

May 2010 press release reporting on findings from the UKBB and UKBAB Q2 surveys of April 2010

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General Election won by the media

As the debate continues to rage on the ability of a Conservative-Lib Dem UK coalition to govern effectively, small- and medium-sized businesses have hailed the General Election as being won by the media.

Questioned shortly before the General Election, participants in the UK Business Barometer quarterly online survey, run by The University of Nottingham Institute for Enterprise and Innovation (UNIEI), overwhelmingly felt that the large amount of press, broadcast and social media comment would have the biggest influence on voters.

A massive 85 per cent of respondents — and an even greater 88 per cent of respondents in its sister survey the UK Business Adviser Barometer (UKBAB) — believed that interpretation and presentation of views in the media would win out over the actual policy proposals contained in manifestoes or party political broadcasts.

Quizzed about the possibility that Britain could wake up on Friday May 7 with a hung parliament, respondents believed this would not bode well for business. More than half of UKBB participants (55 per cent) thought that a hung parliament would worsen economic prospects either somewhat or greatly. In the UKBAB 59 per cent of respondents agreed that the future looked gloomy. Only 18 per cent of UKBB and 14 per cent of UKBAB respondents felt that the economy would thrive greatly or somewhat.

Over the period October 2008 to March 2010 the government streamlined more than 300 different publicly funded business support schemes into a new package of 30 schemes under the title Solutions for Business. These are provided through local, regional and central government departments and private and third sector provision is also brokered through Business Links.

Respondents to the April 2010 UKBB and UKBAB surveys were quizzed on what extent they believed national, regional and local government should be involved in providing business support. The least popular direct source on average, with respondents to both surveys, was national government. UKBB respondents favoured regional government to local, while the reverse was true for UKBAB respondents.

The surveys also posed questions on pension arrangements and benchmarking businesses, as well as the usual quarterly trends questions that cover issues including business growth, skills shortages, the situation with access to finance and the effect of low market demand.

The UKBB and UKBAB online surveys pose a number of topical questions in a bid to uncover the key issues affecting the small business market and how it is coping with the current state of the economy. Operating over the web means that results can be rapidly generated and the surveys have unique software that enables results to be processed and posted on their respective websites immediately they arrive.

More follows...

More information, including results and analyses, can be found on the web at [www.ukbb.ac](http://www.ukbb.ac) and [www.ukbab.ac](http://www.ukbab.ac). Businesses and advisers wishing to contribute as panellists on the project should visit the appropriate Business Barometer website to register.

— Ends —

Notes to editors: The University of Nottingham is ranked in the UK's Top 10 and the World's Top 100 universities by the Shanghai Jiao Tong (SJTU) and the *Times Higher Education*-QS World University Rankings.

More than 90 per cent of research at The University of Nottingham is of international quality, according to RAE 2008, with almost 60 per cent of all research defined as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'. *Research Fortnight* analysis of RAE 2008 ranks the University 7<sup>th</sup> in the UK by research power. In 27 subject areas, the University features in the UK Top Ten, with 14 of those in the Top Five.

The University provides innovative and top quality teaching, undertakes world-changing research, and attracts talented staff and students from 150 nations. Described by *The Times* as Britain's "only truly global university", it has invested continuously in award-winning campuses in the United Kingdom, China and Malaysia. Twice since 2003 its research and teaching academics have won Nobel Prizes. The University has won the Queen's Award for Enterprise in both 2006 (International Trade) and 2007 (Innovation — School of Pharmacy), and was named 'Entrepreneurial University of the Year' at the *Times Higher Education Awards* 2008.

Nottingham was designated as a Science City in 2005 in recognition of its rich scientific heritage, industrial base and role as a leading research centre. Nottingham has since embarked on a wide range of business, property, knowledge transfer and educational initiatives ([www.science-city.co.uk](http://www.science-city.co.uk)) in order to build on its growing reputation as an international centre of scientific excellence. The University of Nottingham is a partner in *Nottingham: the Science City*.

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