



# CONSULTING EXCELLENCE AFTER BREXIT

Quarterly EU Survey findings

Survey 2 | February 2017



## INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the findings of the MCA's second quarterly Brexit survey, conducted in early 2017. We have presented these alongside the results of the first survey (Autumn 2016) to enable easy comparison.

There is a broadly similar pattern of responses to both exercises, with one or two nuances and variations. The key differences are as follows:

In reporting the effect on their revenues (figure 1), respondents overall point to continuing negligible impact and again some negativity. However, 8% of respondents now record a positive impact on their revenues. This is consistent with feedback from some member firms about the benefits of the lower pound for overseas sales. It also accords with the pickup in one or two client markets (figure 3B) and with the polarisation evident in figure 2.

Indeed, the story of the report appears to be that (potentially short-term) polarisation. In figure 2, fewer respondents now record negligible impact on client growth expectations and confidence. More now record both positive and negative effects.

The contrast between 3A and 3B shows where some of this polarisation comes from. Respondents suggest a more positive outlook for the manufacturing sector (as well as, to a less marked extent, for infrastructure and transport). Manufacturing's position is doubtless linked to sterling's competitiveness. By contrast, respondents suggest worsening prospects for private health/life sciences, a more polarised outlook for retail, while there is a notable intensification of concerns about financial services. High-profile reports of financial services institutions contemplating relocation will have contributed here.

Figure 4 shows that member firms' perceptions of the challenges of recruiting skilled labour have likewise polarised. 15% cite Brexit as having a positive impact, while the percentage

reporting a negative impact has nearly quadrupled. Access to the Single Market continues to matter to respondents (figure 5). Respondents suggest however that this is notably less significant for their firm than for their clients or (in line with recent MCA findings) for non-EU recruits.

In figure 6, respondents again stress the negativity, uncertainty and reduced confidence in the UK that intelligence-gathering from their overseas networks has revealed. From Brexit negotiations (figure 7), respondents are again seeking the Single Market access and cooperation associated with a 'soft Brexit', while some respondents also highlight the need for better performance on trade agreements beyond the EU.

Going forward, we will discontinue this survey format. Instead, throughout the Article 50 negotiations, we intend to ask one-off and topical questions. This will allow us to complement our Brexit and New Economy work with specific opinion and impact surveys. Our [New Economy 2020 and Beyond](#) report has set out an ambitious Brexit and Industrial Agenda for the UK. We will test and refine its relevance from bespoke surveys and other research.

(Please note throughout that where combined numbers seem to add up to slightly more/slightly less than 100%, this is a result of rounding.)

# SURVEY FINDINGS

Figure 1

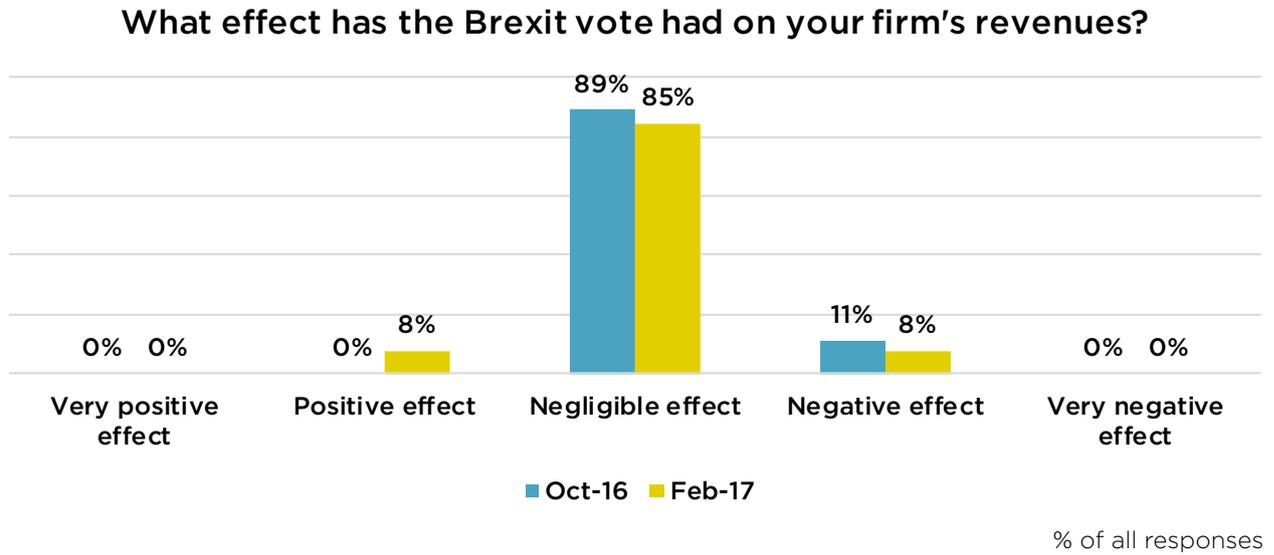


Figure 2

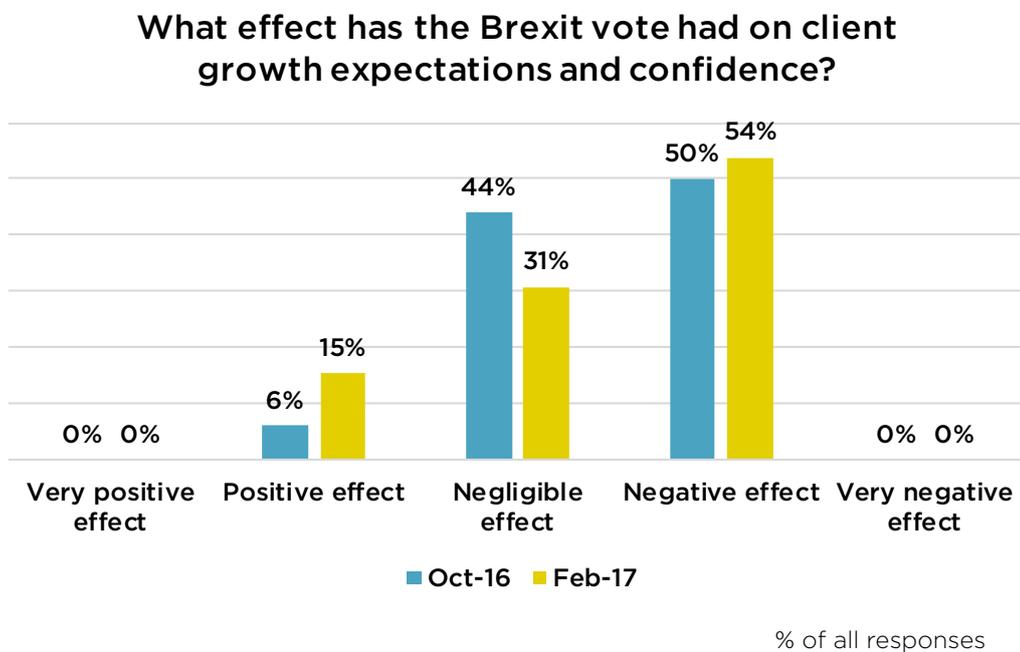


Figure 3A

To what degree are these sectors of the economy being affected by the Brexit vote? (October 2016)

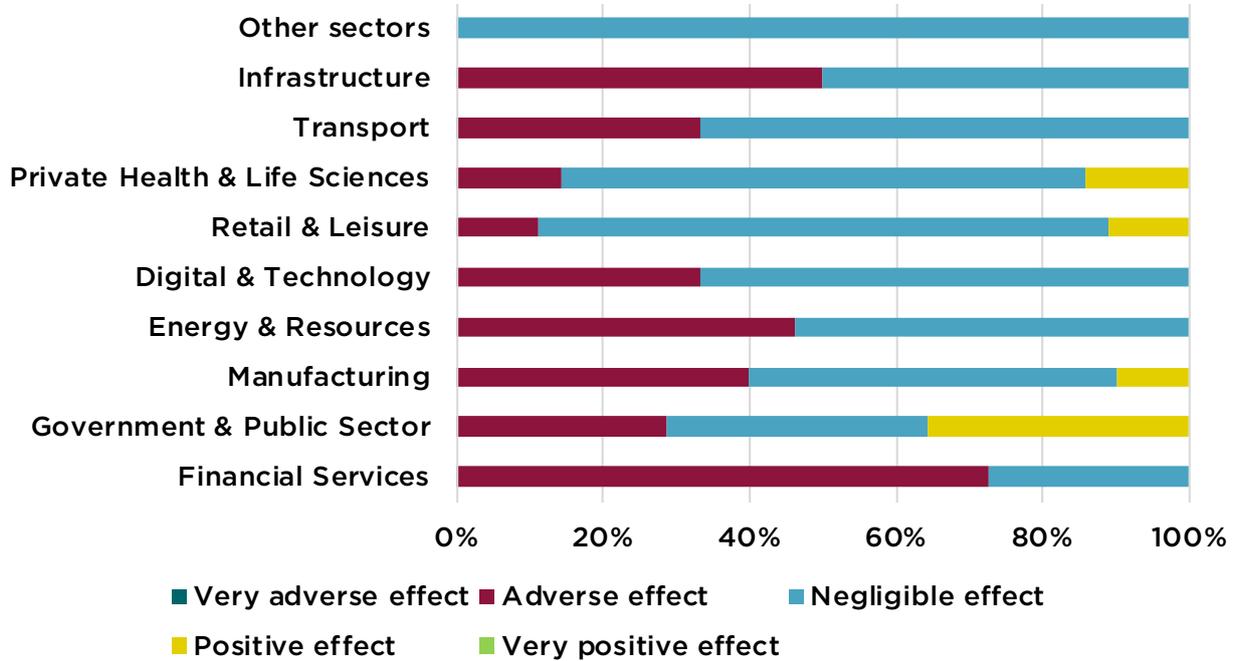


Figure 3B

To what degree are these sectors of the economy being affected by the Brexit vote? (February 2017)

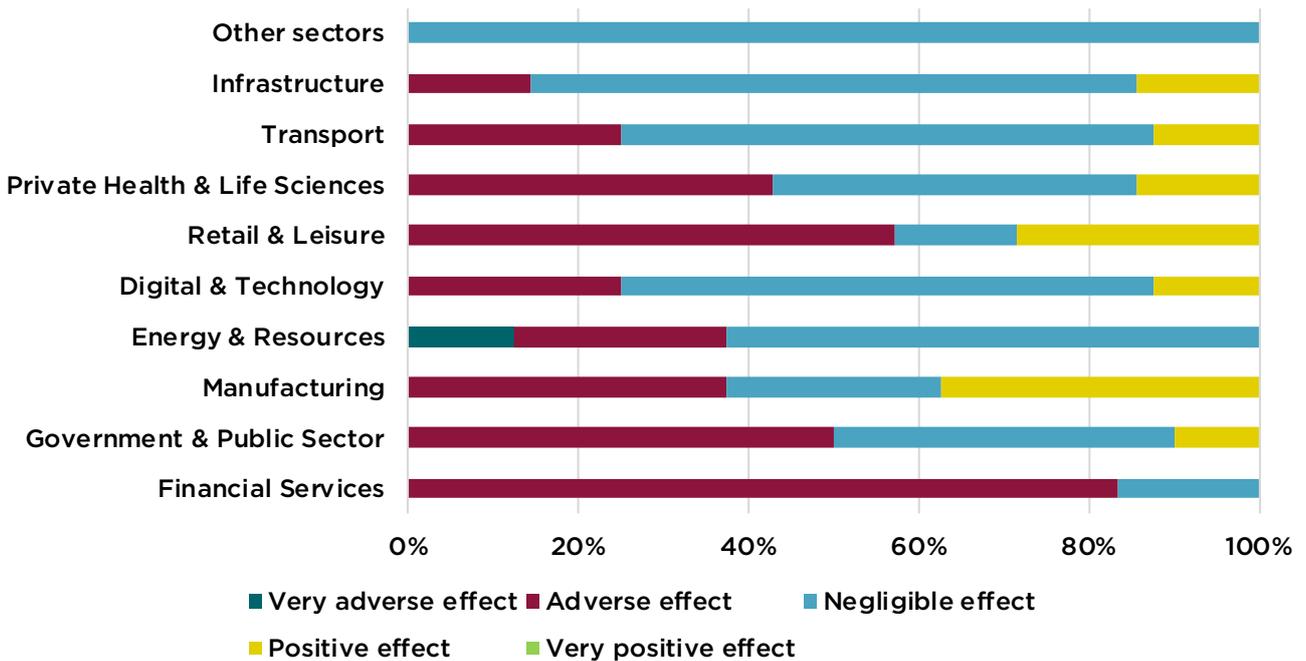


Figure 4

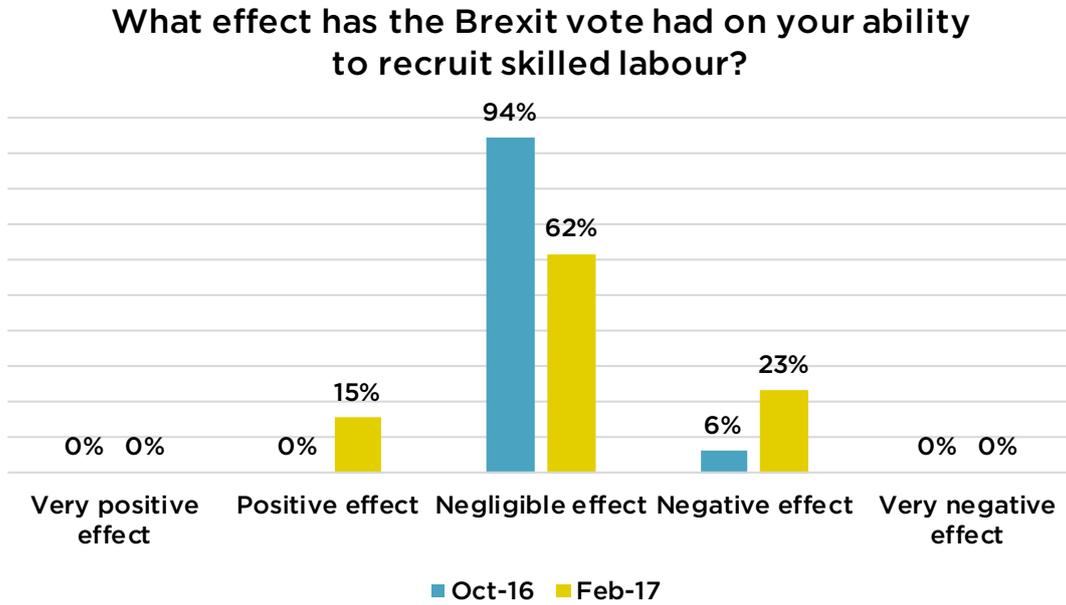


Figure 5

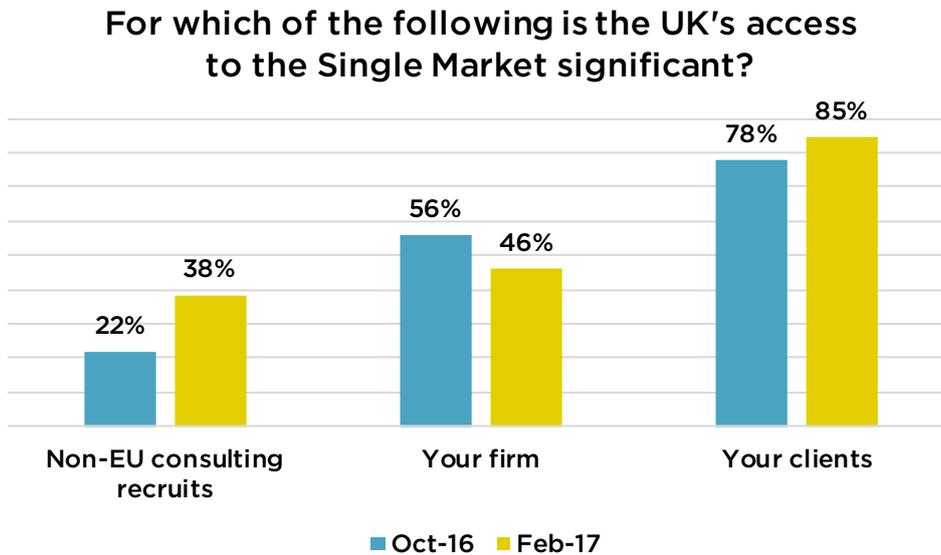
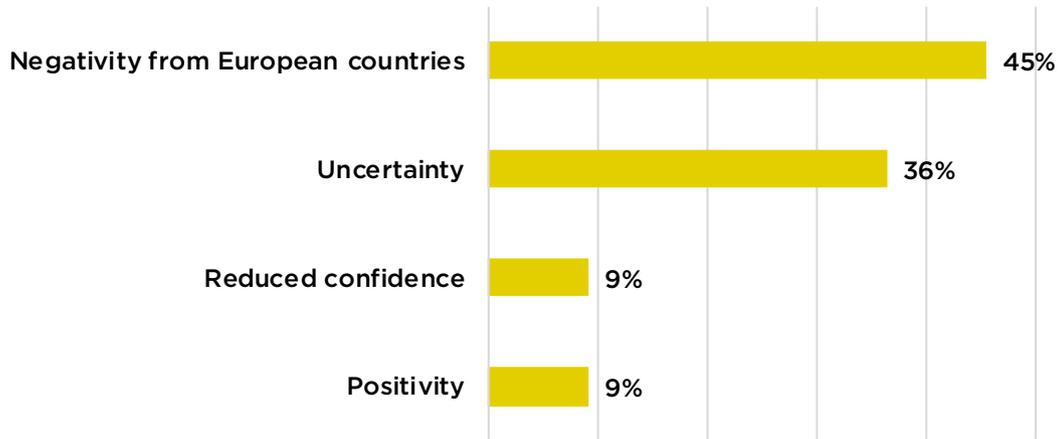
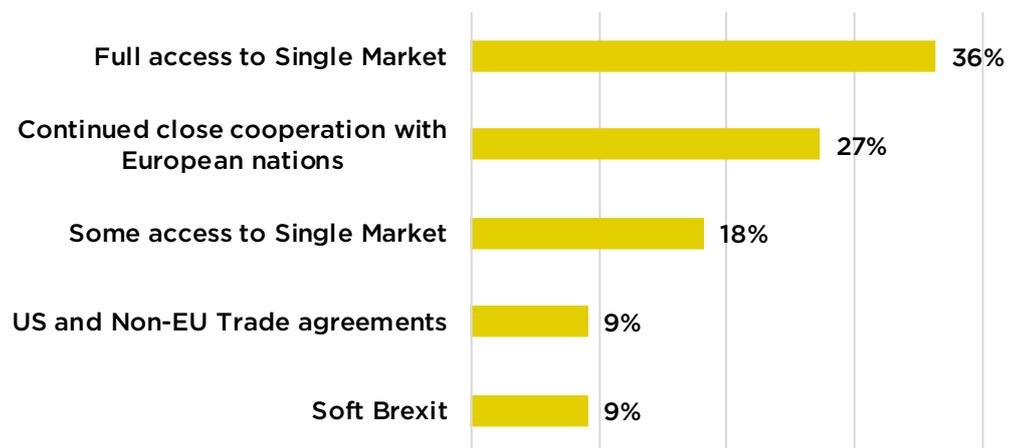


Figure 6

**What attitudes has your firm observed from its overseas networks or other sources?**

% of responses containing the coded theme.

Figure 7

**In your view, what policy objectives should the UK government and policymakers pursue to secure the most positive post-Brexit outcome?**

% of responses containing the coded theme.



**MCA**  
A POSITIVE FORCE  
FOR THE ECONOMY

Management Consultancies Association  
5th Floor, 36-38 Cornhill,  
London, EC3V 3NG

[www.mca.org.uk](http://www.mca.org.uk)

T: +44 (0) 20 7645 7950

E: [info@mca.org.uk](mailto:info@mca.org.uk)

Twitter: [@TheMCA\\_UK](https://twitter.com/TheMCA_UK)