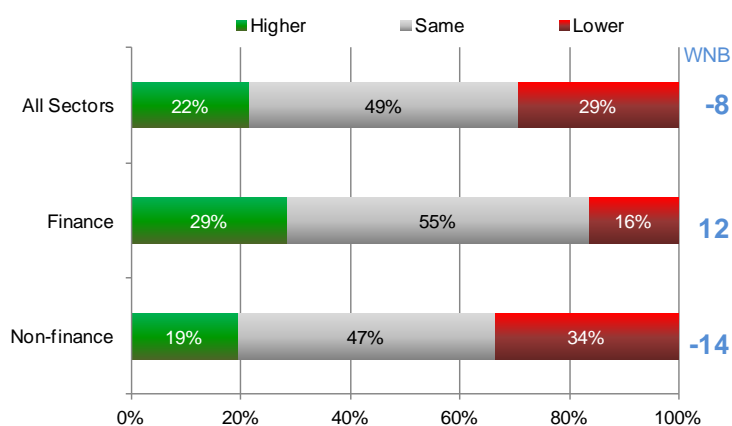
It should be emphasised that the Business Activity Indicator, and the other “current” indicators, represent a qualitative expression of the relative position of economic performance between the current point in time and that of three months previously rather than an absolute measure of performance. The two “future” indicators represent a qualitative expression of expected changes over the next three months.

Section 1: Business Activity

The **Business Activity Indicator** represents a measure of the total amount of work undertaken by businesses operating in Jersey. Such activity will have specific definitions relevant to each sector of business and may be considered as, for example, turnover, number of products produced, gross income or chargeable hours.

Figure 1.1 – Business Activity Indicator

June 2013 compared with the situation three months previously



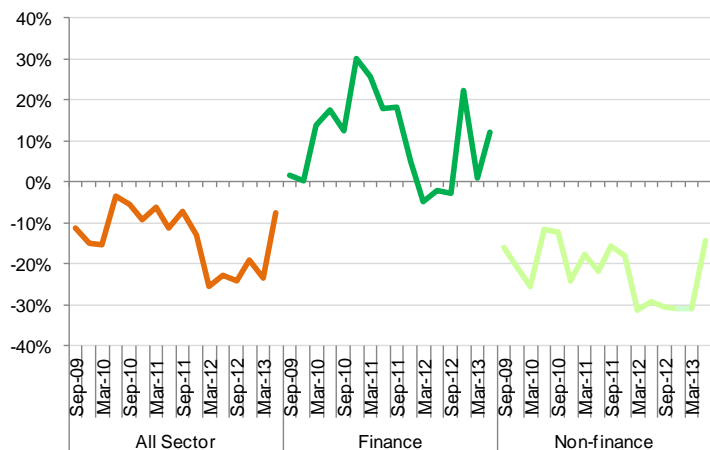
The all-sector Business Activity Indicator in June 2013 improved in the latest quarter, recording a slightly negative level last seen in September 2011.

The non-finance sectors, overall, were significantly more negative in terms of business activity than the Finance sector.

Around half of businesses in the Finance (55%) and non-finance sectors (47%) reported no change in business activity during the latest three months.

Figure 1.2 – Business Activity Indicator: time series

September 2009 – June 2013



The Business Activity indicator for the Finance sector improved by 11 pp in June 2013, from the neutral level seen in March 2013 (1 pp) to a positive level (12 pp).

The Business Activity Indicator for the non-finance sectors, although remaining negative, improved to a similar level to that last seen in the latter part of 2011

Section 2: Finance

Five of the indicators for the Finance sector improved in the latest quarter, whilst four of the indicators remained essentially similar (see Appendix 2).

Figure 2.1 – Finance Sector Indicators

June 2013 compared with the situation three months previously

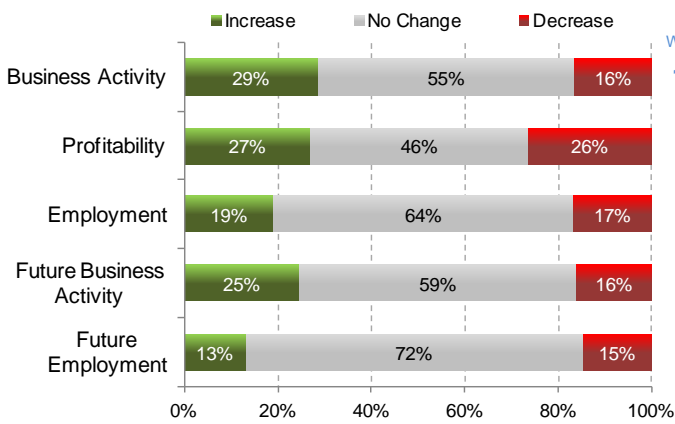
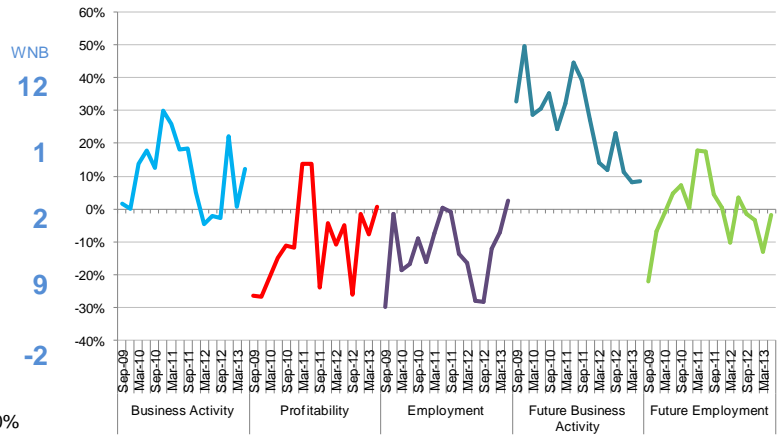


Figure 2.2 – Finance Sector Indicators

September 2009 – June 2013



Capacity Utilisation saw the greatest improvement in the latest quarter, recording its highest level to date. The Business Activity, Profitability, Employment and Future Employment indicators also saw some improvement compared with the previous quarter. Profitability and Future Employment were essentially neutral in the latest quarter; around three-quarters of firms anticipated no change in future employment.

In contrast, the New Business indicator saw a significant decline from the strongly positive levels seen in the two previous quarters, returning to the marginally negative level recorded in September 2012. The Future Business Activity indicator, whilst slightly positive, remained at its lowest level to date.

Smaller finance companies (having fewer than 50 full-time equivalent employees, FTEs) were generally more positive or less negative than larger companies, notably for Business Activity, New Business and Future Business Activity. Larger finance companies were more positive for Capacity Utilisation.

Section 3: Non-finance

Seven of the ten indicators for the non-finance sectors, although all negative, improved in the latest quarter.

Figure 3.1 Non-finance sector indicators

June 2013 compared with the situation three months previously

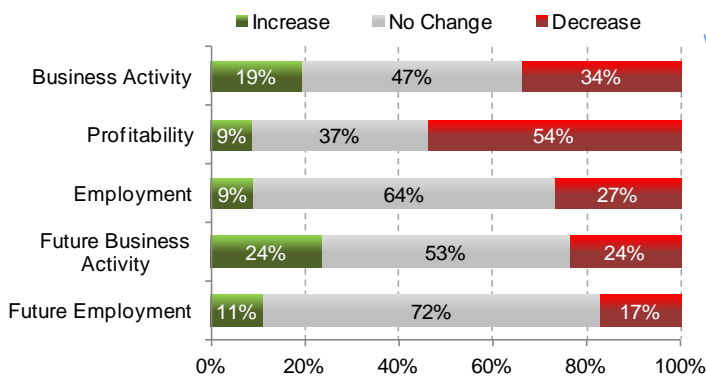
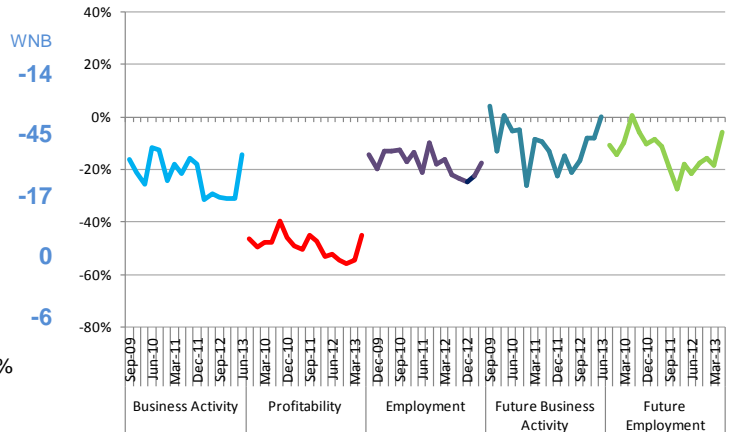


Figure 3.2 Non-finance sector indicators

September 2009 – June 2013



The Business Optimism and Future Employment indicators for the non-finance sectors were at their least negative levels for two years, since June 2011, and the Business Activity indicator was its least negative for more than a year, since December 2011.

Section 4: Business Optimism Indicator

Business Optimism in the Finance sector remained essentially neutral, with more than four-fifths of companies reporting no change. In contrast, around two-fifths of firms in Wholesale & retail and Construction reported a decrease in Business Optimism in the latest quarter.

Figure 4.1 Business Optimism

June 2013 compared with the situation three months previously

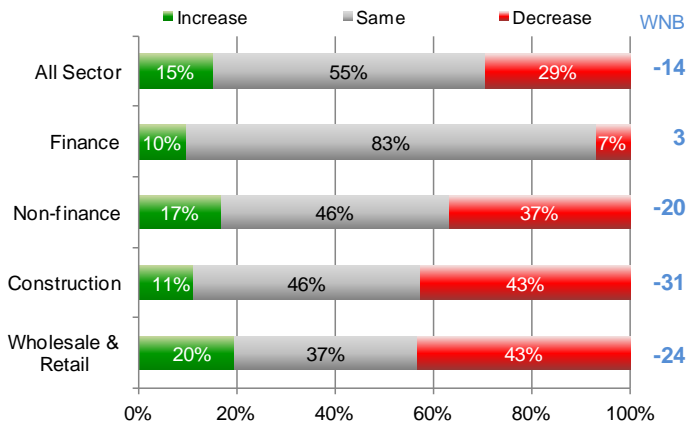
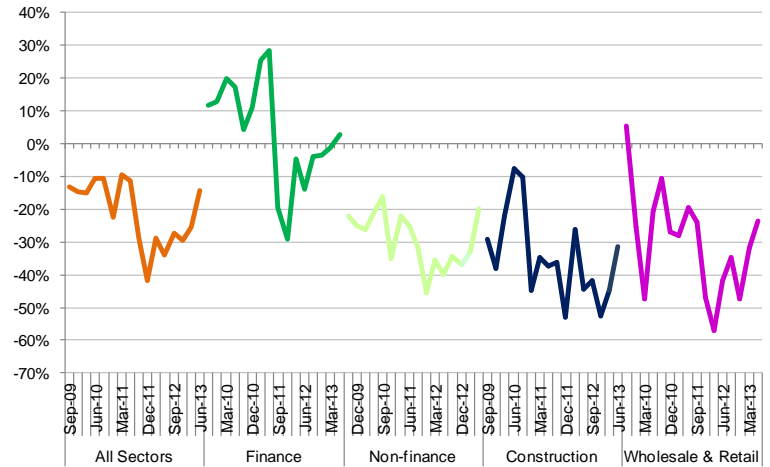


Figure 4.2 Business Optimism

September 2009 – June 2013



Section 5: Construction sector

Figure 5.1 Construction sector indicators

June 2013 compared with the situation three months previously

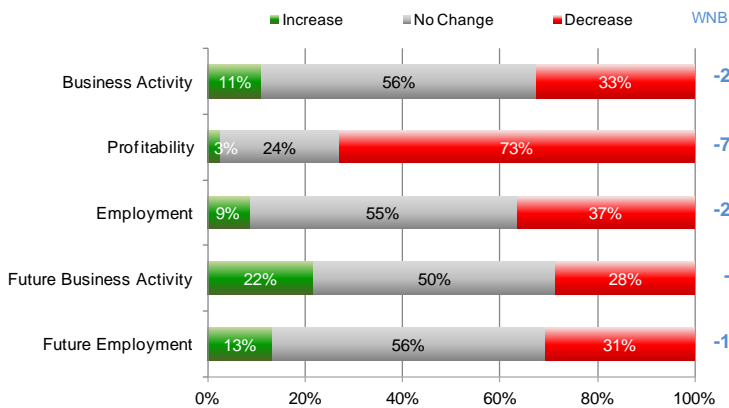
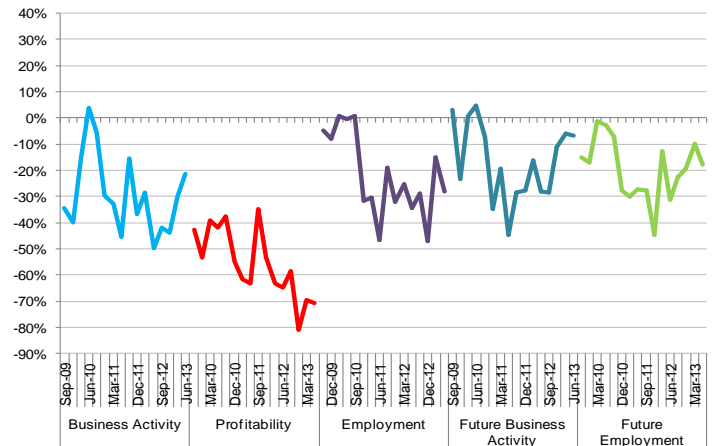


Figure 5.2 Construction sector indicators

September 2009 – June 2013



All indicators for **Construction** remained negative, Profitability and Capacity Utilisation being the most strongly negative.

Section 6: Wholesale and retail sector

Figure 6.1 Wholesale & Retail sector indicators

June 2013 compared with the situation three months previously

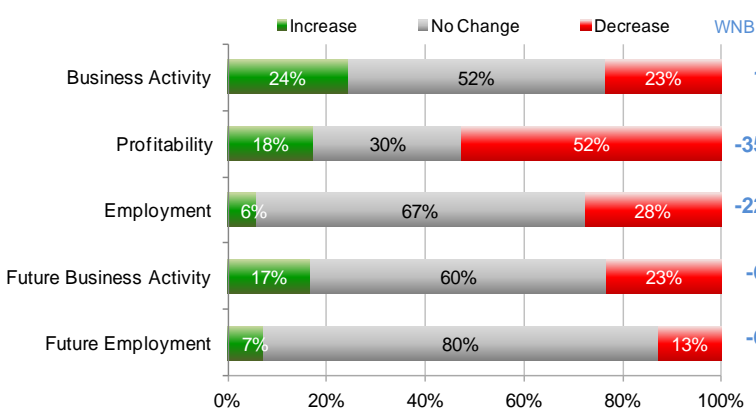
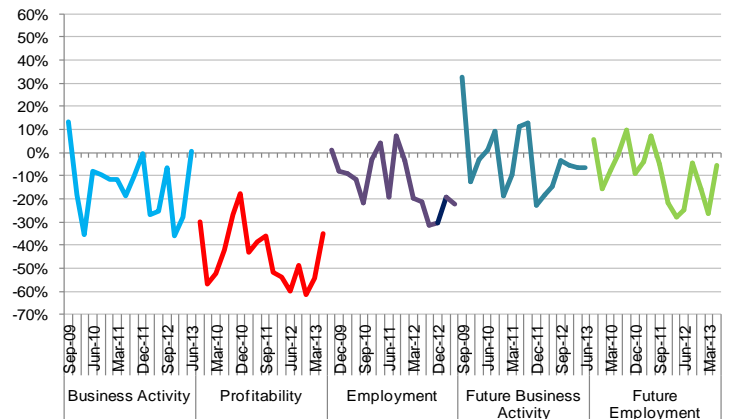


Figure 6.2 Wholesale & Retail sector

September 2009 – June 2013



Five of the ten indicators for **Wholesale & retail** saw improvement compared with the previous quarter and a further three saw some slight improvement. Business Activity, New Business, Future Employment and Profitability were the most improved.

Notes

The Business Tendency Survey samples private sector businesses in Jersey. The survey asks the Chief Executive or Managing Director of sampled businesses for their opinions on the **current situation of their business compared to three months previously** and also for their **expectations for the next three months**.

The June 2013 round of the survey ran in the first four weeks of June. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 3.

Each indicator derived from the survey responses is calculated as a net balance that is the difference between the percentage of respondents answering *higher* or *increase* compared with the percentage answering *lower* or *decrease*. Responses are weighted according to the sampling probability and size of workforce of each business. Hence, each indicator constitutes a **weighted net balance (WNB)**.

1. **Net Balance:**

Net balances are used to summarise respondents' answers to the multiple-choice questions of the Business Tendency Survey. The net balance is obtained by taking the difference between the weighted percentages of respondents giving positive (such as "*increase*" or "*higher*") and negative responses (such as "*decrease*" or "*lower*"). The net balance is given as a difference measured in percentage points (pp). The statistical uncertainty on each net balance (expressed as a 95% confidence interval) depends on the effective (weighted) numbers of respondents to each question and ranges from ± 2 to ± 3 pp.

2. **Seasonal effects:**

Businesses are asked to exclude normal seasonal fluctuations from their responses.

3. **Stratified sample:**

To design a representative sample of Jersey's businesses, a random sampling approach was invoked, stratified by business size (employment on a full-time equivalent, FTE, basis) and type of activity (SIC sector). Size-dependent sampling probabilities were applied, businesses with more than 50 FTE employees having a sampling probability of 1. The sample will be reviewed twice yearly to incorporate new or expanding businesses, in order that the sample remains representative of Jersey's economy.

4. **Response:**

Around 500 firms were sent a survey questionnaire for this survey; some 350 completed questionnaires were returned, constituting an overall response rate of 70%. The respondents accounted for more than two-fifths (42%) of total private sector employment.

5. **Weighting:**

The response data collected were analysed by calculating a weighted net balance. Each reporting business was assigned two weights: a sampling probability weight and a size weight (FTE workforce). The sampling weight adjusts for the different likelihoods of different sized businesses being included in the sample, an effect of the sampling methodology used. The size weight ensures that companies contribute to each indicator in proportion to the size of their workforce.

June 2013 WNB indicators: all sectors, Finance, non-finance, Construction and Wholesale & retail; percentage points.

Indicator	ALL SECTORS		FINANCE		NON-FINANCE		CONSTRUCTION		WHOLESALE & RETAIL		OTHER NON-FINANCE	
	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*
Business Activity	-8	49	12	55	-14	47	-21	56	1	52	-18	42
New Business	-14	48	-3	65	-18	42	-16	45	-11	44	-20	41
Capacity Utilisation	-17	56	11	75	-26	49	-45	48	-37	47	-17	50
Input costs	-39	55	-14	69	-47	50	-38	54	-38	55	-53	47
Product prices	-8	76	-2	83	-10	73	-29	69	-7	77	-6	73
Profitability	-33	40	1	46	-45	37	-70	24	-35	30	-42	44
Employment	-12	64	2	64	-17	64	-28	55	-22	67	-13	66
Business optimism	-14	55	3	83	-20	46	-31	46	-24	37	-16	49
Future business activity	2	54	9	59	0	53	-7	50	-6	60	5	51
Future employment	-5	72	-2	72	-6	72	-18	56	-6	80	-3	73

June 2013 WNB indicators: Finance & non-finance by size of business **: percentage points.

Indicator	Large: FINANCE		Small: FINANCE		Large: NON-FINANCE		Small: NON-FINANCE	
	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*	WNB	No change*
Business Activity	7	58	28	47	-6	46	-17	47
New Business	-12	71	24	47	-6	52	-21	40
Capacity Utilisation	16	83	-2	53	-25	60	-27	46
Input costs	-15	62	-11	89	41	54	49	48
Product prices	2	82	-14	84	-11	69	-9	74
Profitability	-1	51	5	33	-41	36	-46	38
Employment	3	64	1	65	-23	65	-16	64
Business optimism	3	87	3	73	-11	48	-23	46
Future business activity	6	53	17	77	11	60	-3	50
Future employment	-1	73	-4	69	3	79	-8	69

* Weighted percentage of respondents who replied "same".

** Large firms are defined as having more than 50 FTEs; small firms defined as having 50 or fewer FTEs.

WNB Indicators

Appendix 2

All Sectors

Indicator	Sept 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	June 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	June 2011	Sept 2011	Dec 2011	Mar 2012	June 2012	Sept 2012	Dec 2012	Mar 2013	June 2013
Business Activity	-11	-15	-15	-4	-6	-9	-6	-11	-7	-13	-25	-23	-24	-19	-23	-8
New Business	-11	-15	-13	-9	-3	-3	0	-9	-16	-17	-22	-26	-20	-17	-14	-14
Capacity Utilisation	-9	-18	-21	-10	-11	-12	-17	-17	-20	-18	-19	-34	-30	-24	-29	-17
Input costs	-31	-32	-35	-44	-42	-39	-52	-52	-53	-43	-38	-42	-44	-32	-40	-39
Product prices	-11	-13	-6	0	-1	-6	2	2	1	1	-1	-6	-5	-16	-3	-8
Profitability	-41	-43	-41	-39	-32	-37	-32	-34	-40	-38	-43	-41	-48	-44	-43	-33
Employment	-18	-15	-15	-14	-12	-17	-12	-16	-8	-17	-16	-23	-25	-22	-19	-12
Business optimism	-13	-15	-15	-11	-11	-23	-10	-11	-29	-42	-29	-34	-27	-30	-26	-14
Future business activity	12	4	8	5	6	-12	2	5	0	-11	-8	-13	-7	-4	-4	2
Future employment	-14	-12	-8	2	-2	-7	-1	-4	-13	-21	-16	-16	-14	-13	-17	-5

Finance

Indicator	Sept 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	June 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	June 2011	Sept 2011	Dec 2011	Mar 2012	June 2012	Sept 2012	Dec 2012	Mar 2013	June 2013
Business Activity	1	0	14	18	13	30	26	18	18	5	-5	-2	-3	22	1	12
New Business	10	5	25	15	12	36	35	19	-5	11	15	6	-6	25	24	-3
Capacity Utilisation	8	-12	-5	-1	-4	-6	-7	6	-7	3	2	-11	1	2	-8	11
Input costs	16	1	-13	-19	-14	-7	-13	-25	-29	-17	-5	-21	-26	-4	-9	-14
Product prices	-1	-12	-15	2	6	-7	4	-3	-5	5	0	6	1	-5	4	-2
Profitability	-26	-27	-21	-15	-11	-12	14	14	-24	-4	-11	-5	-26	-2	-8	1
Employment	-30	-1	-19	-17	-9	-16	-7	0	-1	-14	-16	-28	-28	-12	-7	2
Business optimism	12	13	20	17	4	11	25	28	-20	-29	-5	-14	-4	-4	-1	3
Future business activity	33	50	29	30	35	24	32	45	39	27	14	12	23	11	8	9
Future employment	-22	-7	-1	5	7	0	18	17	4	0	-10	3	-2	-3	-13	-2

Non-Finance

Indicator	Sept 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	June 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	June 2011	Sept 2011	Dec 2011	Mar 2012	June 2012	Sept 2012	Dec 2012	March 2013	June 2013
Business Activity	-16	-21	-26	-12	-12	-24	-18	-22	-16	-18	-31	-29	-30	-31	-31	-14
New Business	-19	-23	-27	-19	-9	-18	-13	-20	-19	-24	-33	-36	-25	-29	-27	-18
Capacity Utilisation	-15	-20	-27	-14	-14	-14	-21	-25	-24	-25	-26	-41	-39	-31	-36	-26
Input costs	-48	-45	-43	-54	-52	-51	-66	-61	-61	-51	-47	-49	-49	-49	-50	-47
Product prices	-15	-13	-3	0	-3	-6	2	4	3	-1	-2	-10	-7	-19	-5	-10
Profitability	-46	-49	-48	-48	-39	-46	-49	-50	-45	-47	-53	-52	-55	-56	-55	-45
Employment	-14	-20	-13	-13	-12	-17	-13	-21	-10	-18	-16	-22	-24	-25	-22	-17
Business optimism	-22	-25	-26	-21	-16	-35	-22	-25	-32	-46	-36	-40	-34	-37	-33	-20
Future business activity	4	-13	1	-5	-5	-26	-9	-9	-13	-22	-15	-21	-17	-8	-8	0
Future employment	-11	-14	-10	0	-6	-10	-8	-11	-19	-28	-18	-22	-17	-16	-18	-6

Construction

Indicator	Sept 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	June 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	June 2011	Sept 2011	Dec 2011	Mar 2012	June 2012	Sept 2012	Dec 2012	Mar 2013	June 2013
Business Activity	-34	-40	-15	4	-6	-30	-33	-45	-15	-37	-29	-50	-42	-44	-30	-21
New Business	-31	-59	-31	-1	-2	-25	-24	-46	-17	-52	-35	-50	-38	-39	-19	-16
Capacity Utilisation	-7	-33	-14	9	-12	-27	-28	-42	-22	-28	-29	-56	-58	-57	-40	-45
Input costs	-39	-41	-34	-64	-64	-43	-63	-39	-46	-37	-22	-18	-33	-36	-46	-38
Product prices	-12	-12	-12	-15	-2	-12	-20	-10	-16	-6	-27	-37	-37	-43	-23	-29
Profitability	-42	-53	-39	-42	-37	-55	-62	-63	-35	-53	-63	-65	-59	-81	-70	-70
Employment	-5	-8	1	0	1	-31	-30	-47	-19	-32	-25	-34	-29	-47	-15	-28
Business optimism	-29	-38	-22	-8	-10	-45	-35	-37	-36	-53	-26	-44	-42	-53	-45	-31
Future business activity	3	-23	1	5	-7	-35	-19	-45	-28	-28	-16	-28	-28	-11	-6	-7
Future employment	-15	-17	-1	-3	-7	-28	-30	-27	-28	-45	-13	-31	-23	-20	-10	-18

Wholesale & retail

Indicator	Sept 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	June 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	June 2011	Sept 2011	Dec 2011	Mar 2012	June 2012	Sept 2012	Dec 2012	Mar 2013	June 2013
Business Activity	13	-18	-36	-8	-9	-11	-12	-19	-10	-1	-27	-25	-7	-36	-28	1
New Business	13	-6	-47	-22	-25	-3	-24	-19	-19	3	-26	-39	0	-36	-35	-11
Capacity Utilisation	-22	-11	-44	-35	-28	-15	-22	-19	-16	-1	-19	-50	-44	-48	-45	-37
Input costs	-50	-52	-48	-46	-45	-45	-63	-49	-57	-67	-47	-50	-45	-41	-50	-38
Product prices	-6	-12	6	16	3	1	17	14	25	7	7	7	5	-12	-14	-7
Profitability	-30	-57	-52	-42	-27	-18	-43	-39	-36	-52	-54	-60	-49	-61	-54	-35
Employment	1	-8	-9	-12	-22	-3	4	-19	7	-4	-20	-21	-31	-30	-19	-22
Business optimism	5	-25	-47	-21	-11	-27	-28	-19	-24	-47	-57	-42	-35	-47	-32	-24
Future business activity	33	-13	-3	1	9	-19	-9	11	13	-23	-18	-15	-3	-6	-7	-6
Future employment	6	-15	-7	-1	10	-9	-4	7	-5	-22	-28	-25	-5	-16	-26	-6

Other non-finance

Indicator	Sept 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010	June 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011	June 2011	Sept 2011	Dec 2011	Mar 2012	June 2012	Sept 2012	Dec 2012	Mar 2013	June 2013
Business Activity	-16	-14	-26	-18	-16	-27	-13	-14	-18	-18	-34	-25	-35	-24	-32	-18
New Business	-25	-15	-20	-23	-7	-21	-3	-10	-20	-24	-35	-31	-29	-23	-26	-20
Capacity Utilisation	-12	-18	-26	-15	-9	-9	-17	-20	-28	-32	-27	-33	-32	-17	-31	-17
Input costs	-52	-43	-44	-53	-49	-55	-69	-73	-68	-50	-55	-57	-56	-40	-51	-53
Product prices	-21	-14	-2	-1	-6	-6	5	5	1	-2	3	-9	-2	-12	5	-6
Profitability	-52	-45	-49	-51	-44	-53	-45	-50	-53	-44	-50	-46	-55	-46	-50	-42
Employment	-22	-29	-19	-17	-15	-17	-13	-13	-13	-18	-12	-19	-19	-15	-26	-13
Business optimism	-32	-19	-22	-25	-20	-35	-14	-23	-33	-42	-31	-38	-32	-28	-30	-16
Future business activity	-8	-9	2	-11	-9	-26	-3	-3	-17	-20	-13	-22	-18	-7	-9	5
Future employment	-17	-13	-13	2	-11	-5	0	-11	-21	-24	-16	-18	-20	-15	-18	-3

Business Tendency Survey – June 2013

BEFORE COMPLETING THE SURVEY PLEASE READ THE ATTACHED GUIDANCE NOTES

Company Name:

Contact Details:

The survey is to be **completed by the Chief Executive or Managing Director** and all answers should refer to the local Jersey-based unit of your organisation, not the performance of the international operations of your organisation outside the Island. The basis for answers should be consistent from one survey quarter to the next.

Current situation

Please **compare the current trading situation** for your organisation to **three months ago**; **excluding normal seasonal fluctuations** e.g. *current trading situation is higher (the same or lower) than three months ago when seasonal fluctuations are excluded.*

Note: If it is not practical to compare the current trading situation for your organisation with that of three months ago then please compare it with that of one year ago and make a note of this in the exceptional circumstances below. *(see guidance notes)*

Please tick one option only when answering the following questions regarding your organisation:

1. **Level of business activity / output:** Gross income, chargeable hours worked or turnover. *(see note 1)*

Higher Same Lower N/A

2. **Incoming new business / new orders:** New business 'won' or placed with your organisation. *(see note 2)*

Higher Same Lower N/A

3. **Level of capacity utilisation:** Current business activity relative to 'normal capacity' (e.g. 'above capacity' means busier and longer hours worked than normal). *(see note 3)*

Above capacity Normal capacity Below capacity N/A

4. **Average costs that you pay for inputs:** Prices paid for supplies, purchases, wages and salaries etc. *(see note 4)*

Higher Same Lower N/A

5. **Average prices that you charge for your products:** Prices charged per item or unit of time on average. *(see note 5)*

Higher Same Lower N/A

6. **Profitability:** Total profits earned on all activities of your organisation. (see note 6)

Higher Same Lower N/A

7. **Employment:** Number of employees employed. (see note 7)

Higher Same Lower N/A

8. **Business optimism:** Optimism about the overall business situation in your sector, Financial and legal activities. (see note 8)

Increase Same Decrease N/A

Future expectations

Please **compare your expectations** for your organisation over **the next three months** to the current situation; **excluding normal seasonal fluctuations** e.g. *the next quarter will be higher (the same or lower) than the current quarter, excluding seasonal fluctuations.*

9. **Level of business activity / output:** Gross income, chargeable hours worked or turnover. (see note 1)

Increase No change Decrease N/A

10. **Employment:** Number of employees employed. (see note 7)

Increase No change Decrease N/A

Credit: Availability and Affordability

For your organisation, please **compare the current situation** with that **three months ago** and with that **twelve months ago**; e.g. *current situation is higher (the same or lower) than three months ago (see Note 9).*

11. **Affordability of existing credit:** Current loans, overdrafts, credit cards.

Compared to 3 months ago: More affordable No change Less affordable Don't know

Compared to 12 months ago: More affordable No change Less affordable Don't know

12. **Has your organisation applied for new credit in the last 3 months? Or in the last 12 months?**

Yes – in the last 3 months Yes – in the last 12 months No

13. Availability of new credit: ease of obtaining new loans, overdrafts, credit cards.

Compared to 3 months ago: Increase Same Decrease Don't know

Compared to 12 months ago: Increase Same Decrease Don't know

14. Affordability of new credit: How affordable are new loans, overdrafts, credit cards.

Compared to 3 months ago: More affordable No change Less affordable Don't know

Compared to 12 months ago: More affordable No change Less affordable Don't know

Exceptional circumstances

Please list any recent exceptional circumstances such as business re-structuring, mergers or changes in accounting practices and what impact these circumstances have had on the answers provided.

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Would you like to receive a copy of the **quarterly report** via email? Yes / No

Would you like to receive the **next quarterly Business Tendency Survey questionnaire** via email? Yes / No

The information contained in each survey will be treated with the strictest confidence and will only be used to produce aggregate measures.

Thank you for your time.

GUIDELINES ON COMPLETING THE SURVEY

Please try to **exclude normal seasonal variations** from your responses. For example, activity in hotels is typically higher in the summer than in spring, so do not tick 'higher' *unless* business activity is higher than three months ago *excluding* normal seasonal variations.

If it is not practical to compare the *current* trading situation for your organisation with that of three months ago (e.g. where there may be strong seasonal activities such as in Agriculture or Hospitality) then please compare the current trading situation with that of one year ago. Also use the same annual comparison for the future expectations of your organisation.

1. **Level of business activity / output:** This is the total amount of work undertaken by your organisation. Business activity can be thought of as gross income, chargeable hours worked, turnover or the number of products produced. The measure of business activity used depends on the nature of your organisation. For example, a legal firm may use the number of chargeable hours worked. A bank may decide to use values of fees, commission and premium income.
2. **Incoming new business / new orders:** This is the amount of new business placed with your organisation. This may include any new clients, new orders or contracts from existing clients or any new contracts.
3. **Level of capacity utilisation:** This is your current business activity relative to 'normal capacity'. Please tick 'above capacity' if your current business activity is above its normal capacity (e.g. because your organisation is busier than normal or staff are working longer hours than normal). Please tick 'below capacity' if your current business activity is below its normal capacity (e.g. because your organisation is quieter than normal or staff are working shorter hours than normal).
4. **Average cost of inputs:** This is the average cost for all inputs used by your organisation. Inputs include supplies obtained, stocks/materials bought in and costs of employees, including wages, salaries and pension costs paid by your organisation. Please try to give a weighted average of costs. For example, if employment costs are the largest share, give them the largest weighting (i.e. importance) when answering the question.
5. **Average prices that you charge for your products:** This is the price charged per item or per unit of time on average. For example, a legal firm will know how much they charge an hour. However, if your organisation offers various services/products then please try to give a weighted average. For example, if one service accounts for most of your sales and its prices have increased then give it the largest weighting (i.e. importance) when answering the question by indicating that prices have risen on average.
6. **Profitability:** This is the total profits earned on all activities of your organisation. If your organisation does not calculate profits over the most recent three months, please try to estimate how your profitability has changed, taking into account changes in turnover, changes in input costs and changes in mark-ups/spreads over input costs.
7. **Employment:** This is the number of employees employed on average. Please count two part-time employees as equivalent to one full-time employee. For example, if two part-time employees resigned and one full-time employee was taken on, please count this as no net change and tick 'same'. Ignore seasonal or temporary hirings.
8. **Business optimism:** This refers to your confidence or optimism about the overall business situation in your sector generally. Unlike the previous questions, it is *not* about what is actually happening to *your organisation* at present, but asks about your opinions for your *sector generally*.
9. **Credit (availability and affordability):** This refers to credit from banking and non-banking sources. Please include the re-financing of existing credit under existing credit (question 11) and not under new credit (questions 13 and 14).