

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 24 April

SMMT – Car manufacturing figures announced

UK car manufacturing figures were released this week by SMMT. They show that the strong British car market drove domestic production up 1.9% in March with 144,893 cars built – the record since March 2006. Meanwhile, manufacturing output for the domestic market rose almost a quarter, reflecting continuing strong demand for new cars in the UK. The figures come as new analysis by SMMT reveals that productivity in UK automotive manufacturing is at an all-time high. Looking at the past five year period, 11.5 vehicles were produced a year for each person employed in the industry. For the period from 2005 to 2009, the figure was 9.3 vehicles produced per employee per year.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2015/04/uk-car-manufacturing-march-2015/>



SMMT - Engine manufacturing stable

Engine manufacturing figures show a stable output with 230,634 engines made in the UK this March, up 0.3% on the year-to-year date. March 2015 was a positive month for British engine exports, with overall demand up by 2.7%. Overall, the outlook is positive with investments into building the next generation of low emission Euro-6 engines, set to be realised throughout the year.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2015/04/engine-manufacturing-stable-and-outlook-positive/>

SMMT – CV markets boost UK output

Figures released this week show an increase in demand for UK-built commercial vehicles (CV). Britain produced 9,648 vans and trucks in March, representing an uplift of 43.3% over last year. In the first quarter of the year, 23,435 commercial vehicles were produced, marking 19.1% growth following reduced output in 2014. This growth can be attributed to a particularly strong home market and a ramping up of volume production to meet demand for new to market vans. The UK's CV sector saw a record quarter for registrations with 108,456 van and truck orders fulfilled. This has translated to a 63% upturn in production of UK-built vehicles in March and 37% over the quarter, with light commercial vehicles accounting for more than four fifths of output. In further evidence of the sector's return to form, the export market has also posted growth of 31% in March and 3.9% this quarter. This is in part due to a recovering European market, which has seen an 8.8% increase in registrations so far this year.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2015/04/strong-commercial-vehicle-markets-boost-uk-output/>

ONS – Labour market statistics

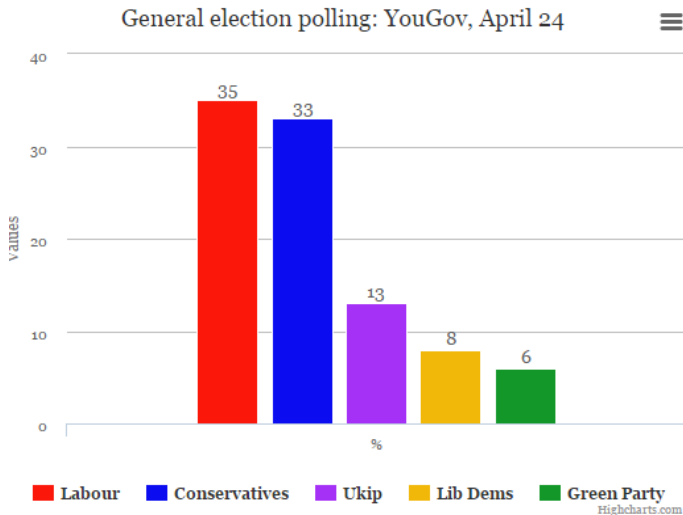
The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released its Labour Market statistics for April 2015 last Friday, 17 April. The main findings of this release are that employment continued to rise. This change continues the general direction of movement since late 2011/early 2012. For the three months ending February 2015, 73.4% of people aged from 16 to 64 were in work, up from 72.4% for a year earlier. The unemployment rate for the three months ending February 2015 was 5.6%, down from 6.9% for a year earlier.

(Source: ONS)

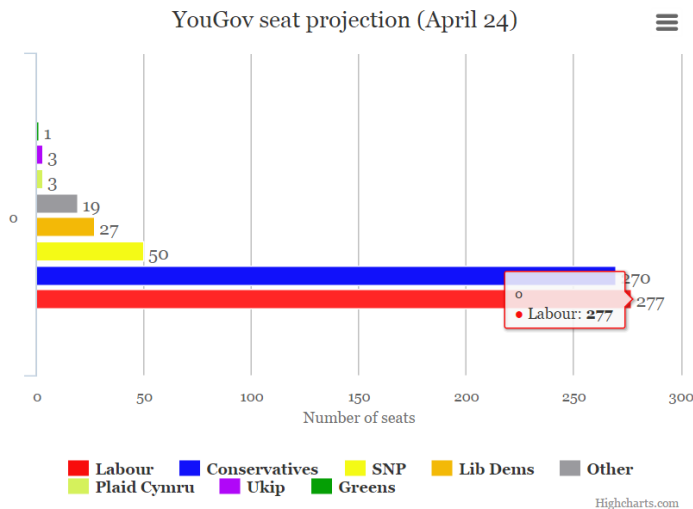
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/april-2015/index.html>

Latest Poll – Labour and Tories tied

Polling data for April 24 show that the general election race continues to be neck and neck. Labour has taken a 2 per cent lead in the YouGov poll.



The latest seat projection from YouGov shows Labour as the largest party, but only just:



(Source: The Telegraph)

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/general-election-2015/11560071/Election-polls-latest-Tories-lead-by-4pc-Labour-by-2pc-in-another.html>

Stolen vehicles down 70%

The number of vehicles stolen in England and Wales has fallen by 70% in the past decade, according to data released on Friday, 24 April by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Latest figures show 69,547 vehicles were stolen last year, compared to 231,323 in 2004. Vehicle theft fell by 1.2% compared with 2013 and the crime is now at its lowest point since 1968. The continued reduction in vehicle theft follows a concerted effort by manufacturers to help make vehicles ever more secure. The industry invests billions of pounds each year to ensure it remains at the cutting edge of technology and stays ahead of criminals.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2015/04/stolen-vehicles-down-70-in-a-decade-as-smmt-calls-for-more-detailed-theft-tracking/>

Week ahead

Monday 18 May

- The new Parliament will meet – swearing-in of Members of the Parliament

Wednesday 27 May

- State Opening and Queens Speech