

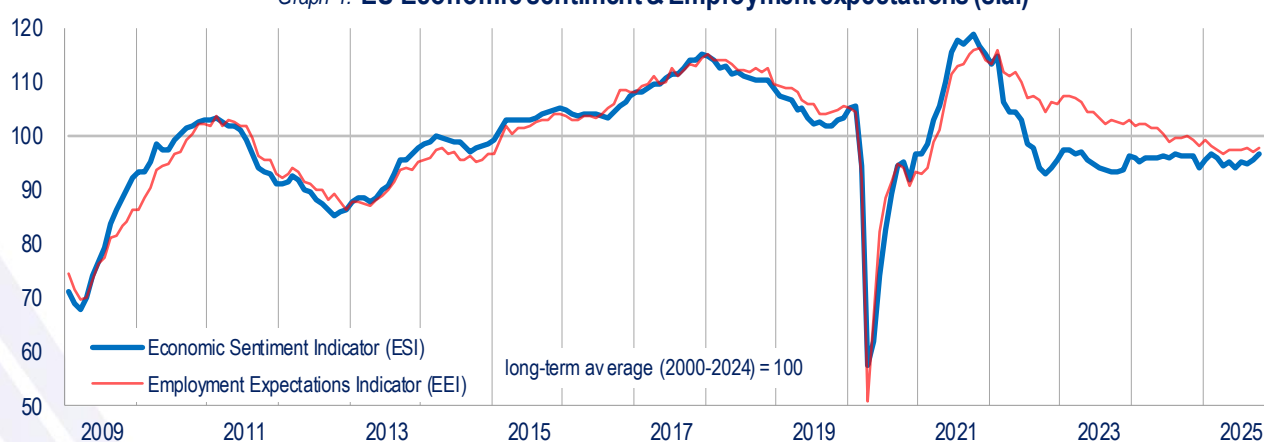
Business and consumer survey results for October 2025

Economic Sentiment and Employment Expectations pick up in both the EU and the euro area

In October 2025, the *Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI)* picked up in both the EU (+1.0 points to 96.7) and the euro area (+1.2 points to 96.8).¹ The *Employment Expectations Indicator (EEI)* also improved compared to September in both areas (EU: +0.6 points to 97.7, euro area: +0.4 points to 96.9). Both indicators continue to score below their long-term average of 100.

EU developments

Graph 1: EU Economic sentiment & Employment expectations (s.a.)

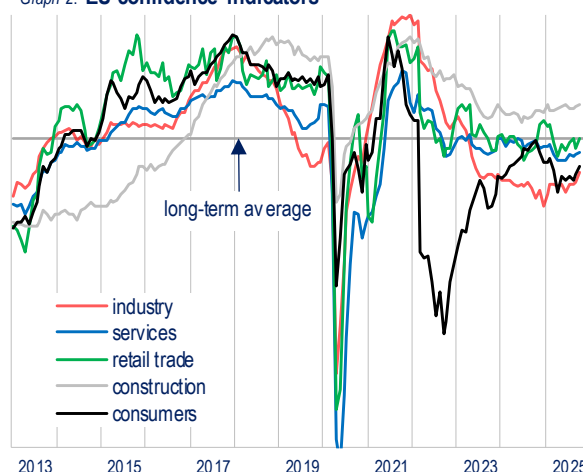


source: European Commission services

The upturn in the ESI was driven by higher confidence in almost all sectors — industry, retail trade, construction and among consumers — while it remained broadly stable in services. Among the largest EU economies, the ESI improved noticeably in France (+2.5), Italy (+1.4) and Germany (+1.0), while it remained broadly stable in the Netherlands (+0.3), and decreased in Spain (-0.9) and Poland (-1.5).

Industry confidence strengthened in October (+1.3 points), driven by managers' brighter *production expectations* and improved assessments of the *current level of overall order books*. Managers' assessment of *stocks of finished products* remained broadly stable. Of the questions not entering the confidence indicator, both managers' assessment of *export order books* and trends in *past production* got a lot better. **Confidence in services** remained broadly stable (+0.2). A moderate improvement in managers' assessments of the *past business situation* and past demand were almost offset by a decrease in their *demand expectations*. **Consumer confidence** picked up in October (+0.8). Consumers' expectations about the *general economic situation* in their country improved significantly in conjunction with a better view of their *households' future financial situation*, but were moderated by decreasing *intentions to make major purchases*. Consumer's assessment of their *households' financial situation* in the past three months was broadly stable. **Retail trade confidence** improved by 1.0 point, on the back of managers' significantly higher expectations about the *future business situation* and an improved appraisal of their *volume of stocks*, despite retailers' assessment of the *past business situation* deteriorating moderately. **Construction confidence** increased by 0.6 points in October, as builders' assessment of their *order book levels*, and their *employment expectations* improved. The percentage of construction managers indicating *labour*

Graph 2: EU confidence indicators²

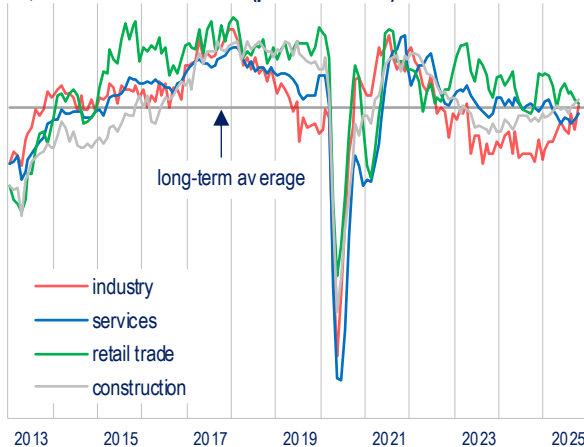


¹ Past survey data were revised due to seasonal adjustment and revisions in French business survey data.

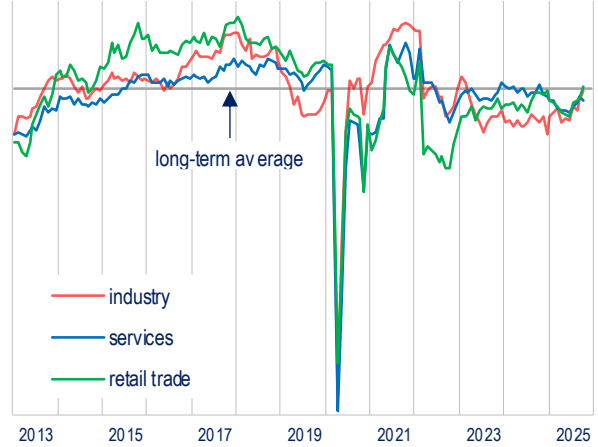
² The graph presents standardised series to correct for differences in means and standard deviations.

shortages as a factor limiting their business increased to 27.5% in October. The other limiting factors — *insufficient demand*, *shortage of material/equipment*, and *financial constraints* — remained broadly stable at 30.7%, 5.3% and 8.5%, respectively.

Graph 3: Business situation (past 3 months) in the EU²



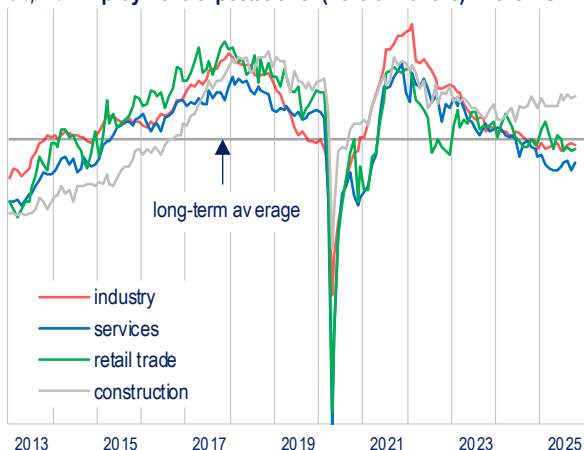
Graph 4: Business expectations (next 3 months) in the EU²



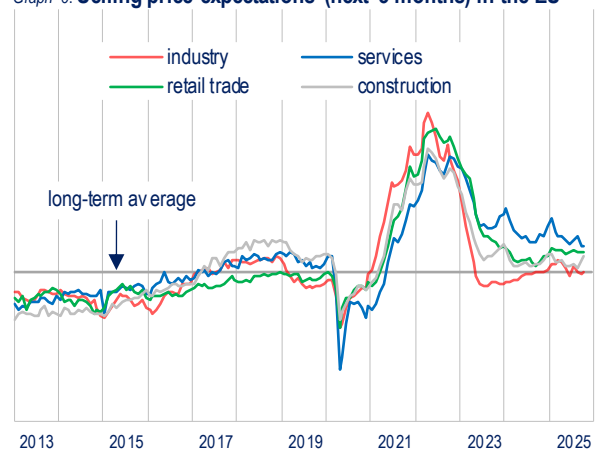
The EU **Employment Expectations Indicator** ticked up in October (+0.6 to 97.7) but remained below its long-term average of 100. Employment plans increased in both the services and construction sectors, while they remained broadly stable in the industry and retail trade sectors. Consumers' unemployment expectations, which are not included in the headline indicator, improved significantly in October. The EU **Labour Hoarding Indicator** increased marginally (+0.1 points to 9.4) and remained just below its long-term average.³

Selling price expectations picked up significantly in construction and slightly in services, while they remained broadly stable in industry and retail trade. Selling price expectations score above their long-term averages in all sectors except industry. Consumers' price expectations for the next twelve months fell markedly in October, but their perceptions of past price developments increased somewhat. Both assessments remain elevated.

Graph 5: Employment expectations (next 3 months) in the EU²



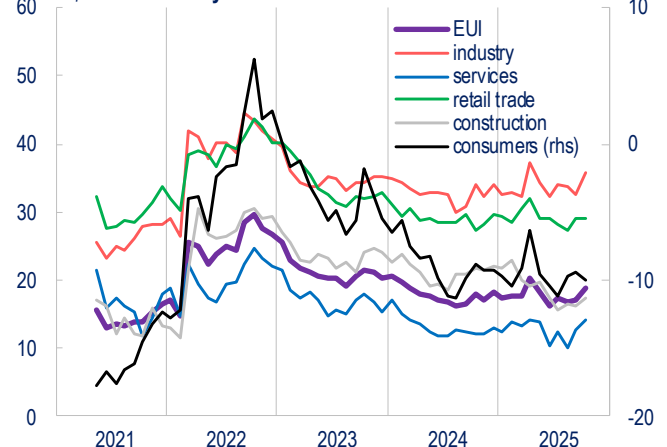
Graph 6: Selling price expectations (next 3 months) in the EU²



Graph 7: Consumer expectations (next 12 months) in the EU



Graph 8: Uncertainty in the EU



³ The LHI measures the percentage of managers expecting their firm's output to decrease, but employment to remain stable or increase. See the special topic of the [2023-Q2 FBCI](#) for background, and section 3.6.9 of the [BCS User Guide](#) for methodological details. Detailed LHI results per sector and country are available for download in the [time series section](#) of the BCS website.

The **Economic Uncertainty Indicator (EUI)** increased (+1.6 point to 18.8). Industry, services and construction managers reported an increase in uncertainty about their future business situation, while uncertainty in retail trade was unchanged. Consumers' uncertainty about their future financial situation deteriorated marginally, as well.

Quarterly survey results (conducted in October)

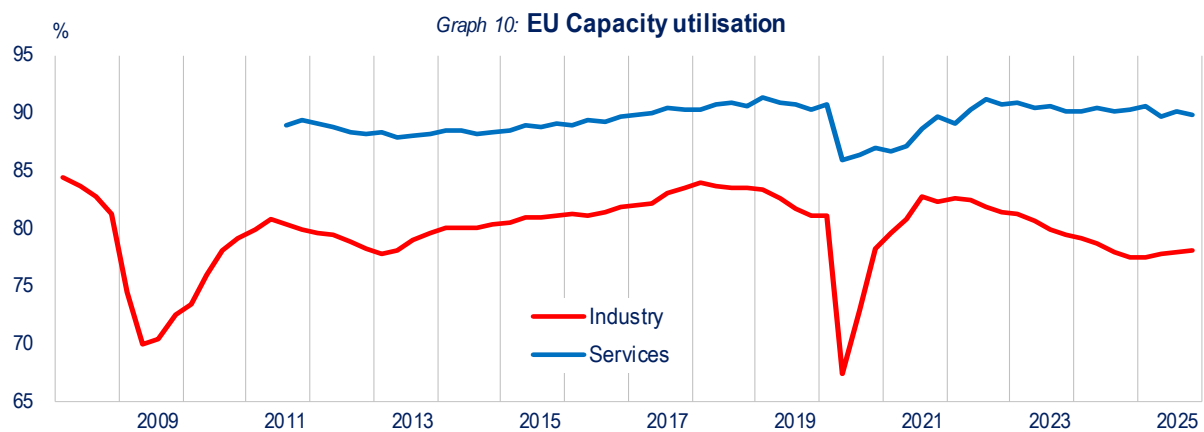
The quarterly questions in the industry and services surveys are asked in January, April, July, and October of each year.

In the EU industry, the estimated rate of capacity utilisation remained unchanged at 78.0% in October compared to July. However, the share of managers assessing their current production capacity as 'more than sufficient' compared with those assessing it as 'not sufficient' (in view of current order books and demand expectations) increased (+3.2 points). On the external side, managers' assessments of their competitive position on non-EU markets over the past three months worsened substantially (-2.7 points), falling to the lowest level on record. Meanwhile, their evaluation of order developments over the past three months improved strikingly (+6.1 points), moving above the long-term average for the first time in 3½ years.

The share of industry managers citing *insufficient demand* as a factor limiting their production decreased by 1.5 points compared to July to 36.6%, continuing the downward trend since the beginning of the year. By contrast, the percentages of managers pointing to *shortage of labour force* (+1.1 points to 17.5%) and *shortages of material and/or equipment* (+0.8 points to 9.7%) as limiting factors picked up compared to July. Only *financial constraints* (+0.3 points to 5.3%) remained broadly stable as a limiting factor.

Turning to services, EU capacity utilisation declined by 0.5 percentage points to 89.7%, moving closer to its long-term average of 89.3%.

Euro-area developments largely mirrored those in the EU. The estimated rate of capacity utilisation increased compared to July in industry (from 77.8 to 78.2%), while it decreased by 0.6 points to 89.8% in services.



Data collection period: 1 to 23 October.

Annex tables displaying results for the ESI, EEI, confidence indicators and individual survey questions for the past 12 months (as well as historical min, max and averages) are available [here](#).

Methods and definitions

The Commission's harmonised Business and Consumer Survey (BCS) programme, managed by the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN), was set up in 1961, and its scope has since expanded considerably in terms of both countries and sectors covered. Five surveys are conducted on a monthly basis in the following areas: manufacturing industry, construction, consumers, retail trade, and services. Some additional questions are asked on a quarterly basis in the January, April, July and October surveys in industry, construction, services, and among consumers. In addition, questions on manufacturing and services companies' investment plans are included twice a year (April and November). The surveys are conducted by national institutes in the Member States and the candidate countries based on harmonized questionnaires and a common timetable.

The data of the surveys is processed by DG ECFIN's Unit Economic situation, forecasts, business and consumer surveys (A3), Sector Business and consumer surveys and short-term forecast.

The **confidence indicators** are produced to reflect overall perceptions and expectations at the individual sector level in a one-dimensional index. For each of the five surveyed sectors, they are calculated as the simple arithmetic average of the (seasonally adjusted) balances of answers to specific questions chosen from the full set of questions in each individual survey.

The **Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI)** is a composite indicator combining judgements and attitudes of businesses (in industry, construction, retail trade, services) and consumers by means of a weighted aggregation of standardised input series.

The **Employment Expectations Indicator** is constructed as a weighted average of the employment expectations of managers in four surveyed business sectors (i.e. industry, services, retail trade and construction).

More information on methods and definitions can be found in the [methodological guidelines](#) section of the [BCS website](#). All press releases can be found [here](#). Detailed data results of all surveys are freely available for download in the BCS [time series](#) section of the website.

You can also contact DG ECFIN at the following address: ECFIN-BCS-MAIL@ec.europa.eu

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Upcoming releases:	Flash Consumer Confidence Indicator	20 November 2025
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