

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 21 November

October UK automotive manufacturing figures announced

Car manufacturing

UK car manufacturing output fell 6.7% in October to 150,060 units leaving year-to-date volumes flat. This has largely been attributed to global economic uncertainty affecting demand. Despite this outlook remains positive with all-time record production levels expected within the coming years.

Commercial vehicle manufacturing

UK commercial vehicle manufacturing output declined 8.9% in October, the smallest monthly fall since June 2013. Production for the UK market increased 14.6% whilst exports fell 30.6%. The commercial vehicle market for 2014 on the whole continues to feel the affects of last year's restructuring.

Engine manufacturing

UK engine production fell 17% on last year's figures for October as re-tooling for new models continued. Year-to-date figures for 2014 show a fall of 6.4% with 2,033,199 engines built so far this year. The outlook is looking positive in the long-term however, with UK engine production receiving significant recent investment.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmmt.co.uk/category/manufacturing/>

Manufacturing growth firm, but exports weak - CBI

UK manufacturing output remains above average and is broad-based, but sluggish export demand means the recovery has slowed compared to earlier in the year, according to the CBI's latest Industrial Trends Survey. In light of a slowdown in growth for the UK's key export markets including Europe, Japan and China, external demand for UK goods has been weak. The findings of a survey conducted amongst 421 manufacturers concluded that expectations for growth in export volumes over the next three months have declined to a 13-month low, although it remains above

the long-run average. According to the CBI, 36% of firms saw output rise in the past three months, with 22% saying it fell, providing a well rounded balance of +15%. The Director for Economics Rain Newton-Smith commented that "overall manufacturing output remains quite strong although growth is expected to ease against the backdrop of continuing global risks". (Source: CBI)

<http://news.cbi.org.uk/news/manufacturing-growth-firm-but-exports-weak/>



Government announces opening up of traineeships

Skills Minister Nick Boles MP has announced government plans to open up the traineeships programme to more young people to help them prepare for apprenticeships and work. The announcement made on 18 November will mean that measures to publish data and improve how providers are funded will allow progress to be made on the programme's successful start after 10,000 young people participated last year. The changes follow a government consultation on ways to ensure traineeships have the best results for young people. Speaking at the Association of Colleges annual conference, Nick Boles welcomed his plans to see training providers and employers offer many more places within the current scheme, building on the progress already seen in traineeships with firms like BT and Barclays. (Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-young-people-to-be-helped-into-work-with-traineeships>

ONS produces Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2014 publication

The Office for National Statistics has published its annual labour market review, an in-depth analysis of trends in earnings across a variety of categories and sectors. Charts included provide illustrations of the distribution of earnings in terms of region, occupation and sex amongst a host of other variables. The key headline from this year's publication was that median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees were £518, up 0.1% from £517 in 2013. With adjustments for inflation this represents a 1.6% decrease in real wages when compared to 2013. In other areas, the gender pay gap narrowed to 9.4% compared with 10% in 2013, marking the lowest level since records began in 1997. (Source: ONS)

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ashe/annual-survey-of-hours-and-earnings/2014-provisional-results/index.html>

UKIP wins Rochester and Strood by-election

UKIP has won the Rochester and Strood by-election with Mark Reckless, the former Conservative MP taking the seat. UKIP won 16,867 votes (42.10%) with the Conservative candidate Kelly Tolhurst taking 13,947 votes (34.81%). Labour polled third with 6,713 (16.76%), ahead of the Green Party at 1,692 (4.22%) and the Liberal Democrats at 349 (0.87%).

(Source: BBC) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-30140747>

Week ahead

Commons Committee

Monday 24 November

- Transport Committee – Motoring of the future with witnesses including Newcastle University, Thatcham Research and TRL
- Political and Constitutional Reform Committee – The future of devolution after the referendum

Tuesday 25 November

- Business, Innovation and Skills Committee - Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Witnesses: Frances O'Grady, General Secretary, TUC and Sean McGuire, Brussels Director, CBI; David Babbs, Executive Director, 38 Degrees
- Energy and Climate Change Committee – Linking emissions trading systems

Wednesday 26 November

- Education Committee - Apprenticeships and traineeships for 16 to 19 year olds
- Energy and Climate Change Committee – New climate economy, with witnesses including Lord Stern
- Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee – Defra performance in 2013 – 2014 with Liz Truss MP, DEFRA Secretary of State

House of Lords

Monday 24 November

- Consumer Rights Bill: Report (Day 2 of 3)

Tuesday 25 November

- Labour Party debates: Debate on the case for the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union (Lord Liddle, Lab)

Wednesday 26 November

- Consumer Rights Bill: Report (Day 3 of 3)