

Business EU Barometer

1ST QUARTER 2013



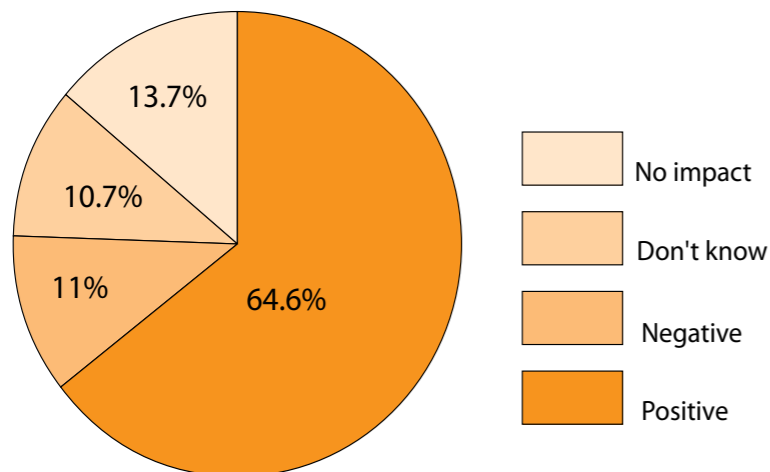
The new Business EU Barometer from the British Chambers of Commerce gauges business sentiment on issues relating to EU policy and the UK's relationship with the EU. This quarter, respondents were asked to give their view on the potential impact of different scenarios for Britain's future relationship with the EU. The key points to emerge were:

- **Business wants more decisions made in the UK:** the scenario viewed most positively was for the UK to remain in the European Union, but with specific powers transferred back from Brussels to Westminster. Over 64% of respondents believe this would deliver a positive impact to their business.
- **Most businesses think withdrawal from the EU would be bad for Britain, but the status quo and / or further integration is also viewed as bad for business:** Over 60% responded that full withdrawal from the European Union would impact negatively on their business. But 42% believe that remaining in the European Union with no change to the current relationship would be a negative outcome too.
- **Business's top three priorities for any future repatriation of powers from Brussels to Westminster are** employment law (54%), health and safety law (46%) and regional development policies (33%).

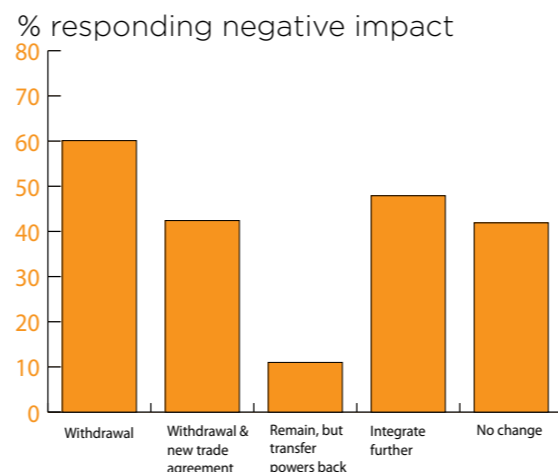
Methodology

The BCC's Business EU Barometer for Q1 2013 received 4,387 business responses. The respondents were surveyed by postal and online questionnaires over the period 18 February to 11 March.

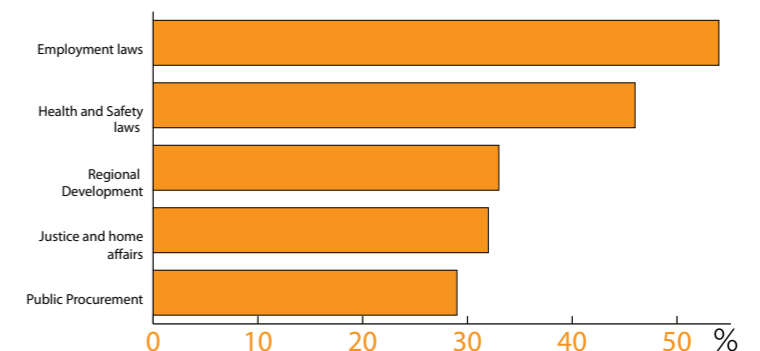
In the manufacturing sector 1,140 firms, employing approximately 95,000 people responded (26% of the total number of responses). In the services sector 3,247 businesses with around 245,000 employees responded (74% of the total).



What do you believe would be the impact on your business of continued membership of the EU but with specific powers transferred back to Westminster?



What impact will each scenario have on your business?



What powers should be transferred back to Westminster?

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BCC Comments



These results say a lot about the UK business community's attitudes towards Britain's relationship with the European Union. Companies believe that re-negotiation, rather than further integration or outright withdrawal, is most likely to deliver business and economic benefit to the UK.

"There are some striking features in our survey of business opinion. 42%, a plurality, now believe that maintaining the status quo in Britain's relationship with the EU could have a negative impact on our economic interests – nearly three times as many as the 15% who view the status quo positively. These findings suggest that UK businesses increasingly feel that some sort of change to Britain's relationship with the EU is needed to boost our trading prospects.

"We now have confirmation of what we've suspected for some time: namely, that employment and health and safety laws are the areas which companies would most like to see legislative competence return to Westminster from Brussels. From a business perspective, any re-negotiation of Britain's relationship with the European Union must therefore focus on these areas which are not integral to the functioning of the Single Market in goods and services.



John Longworth
Director General

About the BCC

The British Chambers of Commerce is the national body for a powerful and influential Network of Accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, a Network that directly serves not only its member businesses, but the wider business community.

Representing 104,000 businesses who together employ 5 million employees, the British Chambers of Commerce is the voice of the 'real economy'. Every Chamber sits at the very heart of its local community working with businesses to grow and develop by sharing opportunities, knowledge and know-how. No other organisation makes such a difference to business as the British Chambers of Commerce.

Further information

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