

Business Monitor Survey Q3 2011



Business Confidence

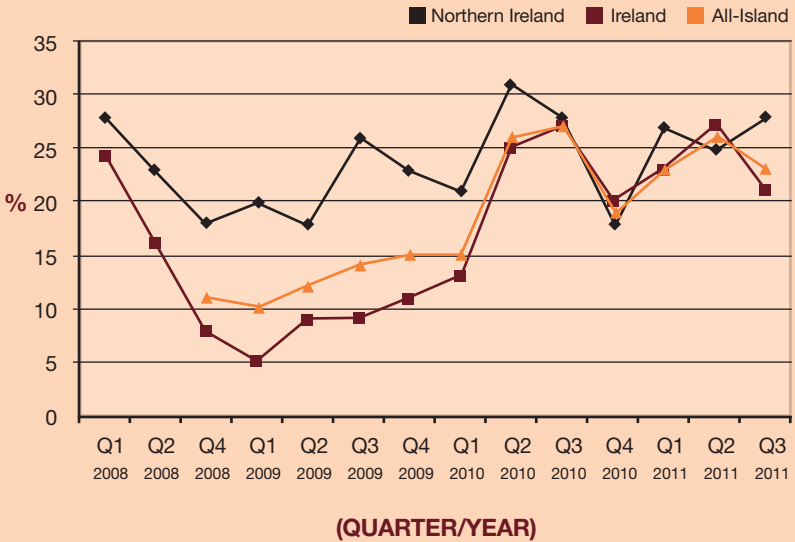
Key Findings Q3 2011

<p>A third (34%) of businesses reported that lack of finance for investment is constraining growth plans.</p>	<p>Almost a quarter (23%) of businesses reported an increase in their sales in Q2 2011</p>
<p>Almost half (46%) of firms reported they were contracting, fighting for survival or winding up.</p>	<p>Only 6% of businesses reported that they had increased employment in the previous quarter.</p>
<p>In the past 14 quarters more businesses reported a decrease than an increase in their employment levels.</p>	<p>One in ten (10%) firms have applied for credit within the past three to six months.</p>
<p>Over half (53%) of businesses were successful in applying for overdrafts and 46% for loans.</p>	<p>Just over half (52%) of businesses thought they would be successful if they approached their bank for finance.</p>

Sales increases...

Less than a quarter (23%) of businesses reported an increase in sales in Q3 2011. This marked a slight fall after two quarters of increasing positivity and is a result of declining sales performance by firms in Ireland (21% reporting an increase) and particularly by micro-enterprises (21%). Businesses in the Manufacturing (28%) and Agriculture (27%) sectors have reported better than average sales returns.

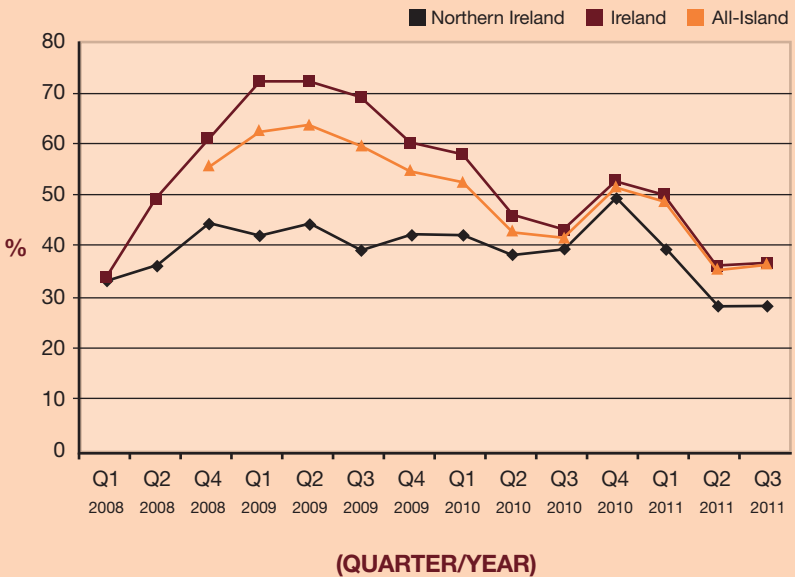
Percentage of companies reporting an increase in sales



Sales decreases...

Over a third (37%) of businesses reported that their sales decreased in the previous quarter. This marks little change on Q2 2011 with firms in Ireland performing worse than those in Northern Ireland. Businesses employing more than 50 people reported smaller decreases (23%) as did those in the Agriculture (26%) and Business Services sectors.

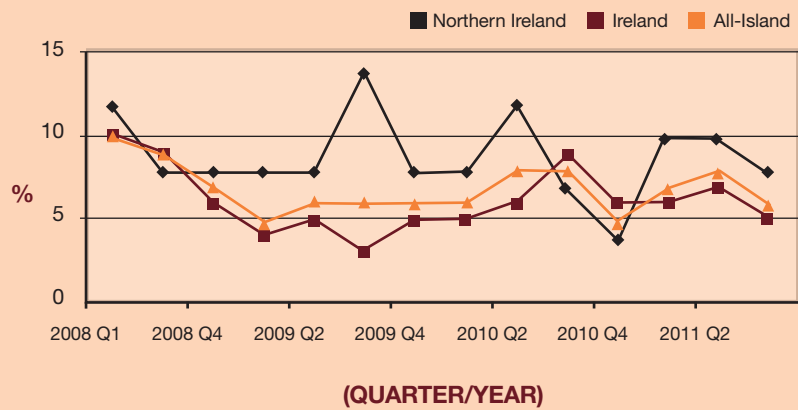
Percentage of companies reporting a decrease in sales



Employment increases...

One in fifteen (6%) of businesses reported that they increased staff numbers in the previous quarter, marking a slight fall from Q2 2011 (8%). Micro-enterprises were less likely to increase employment (only 4% reported a rise) while exporters (11%) and those engaged in cross-border trade (11%) were above average in increasing employment.

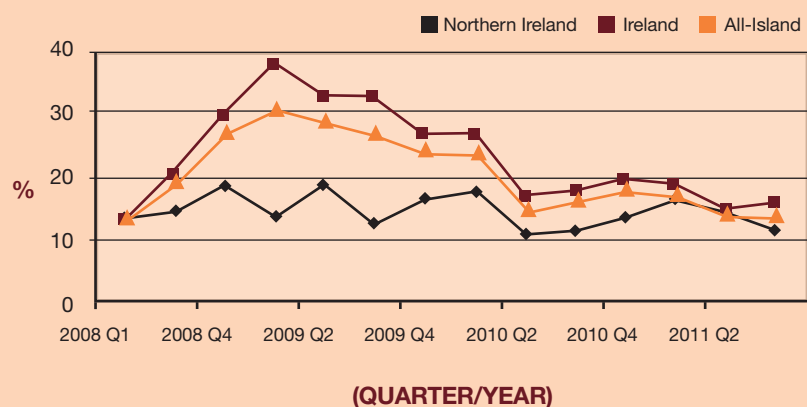
Percentage of businesses reporting an increase in employment



Employment decreases...

Firms of over 50 employees have been more active in decreasing their workforces (23% reported a decrease) while there is little difference between businesses in Ireland or Northern Ireland or across sectors with the exception of construction (where 27% reported a decrease).

Percentage of businesses reporting a decrease in employment



About us

InterTradeIreland is the only organisation which has been given responsibility by both Governments to boost North/South economic co-operation to the mutual benefit of Northern Ireland and Ireland. By encouraging better use of our collective resources we help to expedite trade and business growth across the island and create an environment where it is easier to do business.

We support SMEs across the island to identify and develop North/South trade and innovation opportunities. We do this through:

- **Business programmes**
- **Research and statistics**
- **Networks and partnerships**

InterTradeIreland will endeavour to facilitate requests for alternative formats of this publication including Irish Language, Ulster Scots, Braille, disk and audio cassette.

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