STATISTICAL RELEASE

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English Business Survey – Quarter 1 2013

This release presents the key messages from the English Business Survey (EBS) for Quarter 1 2013 (January to March). The EBS interviews 3,000 workplaces each month and provides timely intelligence on business conditions in England. The Survey provides an assessment of past, current and future conditions. Quarterly statistics are created by aggregating three months' of responses and using a quarterly weighting scheme, instead of a monthly weighting scheme. The quarterly release differs from the regular monthly Statistical Release by providing sub-regional geographical information in the accompanying tables.

Terminology

What these statistics mean:

- The EBS is a survey of workplaces. A workplace can be a single business, or a workplace that is part of a larger enterprise, for example the local store of a large supermarket chain. Ninety-seven per cent of enterprises consist of a single workplace.[1] The term business will be used throughout this release.

- In order to reflect the relative importance or contribution of different sized workplaces to the local economy, the survey uses the number of people employed at each workplace as the measure of its contribution to the economy. Where the size of business is reported in the release, this refers to the number of people employed at each workplace.

- Where 'Balances' are presented, they are the difference between the positive responses and the negative responses. Balances allow a general assessment of whether businesses feel positive or negative about something. More detailed information on the terminology used is included in the Background Notes to the release.

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[1] Source: UK Business: Activity, Size and Location, 2012

Key Points

- Quarter 1 2013 results for output are positive but relatively weak with a balance score of +3%. This compares to balances of +16% in Q4 2012 and +4% for Q1 2012. Future output expectations are stronger, with the highest balance score in the series of +37%.

- The employment performance in Quarter 1 2013 was weak with a balance of -2% this is marginally higher than the balance score in Quarter 1 2012, -4%.

- Expectations of future employment levels are much stronger than past employment levels, with a balance score of +11% in Quarter 1 2013. This follows a similar pattern to a year earlier with a balance of 10% in Q1 2012 and is an increase compared to Quarter 4 2012 (-3%).

- In England, exporting businesses reported an increase in exports, with a balance of +5%. This is an improvement both compared to the previous quarter, 0%, and the same period a year earlier, +2%.

- Looking ahead, exporting businesses expectations for exports in Quarter 2 2013 are positive with a balance score of +27%. This equals the balance in Quarter 1 2012.

Economic Context

This section provides contextual information on the economic performance over the survey period (Quarter 1 2013) to help the user to interpret the statistics.

Official statistics showed the value of the UK economy – Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – was estimated to have expanded in Quarter 1 2013 by 0.3% when compared with Quarter 4 2012.[2] According to Eurostat, GDP declined by 0.2% in the Euro area and by 0.1% in the EU27 during the first quarter of 2013 compared to the previous quarter. Compared with the same quarter of the previous year GDP in the Euro area contracted by 1%, and the EU27 by 0.7% while the UK expanded by 0.6%.[3]

Official business statistics paint a mixed picture of the economy: in the three months to March, retail sales increased,[4] production output rose, but manufacturing output continued to contract,[5] as did the volume of construction

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[2] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/gva/gross-domestic-product--preliminary-estimate/q1-2013/index.html

[3] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/2-15052013-AP/EN/2-15052013-AP-EN.PDF

[4] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/rsi/retail-sales/index.html

[5] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/iop/index-of-production/index.html

which is at its lowest level since Quarter 4 1998[6]. Annual inflation was estimated to have stayed at 2.8% in March, an increase of 0.1% from January's inflation rate and above the Bank of England target rate of 2.0%.[7]

The labour market showed a slight decline; the employment rate was down by 0.2 percentage points in Quarter 1 2013 compared to Quarter 4 2012 while the unemployment rate was 7.8% in the three months to March, 0.1 percentage points higher than in October to December.[8]

Latest EBS results

Output

Output results were positive in Quarter 1 2013 for England overall but the regional picture was mixed.

Chart 1: Level of output in England, Quarter 1 2012 to Quarter 1 2013
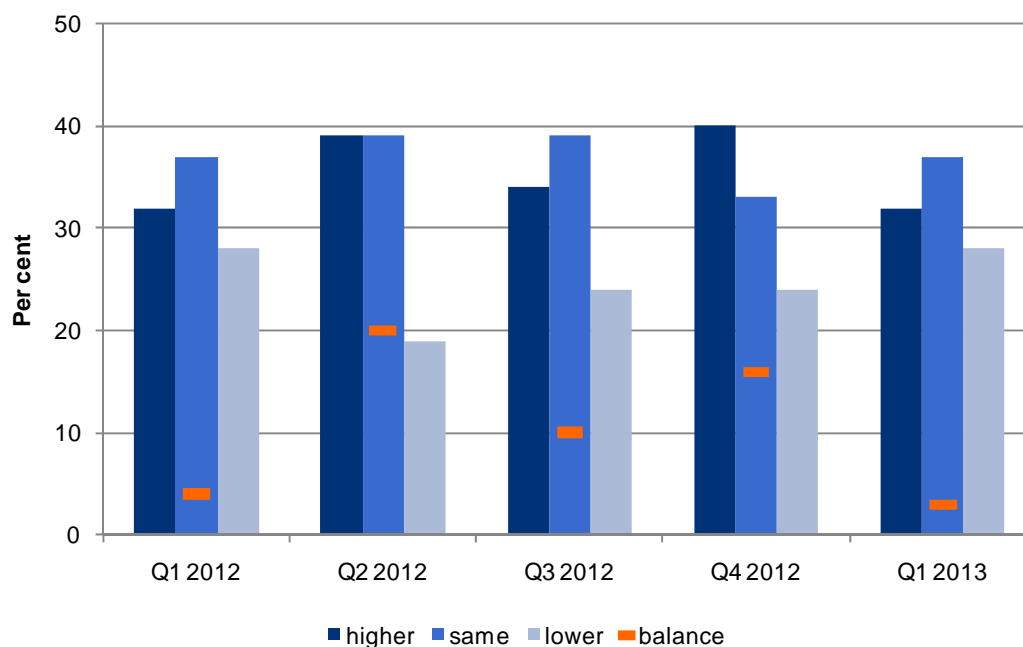
Notes:

1. Workplaces were asked about the level of output in the preceding Quarter when compared to the reference Quarter, for example Quarter 1 2013 results compare Quarter 1 2013 with Quarter 4 2012.
2. Estimates are not seasonally adjusted.
3. Survey results sum to 100%=(% Higher)+(% The same)+(% Lower)+(% Don't know). Estimates for 'Don't know' have been excluded from this chart, but are available in the tables that accompany the release.

Source: BIS - English Business Survey, Quarter 1 2013

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[6] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/construction/output-in-the-construction-industry/march-and-q1-2013/index.html

[7] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/cpi/consumer-price-indices/index.html

[8] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/may-2013/index.html

Across England as a whole results show a balance score of +3%,[9] with an estimated 32% of businesses that reported output[10] was higher in Quarter 1 2013 than it had been in Quarter 4 2012 and 28% of businesses reported lower output.[11] The balance score in Quarter 1 2013 fell when compared to the balance score in Quarter 4 2012 of +16%. Compared to a year earlier it is lower by one percentage point, and the trend indicates there could be a seasonal effect driving the results.

Of the six regions that reported positive scores the South East reported the strongest balance of +9%. Three regions reported negative balances including the North East which had the lowest balance score of -8%, the East of England and East Midlands had balance scores of -3% and -1% respectively. This variation is replicated at the NUTS2 level (hereafter referred to as sub-regions) [12], with the strongest performance recorded in Inner London and Herefordshire Worcestershire and Warwickshire – both sub-regions had a balance of +12%. Essex, South Yorkshire, and Tees Valley and Durham had the weakest scores of -9%.

When examining the Survey results by the size of the business,[13] a similar pattern emerges as in the Quarter 4 2012 results with larger businesses of 250 or more employees recording the highest balance score of +13%, while micro businesses of 1 to 9 employees had a balance score of -13%.

Expected output performance

Expectations of future output in Quarter 1 2013 were strong in England and the English regions.

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[9] Responses across all categories (i.e. Higher, The same, Lower and Don't Know) sum to 100%. Workplaces accounting for 4% of employment responded don't know. See data tables (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-innovation-skills/series/english-business-survey) for detailed figures.

[10] Businesses are asked whether they believe their level of business activity or volume of output at a workplace is the same, higher or lower.

[11] Estimates are not seasonally adjusted; therefore seasonal effects may be driving the results.

[12] NUTS1 refers to the 9 English Regions; NUTS2 refers to 30 areas in England that are mainly groups of counties and unitary authorities, referred to as sub-regions.

[13] Business size is measured in terms of the number of employees at the workplace.

Chart 2: Expected level of output in England, Quarter 1 2012 to Quarter 1 2013


■ higher ■ same ■ lower ■ balance
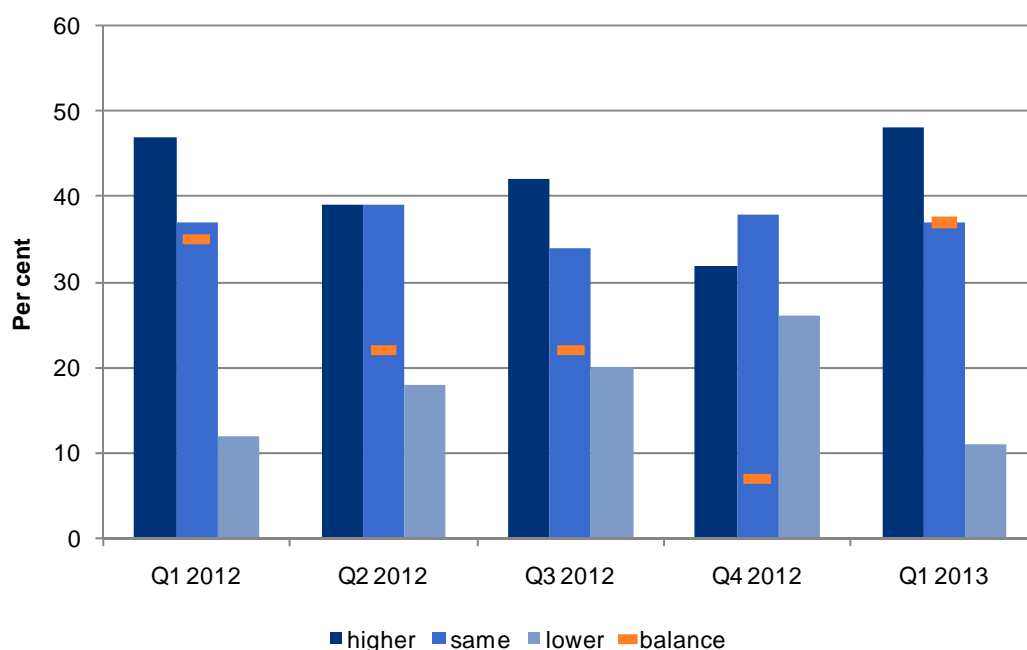
Notes:

1. Workplaces were asked about their expectations for the level of output in the next Quarter when compared to the reference Quarter, for example Quarter 1 2013 results compare Quarter 1 with Quarter 2 2013.
2. Estimates are not seasonally adjusted.
3. Survey results sum to 100%=(% Higher)+(% The same)+(% Lower)+(% Don't know). Estimates for 'Don't know' have been excluded from this chart, but are available in the tables that accompany the release.

*Source: BIS - English Business Survey, Quarter 1 2013*

A strong positive balance of +37% was recorded for expectations of output in Quarter 2 2013 compared to Quarter 1 across England, as more businesses (48%) are anticipating higher output than lower (11%). This is the highest quarterly balance score recorded in the survey. This was an improvement when compared to the balance score in Quarter 4 2012 (+7%) as well as the same period a year earlier (+35%); the increase from Quarter 4 2012 follows a similar pattern to the same period a year earlier. .

All regions recorded a positive balance score on expectations of future output and as for England, these were all higher than balance scores for output performance. The strongest result was recorded for the East of England with a balance score of +44%. At a sub-regional level Essex had the highest balance score of +47% followed by Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, +46%.
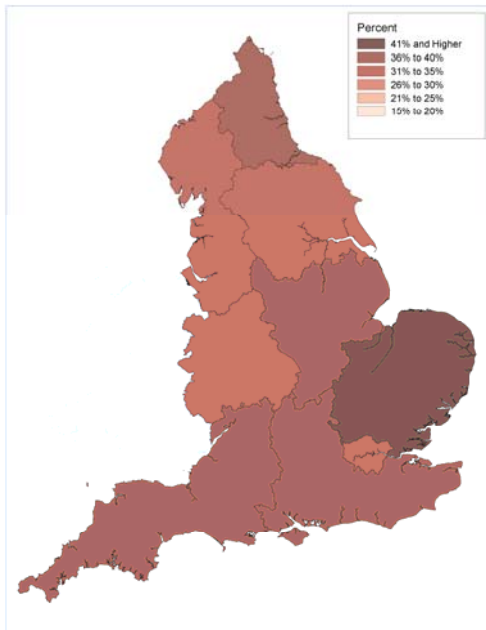
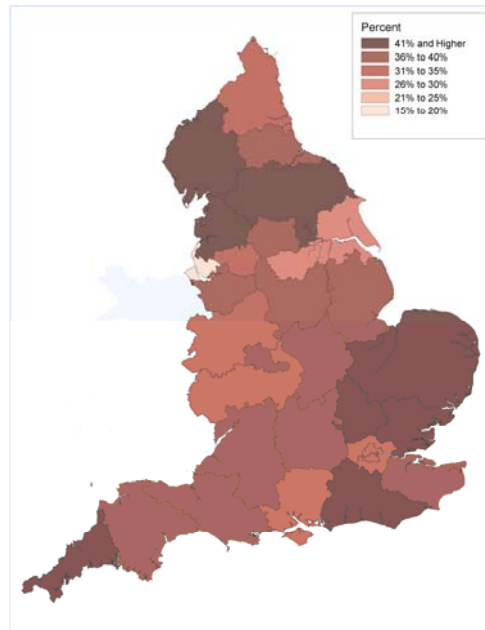**Map 1: Balance Statistics for level of output, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS1 region**
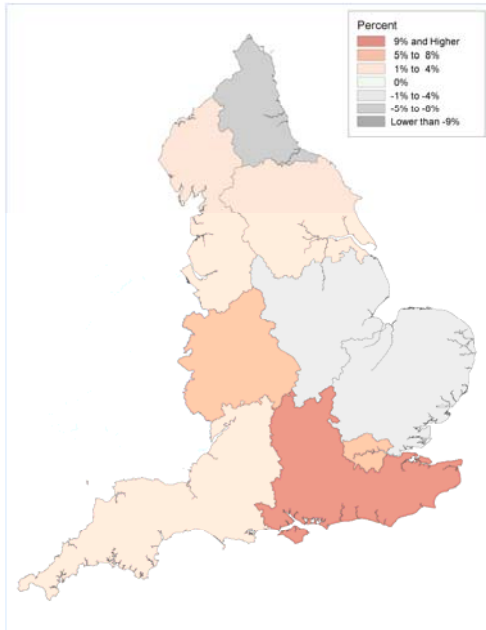
Map 2: Balance Statistics for level of output, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS2 region
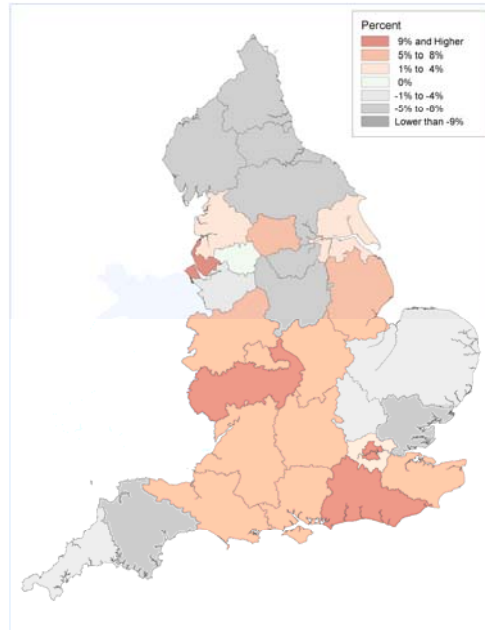
Map 3: Balance Statistics for expected level of output, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS1 region

Map 4: Balance Statistics for expected level of output, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS2 region
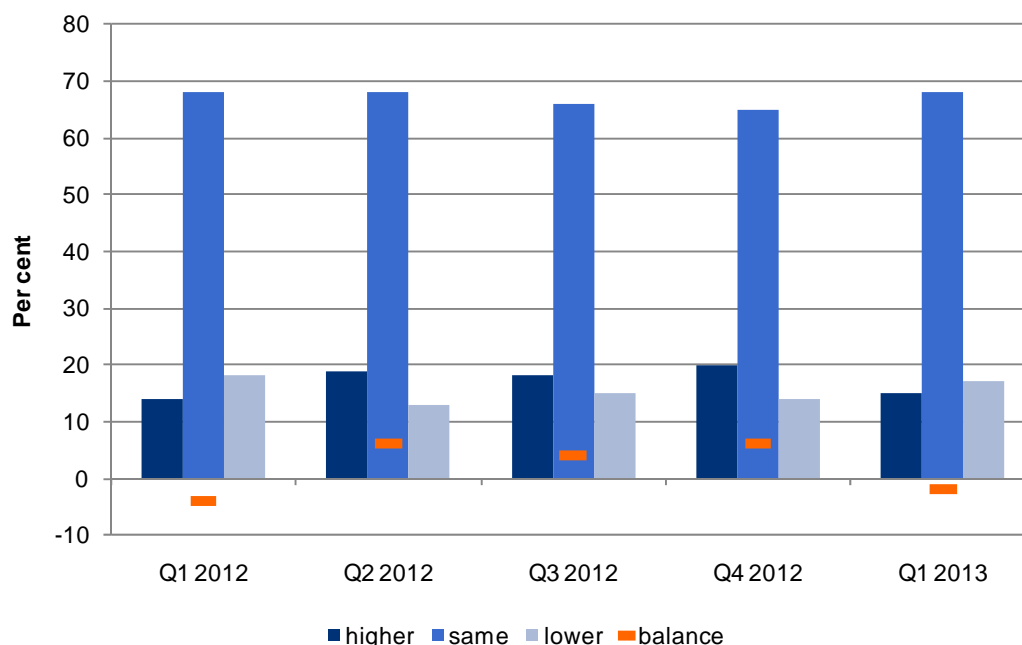

Notes:

1. Map 1 & 2: Workplaces were asked about the level of employment in Quarter 1 2013 compared with Quarter 4 2012.

2. Map 3 & 4: Workplaces were asked about the level of employment in Quarter 1 2013 compared with Quarter 2 2013

3. Results are weighted to be representative of total employment in England, not workplaces.

4. Balance statistics are simple the estimate for higher minus the estimate for lower. A positive balance indicates more business expected higher output than lower output.

5. Contains Ordnance Survey Data © Crown Copyright and database right

Source: BIS - English Business Survey

Employment

Employment results were negative for England and its regions, with more businesses reporting that employment levels were lower in Quarter 1 2013 than Quarter 4 2012.

Chart 3: Level of employment in England, Quarter 1 2012 to Quarter 1 2013

Notes:

1. Workplaces were asked about the level of employment in the preceding Quarter when compared to the reference Quarter, for example Quarter 1 2013 results compare Quarter 1 2013 with Quarter 4 2012.
2. Estimates are not seasonally adjusted.
3. Survey results sum to 100%=(% Higher)+(% The same)+(% Lower)+(% Don't know). Estimates for 'Don't know' have been excluded from this chart, but are available in the tables that accompany the release.

Source: BIS - English Business Survey, Quarter 1 2013

In England, a balance score of -2% was recorded as more businesses reported that employment levels[14] were lower (17%) than higher (15%). This was a fall compared to Quarter 4 2012 which recorded a balance score of +6% and similar to the same quarter a year earlier (-4%).

Almost all regions reported negative employment balance scores in Quarter 1 2013. The exceptions being Yorkshire and The Humber (+1%), the South East, and the West Midlands which recorded neutral balance scores (0%). Of those reporting negative balance scores, the North East had the lowest (-7%). Similarly most sub-regions reported negative balance score with the Tees Valley and Durham (-11%), Outer London (-9%), and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire (-9%) recorded the lowest results. Conversely, Dorset and

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[14] Employment level is used to describe the average number of people working at a workplace.

Somerset reported a relatively strong positive balance when compared to other sub regions of +8%.

Medium sized businesses recorded the highest balance score of 0%, indicating the proportion of businesses reporting higher employment is the same as those that said it was lower All other sizes of business reported negative balance scores with large businesses the weakest (-6%), followed by micro businesses and small businesses (-3% and -1% respectively).

Expected employment performance

Expectations of future employment in Quarter 2 2013 are more positive when compared to employment levels in Quarter 1 2013 for England and the English regions.

In England a balance of +11% was recorded as more businesses (21%) are anticipating higher employment than lower (10%). This quarter's balance statistic was higher than the negative balance in Quarter 4 2012 (-3%) and similar to the same period last year (+10%).[15]

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[15] Estimates are not seasonally adjusted; therefore seasonal effects may be driving the results.

Chart 4: Expected level of employment in England, Quarter 1 2012 to Quarter 1 2013
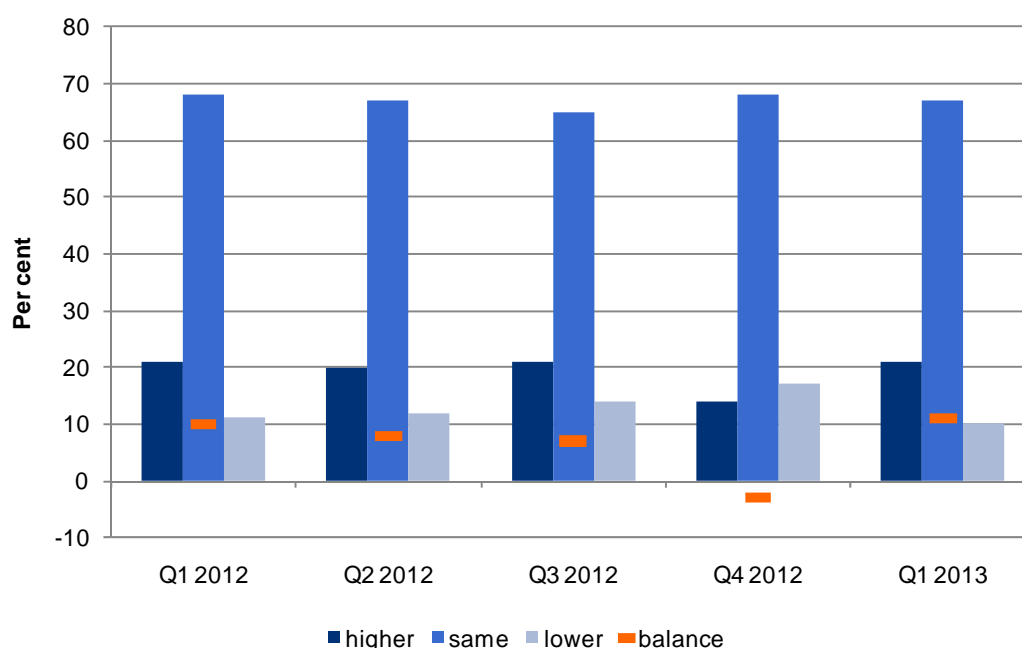

Notes:

1. Workplaces were asked about their expectations for the level of employment in the next Quarter when compared to the reference Quarter, for example Quarter 1 2013 results compare Quarter 1 with Quarter 2 2013.
2. Estimates are not seasonally adjusted.
3. Survey results sum to 100%=(% Higher)+(% The same)+(% Lower)+(% Don't know). Estimates for 'Don't know' have been excluded from this chart, but are available in the tables that accompany the release.

Source: BIS - English Business Survey, Quarter 1 2013

All regions reported positive balance scores for expectations of future employment. The South East had the highest balance (+15%) and Yorkshire and The Humber the lowest score (+6%). At a sub-regional level positive balance scores were reported with the highest in Cheshire (+21%) and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (+20%).
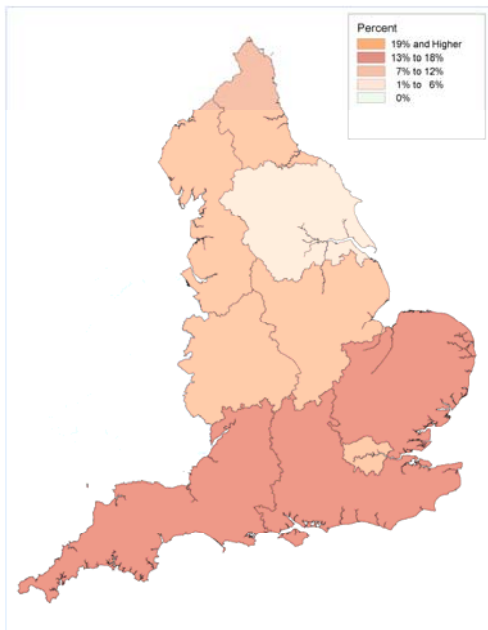
Map 5: Balance Statistics for level of employment, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS1 region
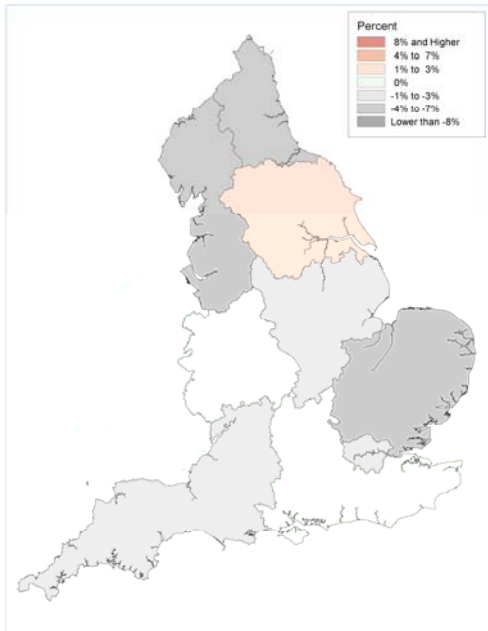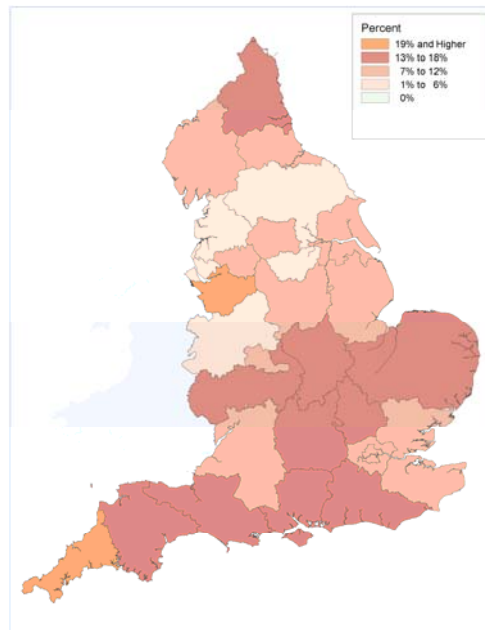

Map 6: Balance Statistics for level of employment, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS2 region
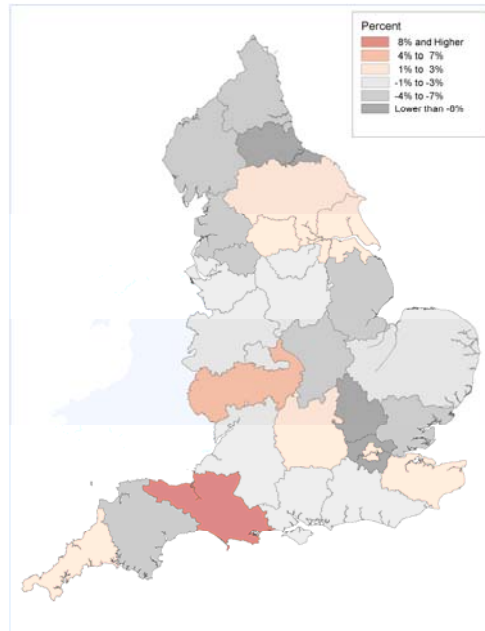
Map 7: Balance Statistics for expected level of employment, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS1 region

Map 8: Balance Statistics for expected level of employment, Quarter 1 2013, by NUTS2 region

Notes:

1. Map 5 & 6: Workplaces were asked about the level of employment in Quarter 1 2013 compared with Quarter 3 2012.
2. Map 7 & 8: Workplaces were asked about the level of employment in Quarter 1 2013 compared with Quarter 2 2013
3. Results are weighted to be representative of total employment in England, not workplaces.
4. Balance statistics are simple the estimate for higher minus the estimate for lower. A positive balance indicates more business expected higher output than lower output.
5. Contains Ordnance Survey Data © Crown Copyright and database right

Source: BIS - English Business Survey

Exports

In England, export performance in Quarter 1 2013 was positive when compared to Quarter 4 2012. The regional performance was mixed with five regions reporting negative or neutral balance scores.

Chart 5: Volume of exports in England, Quarter 1 2012 to Quarter 1 2013
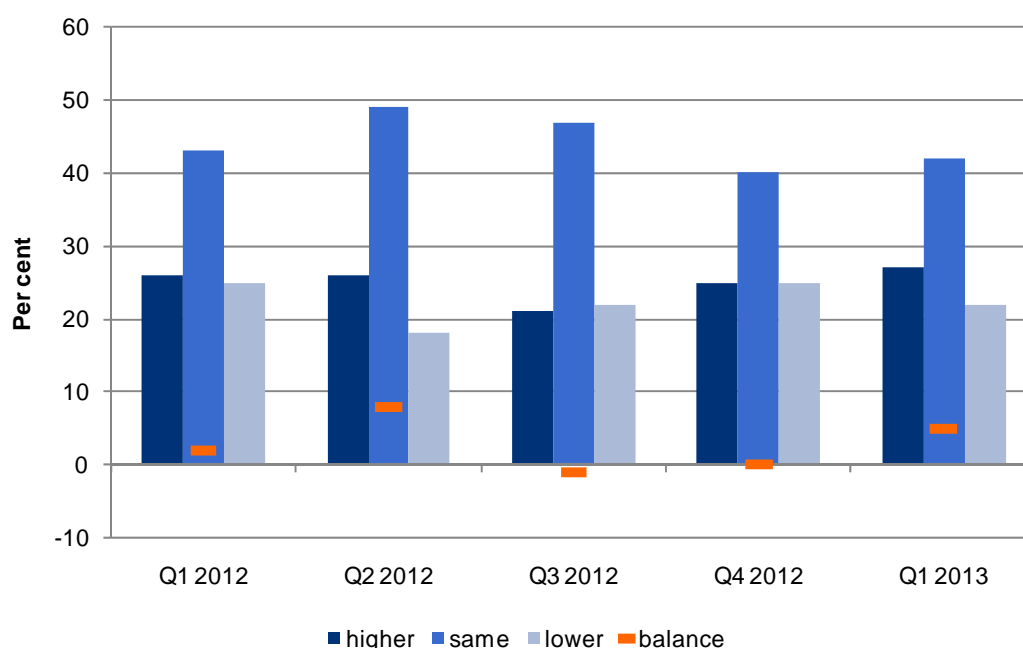
Notes:

1. Workplaces were asked about the volume of exports in the preceding Quarter when compared to the reference Quarter, for example Quarter 1 2013 results compare Quarter 1 2013 with Quarter 4 2012.
2. Estimates are not seasonally adjusted.
3. Survey results sum to 100%=(% Higher)+(% The same)+(% Lower)+(% Don't know). Estimates for 'Don't know' have been excluded from this chart, but are available in the tables that accompany the release.

Source: BIS - English Business Survey, Quarter 1 2013

Exporting businesses are a sub-set of the business population. It is estimated that approximately 19% of small and medium sized businesses, that have employees, export goods or services[16] – which means that statistics on exports can only be published on a quarterly basis due to the small number of monthly responses. Within this section the estimates refer to exporting businesses only.

In England, a positive balance score was recorded of +5% with 27% of exporting businesses reporting higher export volumes, and 22% reporting lower export volumes. This is an improvement on Quarter 4's survey results which reported a neutral balance score of 0%. It is also higher than Quarter 1 2012 which had a score of +2%.

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[16] BIS Small Business Survey, 2012

Four regions reported a positive export balance with the strongest results in the East of England and the North West. However a number of regions reported negative or neutral balance scores with the East Midlands the weakest, -21%. The North East and South West also reported negative balance scores (-2% and -1% respectively) while the West Midlands reported a neutral score (0%).

Comparing across firm size there is also variation in balance scores, with micro businesses the only size to report a negative balance (-5%). Medium sized businesses reported the strongest balance score of +8%, with Large and Small businesses balance scores of +7% and +3% respectively.
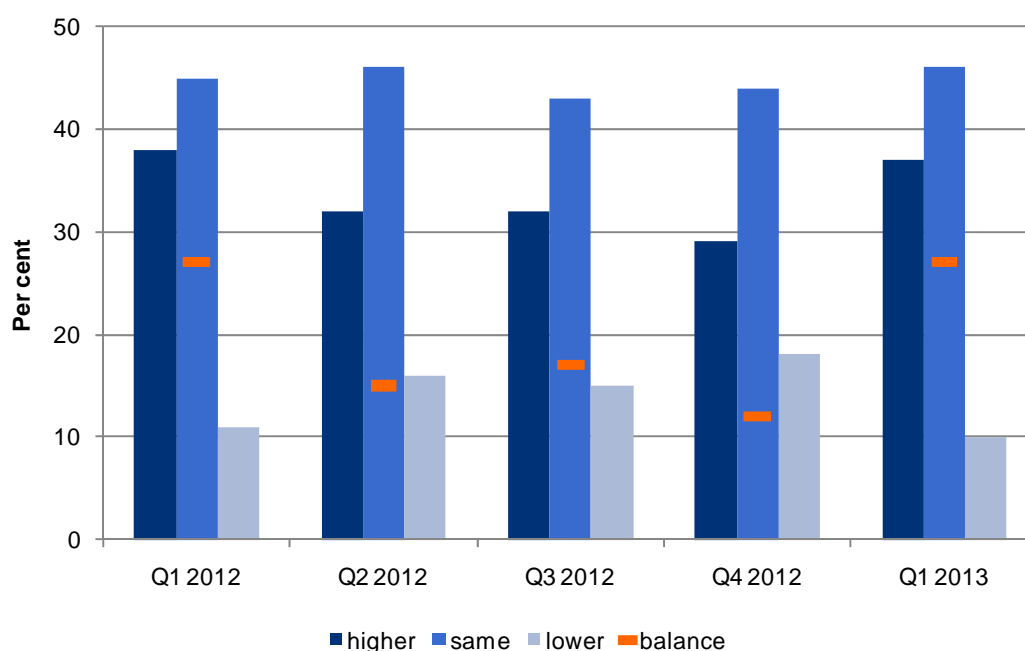
Expected export performance

Expectations of the volume of future exports, for England and its regions, are positive and stronger than the results for export performance.

Results in Quarter 1 2013 show a net positive balance of +27% for export volumes compared with the previous quarter with 37% of exporting businesses expecting higher export volumes and 10% expecting lower volumes. Quarter 1's results continue the trend for export expectations to be more optimistic than export performance experienced in Quarter 1.

The strong positive result was replicated across the English regions with the East of England and North West reporting the strongest performance for export expectations with balance scores of +35%, matching their strong performance in Quarter 1.

Chart 6: Expected volume of exports in England, Quarter 1 2012 to Quarter 1 2013

All sizes of business reported positive balance scores, with small businesses having the highest (+35%) nearly 10 percentage points above all the other sized of business.

Coherence with similar data

Other business surveys, conducted by both trade bodies and private companies, collect information across a range of variables. Although some of this information overlaps with that collected through the EBS, the EBS has the advantages that it: brings the data together in a single place; allows sub-regional analysis each quarter; and, covers all sectors of the economy, including the public/not-for-profit sectors.

Along with many other business surveys, data from the EBS is difficult to reconcile with official statistics, particularly output. The Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) *Industrial trend survey*[17] reported an expansion in output volumes in the three months to April, with the strongest performance in the South West and West Midlands. In the EBS the South East had the

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[17] http://www.cbi.org.uk/business-issues/economy/business-surveys/industrial-trends-survey/

strongest results. In both the CBI and EBS expectations of future output were much more positive with the best performance in the North West in the CBI and the East of England in the EBS, however the North West showed the one of the lowest balance scores in the EBS.

The monthly *Purchasing Manager's Index* (PMI)[18] reports an expansion in business activity in each of the three months to March 2013; and although the PMI has remained in expansionary territory, it has been relatively flat, which is perhaps similar to the EBS' low balance score for output in Quarter 1 2013. The North East and South West recorded the weakest performance in the three months to March, the EBS showed a similar result for the North East. The British Chamber of Commerce (BCC)'s *Quarterly Economic Survey*[19] also found an increase in domestic sales over Quarter 1 2013. In their results, the level of investment was shown to have risen during the quarter, while the EBS showed investment increased marginally.

Unlike the EBS, which recorded negative balance scores for employment for Quarter 1 2013, the *Quarterly Economic Survey* indicated that employment increased over the same period, and predicts employment will continue to increase in Quarter 2. The *Industrial trends survey* similarly recorded a positive balance of +10% for employment for the three months to April. However, official statistics seem to support the Quarter 1 EBS results, finding a rise in unemployment between January and March 2013 when compared to October to December 2012.

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[18] http://www.markiteconomics.com/Survey/Page.mvc/AboutPMIData

[19] http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/policy-maker/policy-reports-and-publications/quarterly-economic-survey-q4-2012.html

Background Notes

Product Development

The survey has undergone extensive development and testing, including pilot testing of the survey and cognitive testing of the survey questions. The Report on the EBS Questionnaire[20] contains details of the development and testing of the questionnaire; the Technical Annex details the methods which underpin the survey. Both documents are available on the EBS webpage.[21]

EBS methods and questionnaire continue to be reviewed and analysed to ensure they remain the best possible. Should you have any comments on the statistics – including on the methods used and dissemination of the statistics – or would like to inform us how you use the statistics, please contact ebsurvey@bis.gsi.gov.uk.

Quality and use

The English Business Survey provides timely and robust information on a regular and geographically detailed basis, the survey enhances understanding of business perceptions and economic conditions throughout England and ultimately improves policy making through this understanding. The statistics are also useful to businesses, providing intelligence about local economic and business conditions.

These estimates are currently classified as experimental statistics as they are undergoing development and have not yet been assessed against the standards required for National Statistics. It is recommended that users exercise caution when interpreting time series data, as the data are likely to include seasonal patterns, which have not been removed through seasonal adjustment[22]. It is expected that seasonal patterns will differ by industry, for example, all else being equal, some industries would expect output to be much lower in January compared to November due to seasonal patterns. It is recommended that until the statistics are assessed for seasonality that time series results are interpreted with caution.

Methodology

The English Business Survey is a monthly telephone survey that asks managers at sampled workplaces about their expectations and experiences on a range of measures such as output or sales. The data are weighted so that the weighted sample matches the population with respect to sub-region

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[20] http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/statistics/docs/e/12-601-english-business-survey-report-questionnaire-development.pdf

[21] http://www.bis.gov.uk/analysis/statistics/sub-national-statistics/ebsurvey

[22] The recommended approach for removing seasonality in UK Official Statistics requires three years of monthly data or 5 years of quarterly data.

and employment[23]. This is designed to capture the importance of the workplace to the economy; employment is used as a proxy for economic importance as a robust measure of turnover is not available for all workplaces. The use of employment means that the results effectively estimate: the proportion of employees whose manager believes a particular measure is positive/negative/the same.

To aid understanding and assist in the interpretation of the survey findings there are two documents aimed at different types of user: a non-technical User Guide[24], which provides information about how to interpret results, and a Technical Annex[25], which contains detailed information about the methodology.

Strengths and Limitations

The EBS has a number of strengths:

- a relatively large monthly sample with the potential to provide timely sub-national statistics;

- a workplace focus, which will enable data on local conditions to be collected;

- an 'economic influence'-type weighting approach to try to better represent what is happening for sub-national economies;

- coverage of all sectors of the economy, including the public/not-for-profit sectors; and

- timely statistics, allowing policy makers and businesses to react promptly to issues as they arise in the current macroeconomic climate.

However, it also has some limitations:

- the nature of data collection being at workplace level mean that statistics about region, employment size and industry all relate to that of the workplace, rather than for the enterprise. Accordingly, inferences about the enterprise-level business population are more limited; and

- due to the coverage of the sampling frame – the Inter-Departmental Business Register – the EBS does not cover non-registered[26] businesses. This is potentially important as such businesses make up a significant

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[23] The characteristics used for weighting include: location (NUTS2 Region) and employment size (0-49, 50-249 and 250+).

[24] http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/statistics/docs/e/12-598-english-business-survey-user-guide.pdf

[25] http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/statistics/docs/e/12-602x-english-business-survey-technical-annex.pdf

[26] Non-registered businesses are not registered for either PAYE or VAT, which means they are generally, the very smallest non-employing businesses.

proportion of the overall business population (55% of businesses) although they account for a smaller share of employment (12%) and turnover (3%)[27].
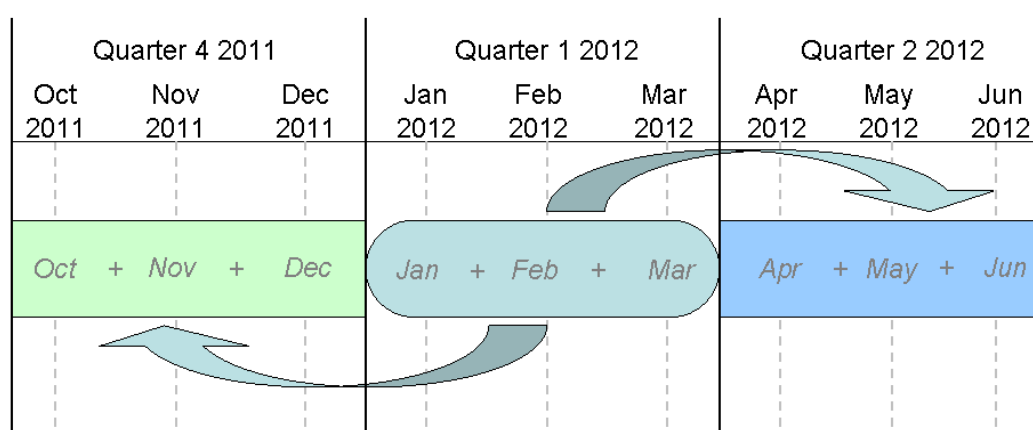
Interpreting the results

Workplace based survey

1. The main purpose of the EBS is to provide sub-national information. For this reason the EBS is a survey of workplaces and the region, employment size and industry all relate to that of the workplace.

Period covered

2. EBS Releases are labelled by the period which workplaces are asked about – the reference quarter. In most questions workplaces are asked to compare the reference quarter (quarter T) with the previous quarter (T-1) and the next quarter (T+1). For example, in the Quarter 1 2012 EBS, most backward-looking questions compare Quarter 1 2012 with Quarter 4 2011 and forward-looking questions compare Quarter 2 with Quarter 1 2012.

Quarter 4 2011			Quarter 1 2012			Quarter 2 2012		
Oct 2011	Nov 2011	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	Mar 2012	Apr 2012	May 2012	Jun 2012

Key

○ Quarter of Survey

▢ Quarter backward-looking question refers to

▢ Quarter forward-looking question refers to

Feb Months aggregated to form the quarterly data

3. Questions on capital investment and capacity constraints cover the reference period; however, these statistics present a single month's responses – rather than three months - and have a smaller sample size that does not allow sub-regional analysis. Periods being compared are clearly labelled on the tables. This is also explained in the EBS *User Guide*.

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[27] Statistics on the non-registered businesses are taken from Business Population Estimates for the UK and Regions 2012

Balance Statistics

4. A balance can be achieved through a number of different scenarios in the underlying results, for example a balance of zero can be achieved from Higher and Lower both being 0% or both being 50%. It is therefore important to consider the underlying figures. All figures in this document and the underlying data can also be found in the supporting tables.

5. It is important to remember that these questions only ask workplaces whether output was higher or lower and this does not take into account the size of any changes. Therefore a balance of 50% does not necessarily mean output growth will be higher than if the balance was 20%, as the growth rate seen by those contributing to the 20% positive balance may, in aggregate, outweigh the growth rates seen or expected by those contributing to the positive 50% balance. The difference in size between two higher percentages simply means that businesses accounting for a larger proportion of the economy, reported that output was higher.

Time Series Comparisons

6. Data from the EBS is still in its infancy and therefore it is not yet possible to seasonally adjust the data. The results presented in this release are not seasonally adjusted and users should be aware of this when interpreting the results, as it is likely that comparisons over time will show large changes for certain groups; these changes could be true changes, but they could be a result of seasonal patterns.

Accuracy

7. All estimates based on a sample of the population rather than a census are subject to sampling error. Calculation of these errors for the EBS is still being developed and will be released when available, however, provisional information on the likely size of these sampling errors is provided in the *Technical Annex*.

8. Like all statistics, the estimates in the EBS are subject to potential non-sampling errors – for example biases; measurement errors; and calculation errors. However, attempts have been made to minimise these by, for example, rigorous testing of the questionnaires, monitoring the work of interviewers and response rates to the survey.

9. Unlike the monthly EBS statistics, tests for statistically significant differences between the England total results and the results from each sub-group are still to be developed and are not included in this release.

Presentation

10. In the tables accompanying this release, the following conventions have been used:

- 0   nil (none recorded in sample)
- *   Suppressed due to small cell sample size
- -   Suppressed due to small column sample size
- …   Balance score not available due to small sample counts

11. All figures and percentages in this release, including the accompanying tables, have been rounded. Unweighted counts have been rounded to the nearest 5 and percentages have been rounded to the nearest integer. Balances are calculated based on unrounded figures and rounded independently therefore differences in the components may not equal the difference between the rounded figures.

Timeliness

12. Quarterly statistics from the EBS are published within two months of the period to which they refer. The date of publication will be announced at least four weeks in advance. We are working towards a regular publication cycle; however, due to the experimental nature of the data, the publication date for each quarter may initially vary. Future publication dates will be added to the National Statistics Publication Hub.[28]

Revisions

13. While every care has been taken to produce reliable statistics, EBS is still being developed and has been designated an Experimental Official Statistic. As the EBS develops statistics may be subject to revision if improvements in methodology are identified. All revisions will be pre-announced where practicable and all known users notified.

Additional information

Geographical units and NUTS levels

14. The Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) provides a single uniform breakdown for the production of regional statistics for the European Union. Results are published at two of the three NUTS levels in England:

- NUTS1: 9 English Regions;

- NUTS2: 30 areas in England that are mainly groups of counties and unitary authorities; can be referred to as sub-regions.

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[28] http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html

15. More information on NUTS areas can be found on ONS' Beginner's Guide to Geography - http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/beginner-s-guide/eurostat/index.html

Sub-regional data

16. The English Business Survey Reporting Tool[29] allows users to access detailed EBS statistics for individual periods (months and quarters) as well as cumulative periods, starting in October 2011 for monthly statistics and Quarter 1 2012 for Quarterly statistics. The reporting tool includes a more extensive range of statistics than presented in the Statistical Release and the supporting tables.

17. The English Business Survey Interactive Map[30] allows users to determine how NUTS 2 areas are performing, relative to England, over time for a Output, Employment and levels of Stock.

Micro data

18. EBS Micro data are available to 'approved researchers' via ONS' Virtual Micro Laboratory[31] and an aggregated version of the dataset is available to academics from the UK Data Archive[32].

Contact details

For enquiries, or to give feedback on this publication, please use the details below:

Statistician: Gary Wainman

Tel: 0114 207 5114

E-mail: ebsurvey@bis.gsi.gov.uk

Letters: 2nd Floor, 2 St Paul's Place, 125 Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2FJ

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[29] http://dservuk.tns-global.com/English-Business-Survey-Reporting-Tool/

[30] http://aalookup.bis.gov.uk/ebs/map/

[31] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/who-we-are/services/vml/index.html

[32] http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/

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