



The Irish Economic Update

Growth Remains Strong

April 2018

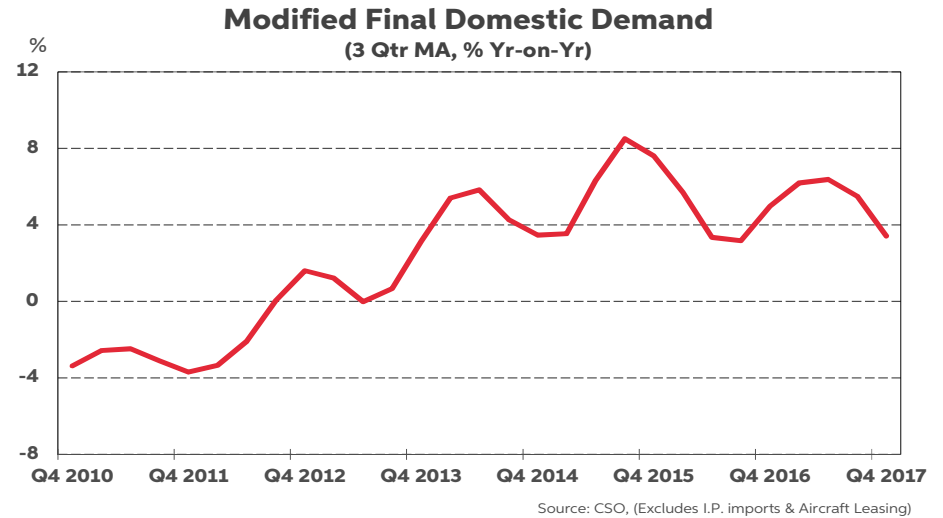
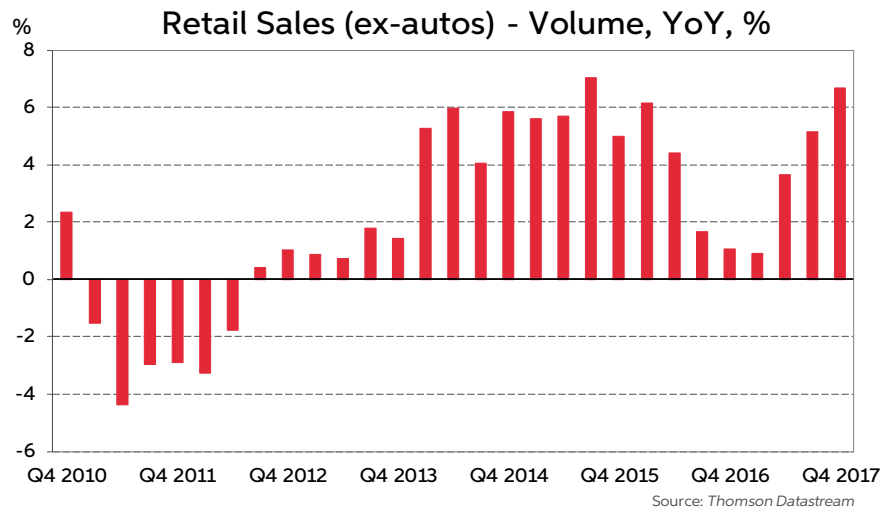
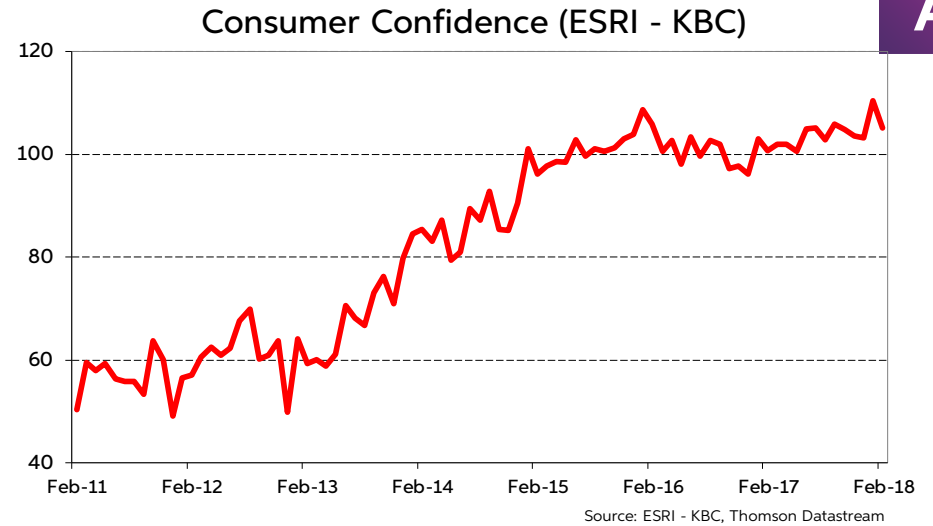
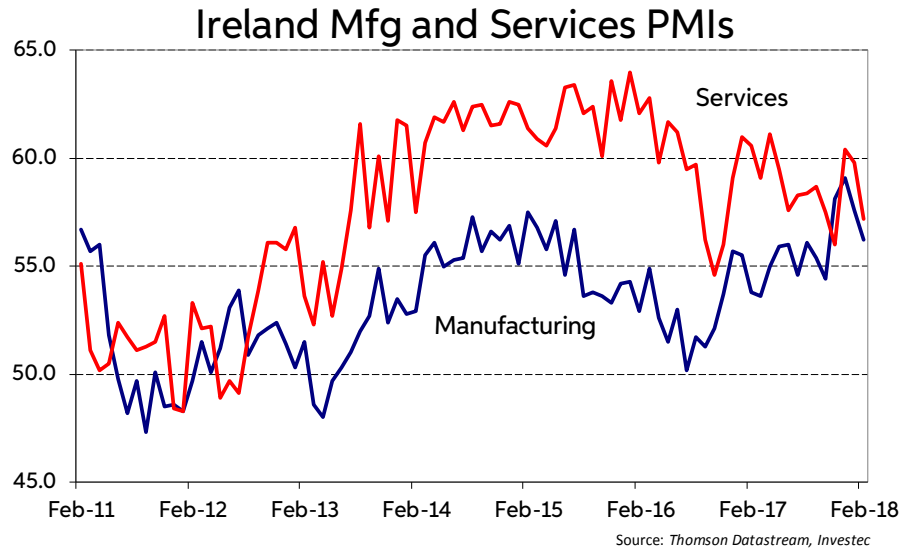
Oliver Mangan
Chief Economist
AIB

Strong recovery by Irish economy since 2013



- Irish economy boomed from 1993 to 2007 with GDP up by over 250% – Celtic Tiger
- Very severe recession in Ireland in 2008-2009. GDP fell by 8.5% and GNP down 11%
- Collapse in construction activity and banking system, severe fiscal tightening, high unemployment. Ireland entered a 3 year EU/IMF assistance programme from 2010-2013
- GDP at end of 2008-09 recession was still over 25% higher than in 2001, highlighting that the economic crash came after a long period of very strong growth, unlike in other countries
- Ireland tackled its problems aggressively in the public finances, banking sector and property market. Imbalances in economy unwound – housing, debt levels, competitiveness, BoP
- Ireland focused on generating growth via its large export base as the route to recovery
- Economy rebounded strongly over 2013-17 – underlying growth averaged 4.4% for the period
- Domestic economy has recovered strongly, led by rebound in investment and retail spending
- Strong jobs growth. Unemployment rate fell from 16% in early 2012 to near 6% by Feb 2018
- Budget deficit has declined at a quicker than expected pace. Down to 0.3% of GDP in 2017

Indicators remain upbeat despite concerns over Brexit



Economy continues to grow at strong pace



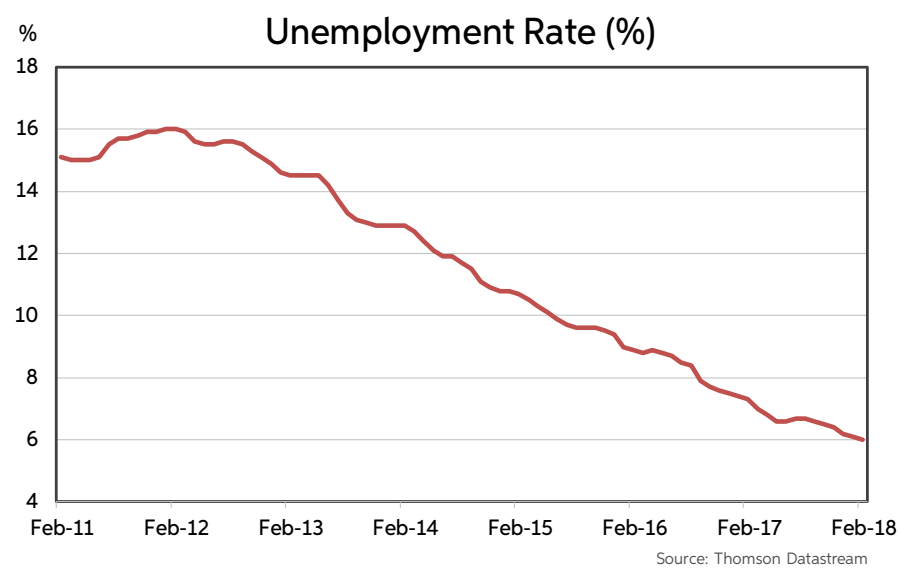
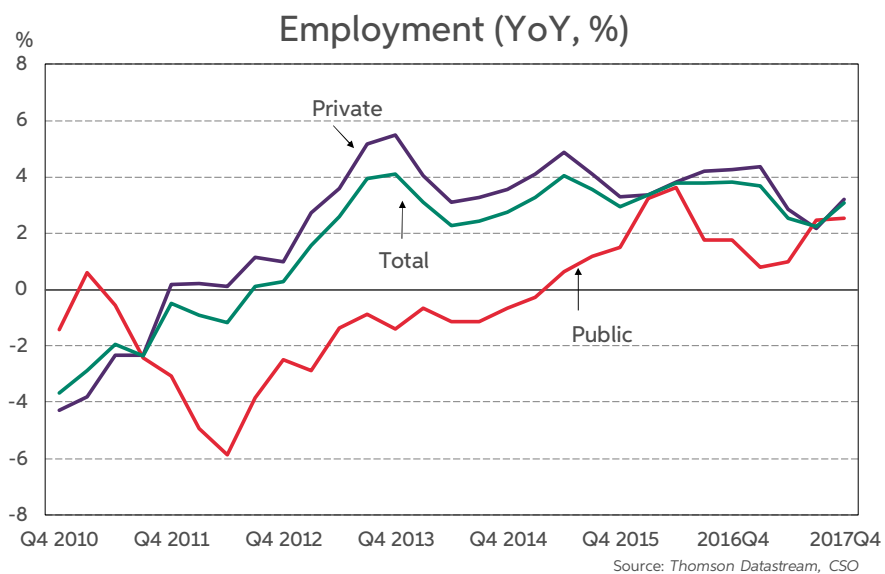
- Modified final domestic demand grew by 4.1% in 2017 after 4.6% growth in 2016
- Mfg PMI remains very high in early 2018, averaging close to 57 in January/February
- Services PMI also very strong in January/February averaging 58.5
- Continuing very high construction PMI – at 60.3 in January/February
- Consumer confidence at very robust levels in early 2018 - hit 17-year high in January
- Retail sales (ex-motor trade) continue strong growth - up 5.9% year-on-year in Jan/Feb 2018
- Total car regs (new + used imports) rise further 1.5% yoy in Jan/Feb 2018 – surged over 2014-17
- Housing completions (ESB connections) rose by 29% to 19,300 in 2017. Up again in January 2018
- Mortgage lending rose by 29% in value terms in 2017. Slowdown in approvals in early 2018.
- Strong job growth continuing – employment rose by 2.9% in 2017
- Live Register continues its sharp decline in early 2018. Jobless rate down to 6.1% in February
- Budget deficit fell to 0.3% of GDP in 2017. Solid Jan/Feb 2018 figures - tax receipts up 3% yoy

Robust jobs growth; unemployment falls sharply



Year Average	2014	2015	2016	2017(e)	2018(f)	2019(f)
Unemployment Rate %	11.9	10.0	8.4	6.8	5.8	5.4
Labour Force Growth %	0.4	1.2	1.9	1.1	1.5	1.5
Employment Growth %	2.6	3.5	3.7	2.9	2.5	2.0
Net Migration : Year to April ('000)	-8.5	5.9	16.2	19.8	25.0	30.0

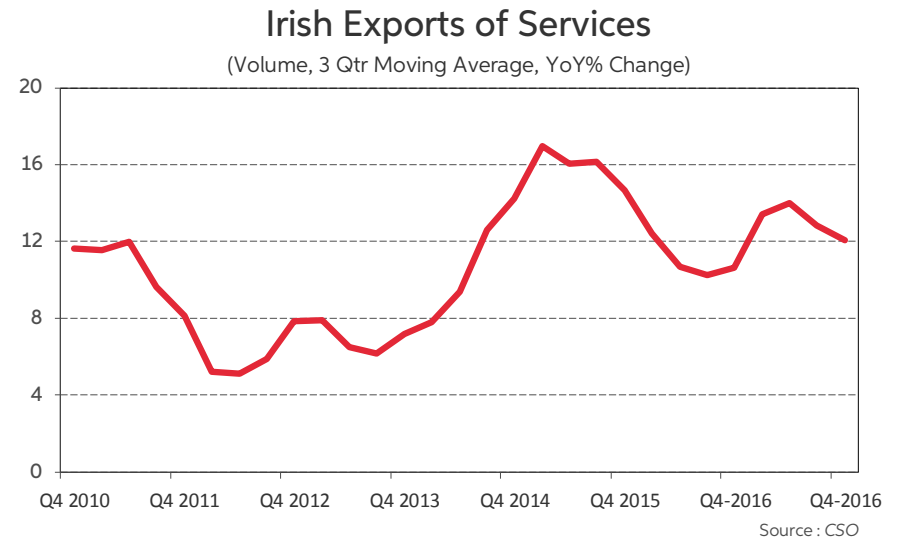
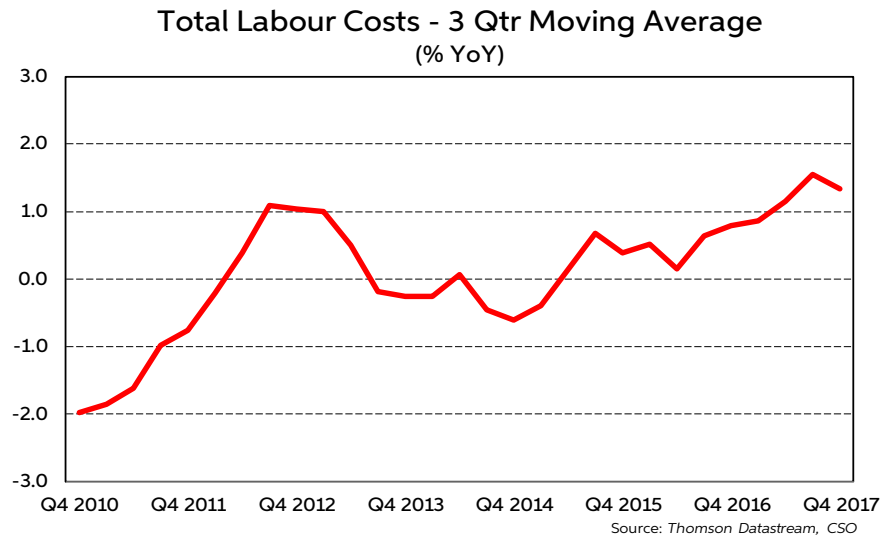
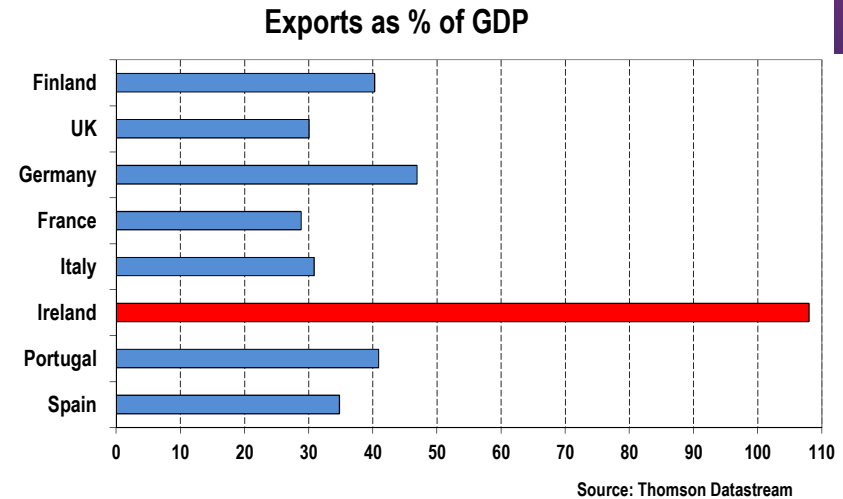
Source: CSO and AIB ERU forecasts



Large Irish export base performing very well



- Ireland a very open economy – exports, driven by huge FDI, equate to well over 100% of GDP
- Major gains in Irish competitiveness in past decade - weakening of euro in 2014/15 helpful
- Exports have risen strongly, helped by large FDI inflows and recovery in global economy
- Sterling’s sharp fall a challenge for exports to UK but total exports still up by circa 7% in 2017



FDI and the Irish economy



WHAT ATTRACTS FDI TO IRELAND?

- Access to European markets
- Low corporate tax rate of 12.5%
- English speaking country
- Well educated, flexible workforce
- Common law legal system
- Stable political framework
- Long history of successful FDI
- Access to decision makers

KEY FDI IMPACTS ON THE IRISH ECONOMY

- 1,200 multinational companies
- €150bn Exports (64% of Irish exports)
- 200,000 Jobs in FDI, 340,000 in total
- 70% of Corporation Tax
- €8.7bn Spending on Irish services/materials
- €10bn in Payroll
- 67% of Business R&D expenditure

WORLD LEADERS CHOOSE IRELAND

- 8 of the top 10 in ICT
- 9 of the top 10 in Pharmaceuticals
- 17 of the top 25 in Medical Devices
- 3 of the top 5 Games companies
- 10 of the 'top born on the Internet' firms
- More than 50% of the world's leading Financial firms
- UK becoming less attractive for FDI owing to Brexit

US TAX CHANGES SHOULD NOT HIT FDI

- US firms have well established operations here
- Need highly skilled, multi-lingual workforce
- Firms do not move Ireland to avoid US tax
- Ireland is base to service their European markets
- Easier to operate in local rather than US time zone
- Still wide gap between US & Irish corporate tax rates

Many top global companies have big operations in Ireland



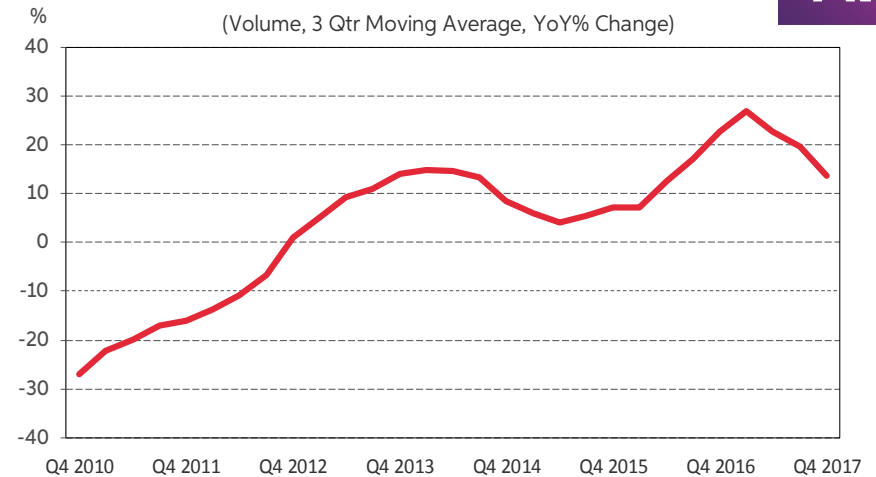
Strong recovery by domestic economy in place since 2013



- Domestic economy contracted by 20% in period from 2008-2012, with particularly big fall in construction
- Construction has seen good recovery since 2013, with output up 15% in 2016 and 17% in 2017
- Core business investment (ex aircraft/intangibles) grew by average 22% in 2012-2016. Fell back in 2017
- Consumer spending grew by 3.2% on average over 2014-2016 period and by 1.9% in 2017
- Core retail sales (i.e. ex-autos) rose by 4.1% in 2017 after 3.3% growth in 2016.
- Core retail sales up by 5.9% yoy in Jan/Feb 2018
- Total car regs (new + used imports) up 1.5% yoy in Jan/Feb 2018, having surged in 2014-17 period
- Modified final domestic demand (excludes IP imports and aircraft leasing) up 4.1% in 2017 & 4.6% in 2016

Construction Investment

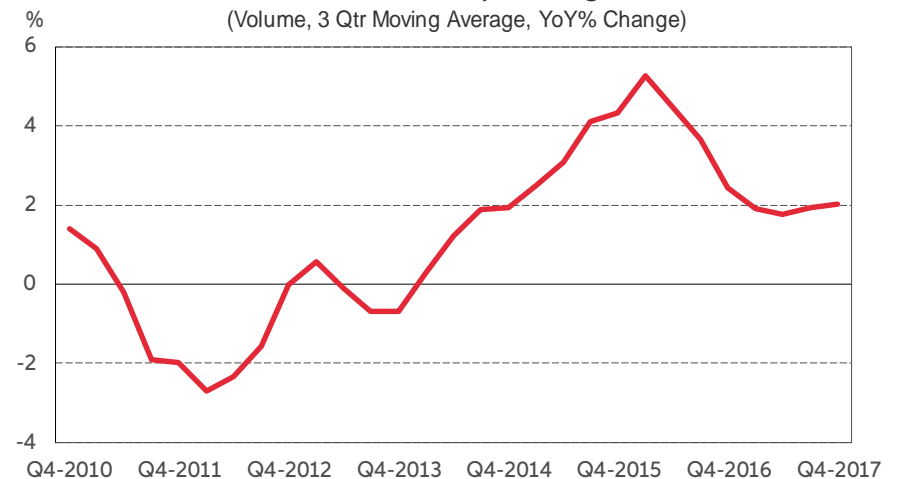
(Volume, 3 Qtr Moving Average, YoY% Change)



Source: CSO

Consumer Spending

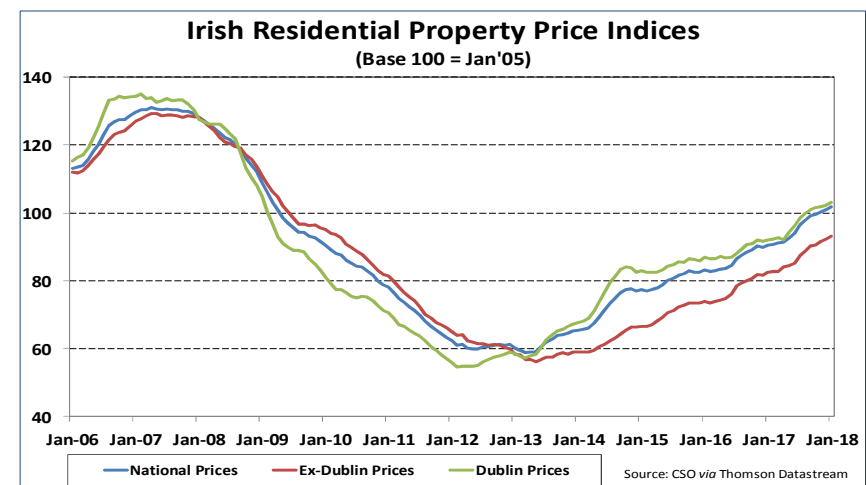
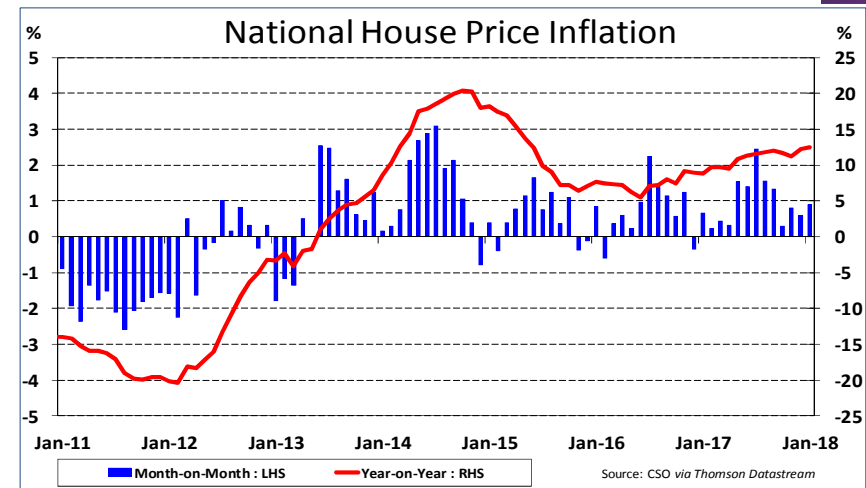
(Volume, 3 Qtr Moving Average, YoY% Change)



Source: CSO

House prices rebound as big housing shortage emerges

- House prices declined by a very sharp 55% between their peak in late 2007 and early 2013
- House prices have since rebounded as big housing shortage emerged after 90% fall in house building
- Supply overhang eliminated with little stock for sale
- Prices up 73.5% by Jan 2018 from low in Mar 2013
- Dublin prices up by 89% from their trough in Feb 2012, while non-Dublin prices have risen by 66%
- House prices nationally are still 22% below their peak levels hit in 2007
- House price inflation picked up in 2017
- Prices up 12.5% yoy nationally by Jan 2018. Dublin up 12%, with non-Dublin rising 13% yoy
- Rents have also rebounded strongly – now 20 % above previous peak reached in 2008 per CSO data

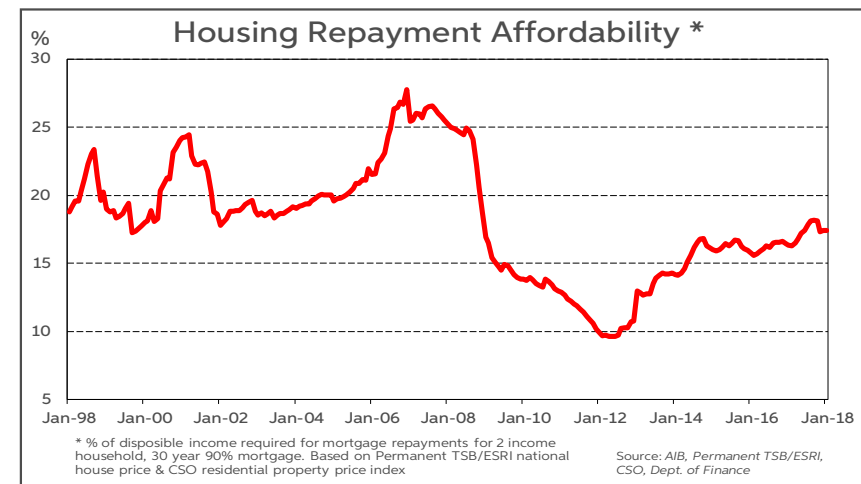
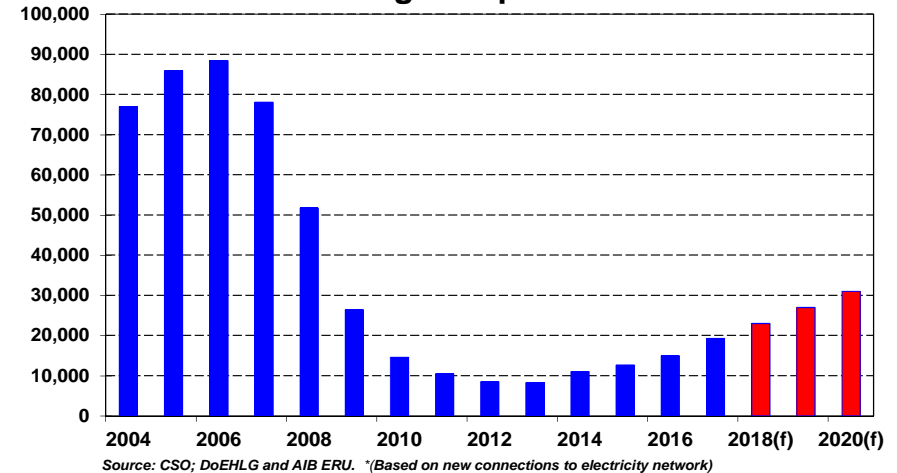


House building rising slowly from very low levels



- Housing completions (new electricity connections) increased by 29% to 19,300 in 2017
- Housing commencements rose by 33% in 2017 to 17,500, pointing to continuing rising supply
- Output still running well below annual new housing demand estimated at circa 33,000 units
- Measures put in place to boost new house building. More Local Authority and NAMA building
- Tax rebate introduced to help fund deposits for FTB
- Mortgage lending picks up again after slowing on new CB rules in 2015 – rose by 29% in 2017
- Housing affordability hit by rising house prices but helped by low mortgage rates. Still at good levels
- Likely to be 2020 before housing output rises above 30,000 units – or close to estimated annual demand

Housing Completions*



AIB Model of Estimated Housing Demand



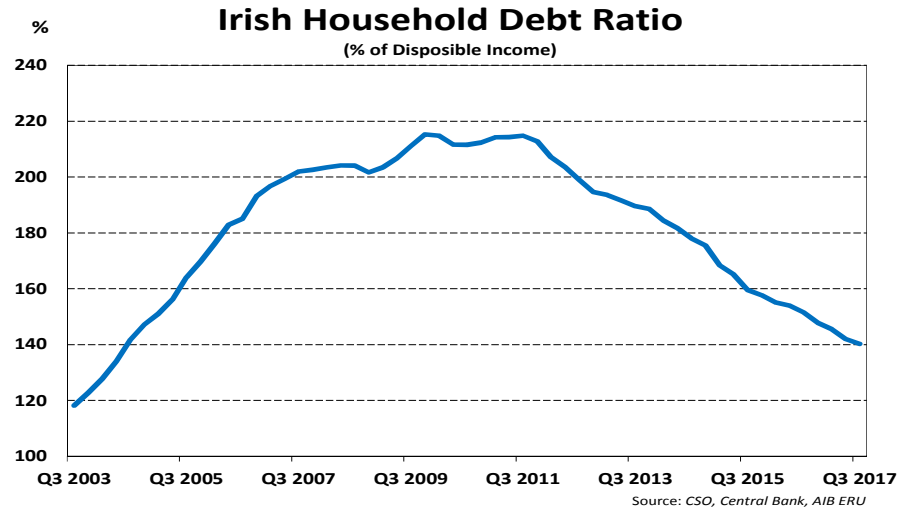
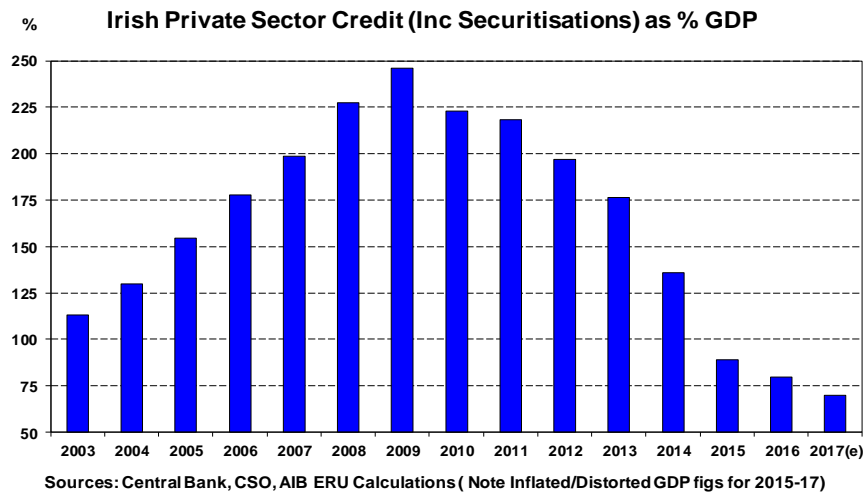
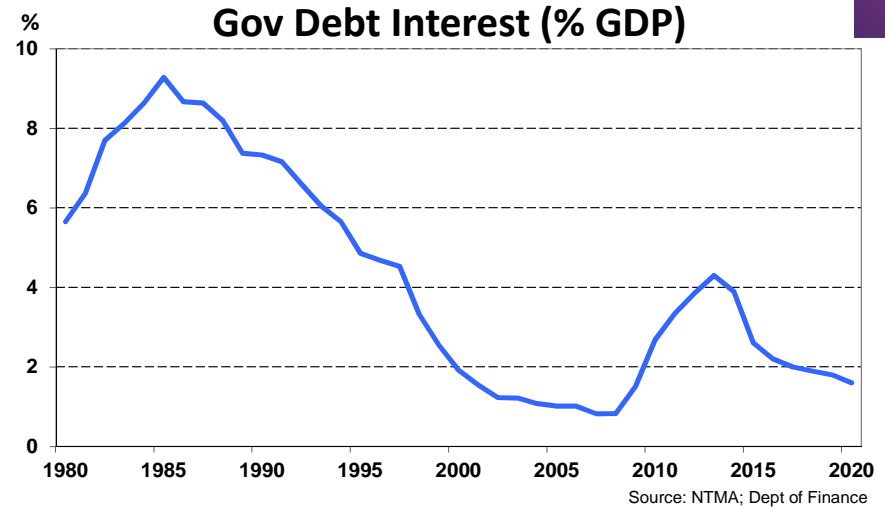
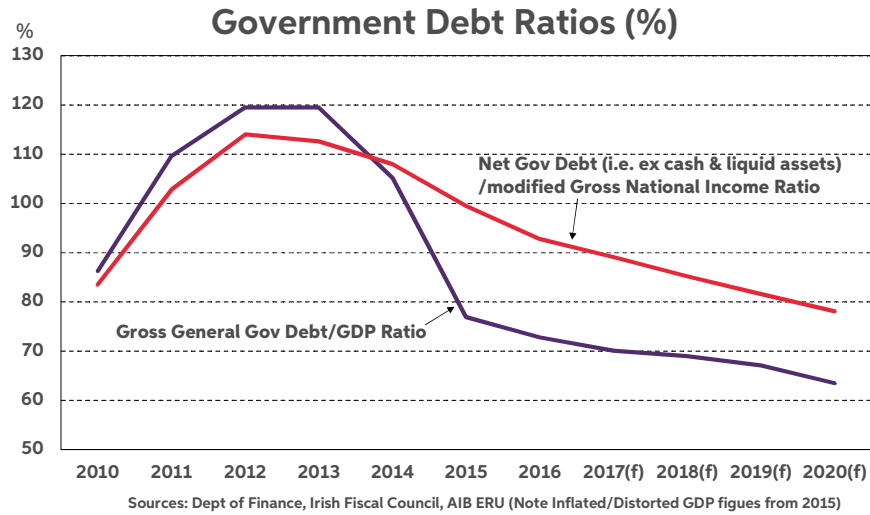
- Rising headship rates added circa 8,000 per year to housing demand in 2002-2011 period
- Shortage of housing, high rents, tighter lending rules saw average household size rise in 2011-16. Thus, headship fell – was a drag of circa 10,000 p.a. on housing demand
- Assume no change in headship in 2016-2020 – note long-term trend is upwards, adding to demand
- Pent-up demand has also built up in recent years from lack of supply
- Thus, forecast table may be under-estimating actual real level of housing demand
- Shortfall in supply met from run down of vacant stock and demand being reduced by fall in headship rate. Both factors very evident in 2011-16 and most likely in 2016-20

Calendar Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Household Formation	26,500	26,500	26,500	27,500	27,500
<i>of which</i>					
Indigenous Population Growth	18,000	18,000	17,000	16,500	14,500
Migration Flows	8,500	8,500	9,500	11,000	13,000
Headship Change*	0	0	0	0	0
Second Homes	500	500	500	500	500
Replacement of Obsolete Units	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Estimated Demand	32,000	32,000	32,000	33,000	33,000
Completions (ESB)	15,000	19,300	23,000	27,000	31,000
Shortfall in Supply	-17,000	-12,700	-9,000	-6,000	-2,000

*Headship is % of population that are heads of households.

Sources: CSO, DoECLG, AIB ERU

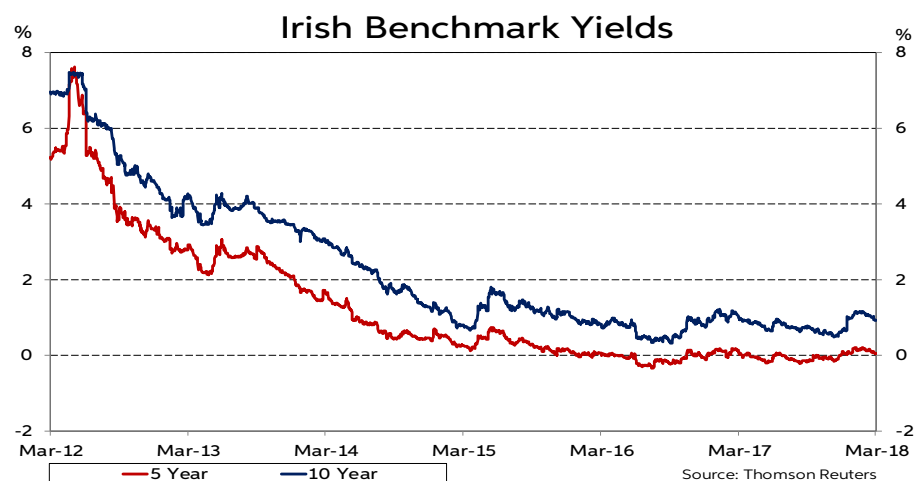
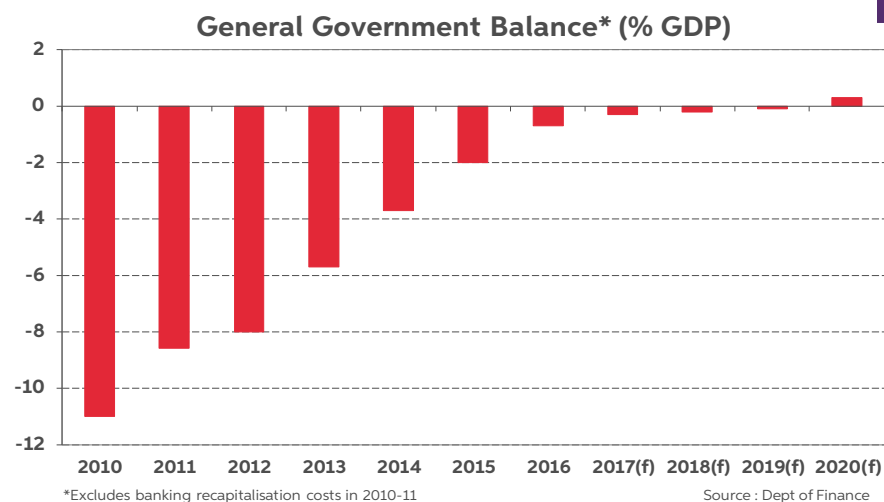
Govt debt ratios fall, private sector deleverages



Budget deficit falls sharply – now close to balance



- Some €30bn (18% of GDP) of fiscal tightening implemented in 2008-2014 period
- Budget deficit has fallen sharply over the course of this decade
- The deficit fell to 0.3% of GDP in 2017 and forecast at 0.2% of GDP for 2018
- Primary budget surplus (i.e. excluding debt interest) of 1.7% of GDP in 2017
- Debt interest costs low – at 2% of GDP in 2017
- Good start to 2018 with tax receipts up 5% in January and budget balance improving further
- Gross Gov Debt/GDP ratio has fallen sharply
- Irish bonds yields have fallen to very low levels
- Sovereign debt ratings upgraded; S&P have Ireland at A+, Fitch at A+, Moody's A2



Brexit is a major challenge for Ireland



- Brexit has serious implications given close economic/trade links with UK
- Trade with UK equates to **35% of Irish GDP**. Thus, it is a key trading partner
- UK takes some **40% of Irish indigenous firms exports**, so very important trading partner
- Expected negative impact of Brexit on UK economy will have **knock-on effect** on Irish exports to there
- Agri, tourism, energy, retailing, financial services, the sectors likely to be most impacted by Brexit

- Sterling has fallen sharply on Brexit concerns, which hits **exports to UK**
- Impacts Irish firms **competing with UK exports** to Ireland and elsewhere
- Many Irish exporters are small firms with no Treasury function so don't hedge currency exposure
- **Cross border trade** picks up as shoppers head North following sterling's big fall. Also big rise in on-line sales going to the UK
- **Sterling weakness** also has a significant impact on cross-border businesses like hotels, restaurants

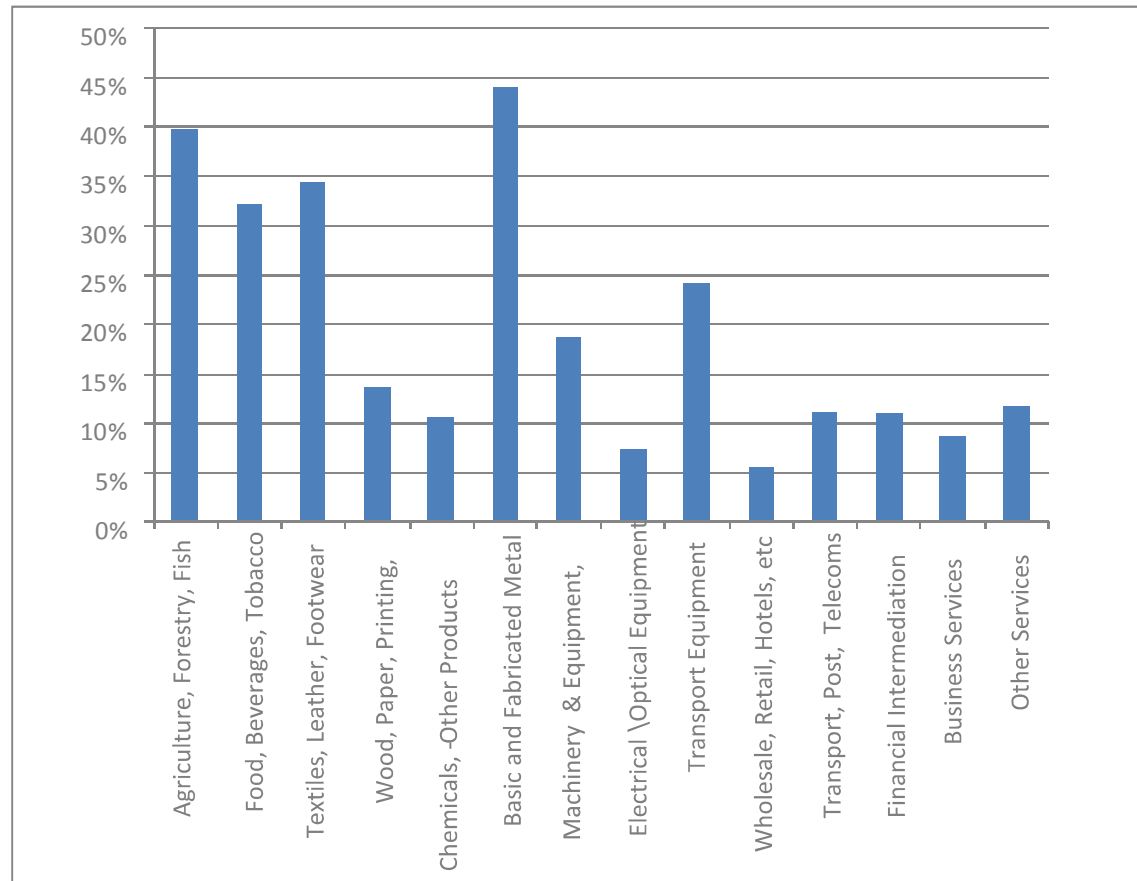
- **Higher trading costs** from more administration, differing rules and regulations, compliance costs, possible customs duties/tariffs when UK leaves EU
- Brexit could impact considerable **cross-country investment** between UK and Ireland.
- **Border** with Northern Ireland will become an external EU land border, with possible Customs checks etc
- Ireland will **lose key ally** within EU when UK leaves as share similar views on taxation, regulation, state involvement in economy etc.

Agri. sector would be severely impacted by hard Brexit



- Main EU tariffs relate to food products, keeping prices up. UK may not maintain these post-Brexit
- Food and Beverages account for 25% of total Irish exports to UK
- Around 40% of Irish food exports go to the UK
- Other sectors very dependent on UK market include machinery and transport, metal products, textiles
- Some 40% of indigenous Irish exports go to UK compared to 10% for foreign owned companies

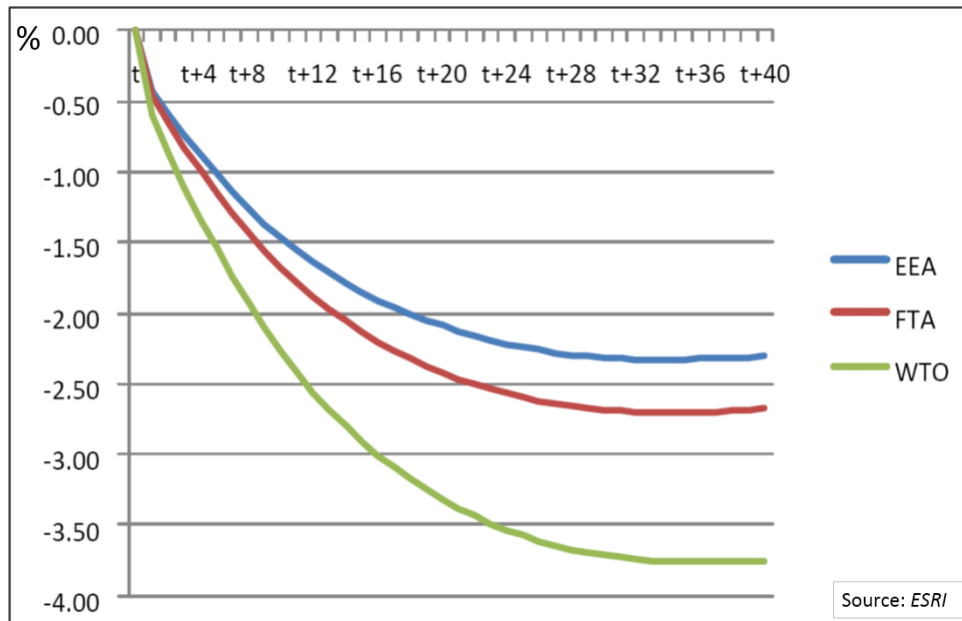
Share of Exports by Industry Destined for the UK (ESRI)



Brexit expected to lower growth rate of Irish economy



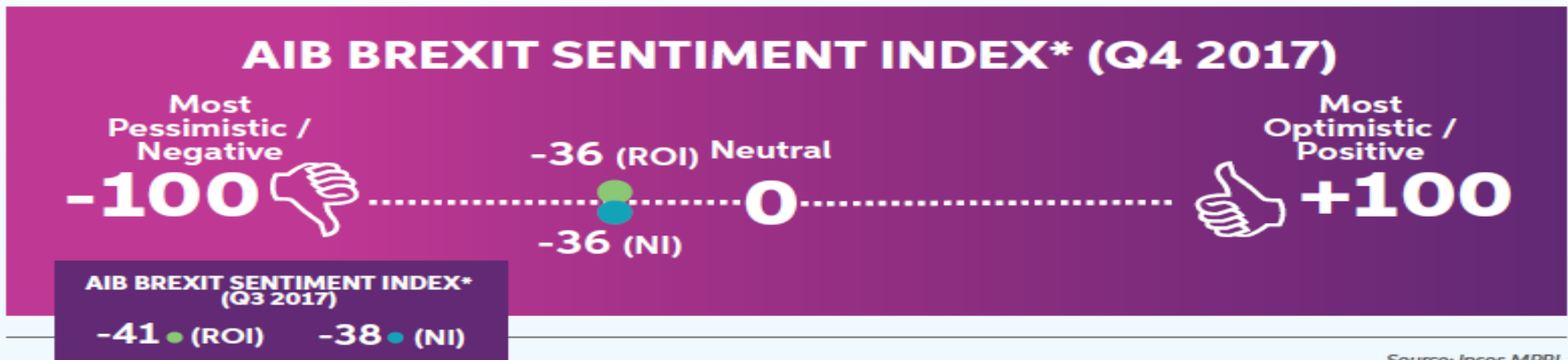
Impact of Brexit on Output (% deviation from base)



- ESRI estimate that Irish output would be reduced by 2-2.5% on a soft Brexit
- Sharp fall-off in trade with UK likely on a hard Brexit
- Output almost 4.0 % lower over time if there is hard Brexit and a fall back on WTO rules and tariffs
- Employment 2% lower and unemployment rate nearly 2% higher in hard Brexit

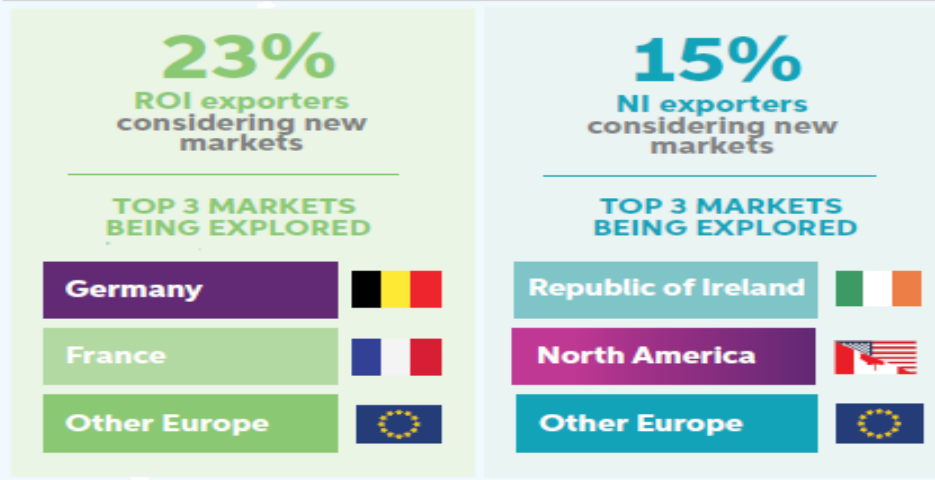
- Copenhagen Economics Report considers costs of regulatory divergence for goods and services and of border checks, as well as tariffs in assessing impact of Brexit
- Estimates impact by 2030 is to reduce Irish GDP by 2.8% under a soft Brexit (EEA), 4.3% in a FTA and 7% in a hard Brexit WTO scenario

Irish SMEs pessimistic about Brexit



Source: Ipsos MRBI

EXPORTERS LOOK TO NEW MARKETS



Source: Ipsos MRBI

*The Index reflects and measures the sentiment of Irish SMEs towards Brexit, summarised as a single number, with a potential range from +100 to -100. It takes the difference between the positive and negative responses across four key measures: Impact on business now, Impact on future business (next 5 years), Level of visibility and, finally, the Wider economic impact of Brexit.

Customs arrangements difficult Brexit issue



- UK to leave EU, Single Market and Customs Union in March 2019
- EU and UK agree on a transition period to end 2020 that will avoid disruption while EU/UK free trade deal is being negotiated. No change in current trading arrangements during this period.
- A withdrawal agreement to be finalised by October to allow for orderly UK departure from EU
- UK will have to fall back on WTO rules post Brexit in absence of withdrawal agreement. Requires common set of tariff rates to be applied to all countries where no free trade deals exists
- Unclear what the arrangements on customs will be after transition period ends. UK suggests ‘a new customs partnership’ or else ‘highly streamlined customs arrangements’ as part of FTA
- Brexit impacts the border with Northern Ireland. All sides want to avoid hard border – this has been agreed in Brexit negotiations - but will prove difficult to avoid if UK has its own tariffs
- Period of uncertainty could last until end 2020 when transition period ends and it is hoped to have concluded an EU/UK free trade deal, if no agreement on Customs before UK’s departure

Talks on trade to determine final shape of Brexit

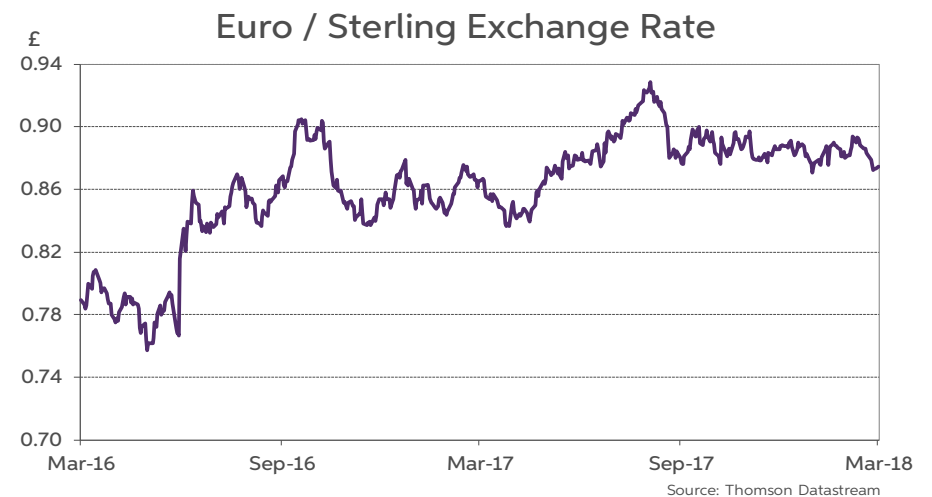
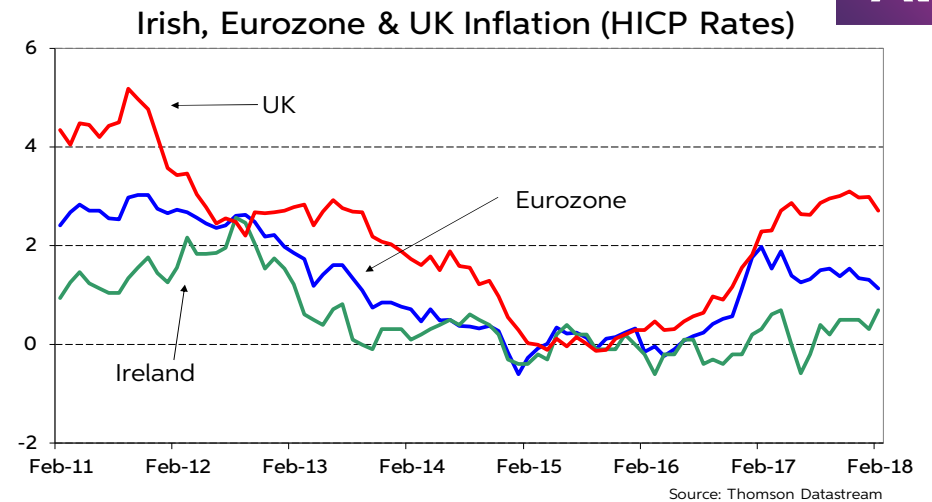


- A lot of hurdles still left to be overcome in Brexit process, despite good progress to date
- Could prove difficult to get a withdrawal agreement through UK parliament, unless some key issues like Customs are left to be resolved in trade talks post Brexit
- Talks on a trade deal to prove difficult as UK wants separate customs arrangements, negotiate trade deals, its own rules and regulations but have access to Single Market
- Different to usual trade talks as no trade barriers at present. EU points out that any free trade deal for UK will be inferior to the Single Market, especially for services
- EU insistent on a level playing field in any trade deal to prevent “Regulatory Dumping” e.g. similar workers rights, subsidy rules, production standards, environmental controls
- Disputes resolution mechanism will need to be agreed, but it will be inferior to the ECJ
- UK faces trade-off between regaining sovereignty and retaining access to Single Market
- The more UK moves away from EU rules, the less access it will have to Single Market

Strong Irish growth to continue ahead of Brexit



- Strong growth by Irish economy is continuing
- Construction picking up from still low output levels
- Budgetary policy turns mildly expansionary
- Activity supported by low interest rate environment
- FDI strong despite concerns on corporate tax
- Very low Irish inflation, well below that of the Eurozone and especially the UK
- Global economy, including the Eurozone, has picked up momentum, helping Irish exports
- However, Brexit is a challenge for the economy
- Sharp fall in sterling impacts exports to UK, tourism from UK, Irish firms competing with UK exports
- GDP growth forecast at circa 4% for 2018
- ESRI estimates long-term growth rate of economy at around 3.5% in the period out to 2025



AIB Irish Economic Forecasts



<i>% change in real terms unless stated</i>	2014	2015	2016	2017 (f)	2018 (f)	2019 (f)
GDP	8.3	25.6	5.1	7.8	4.0	3.5
GNP	9.0	16.3	9.6	6.6	3.5	3.0
Personal Consumption	2.0	4.2	3.3	1.9	2.7	2.5
Government Spending	4.8	1.8	5.3	1.8	2.0	2.0
Fixed Investment	18.1	27.9	61.2	-22.3	6.0	5.0
Core Fixed Investment*	13.5	10.8	13.6	5.7	6.0	5.0
Exports	14.4	38.4	4.6	6.9	4.5	4.5
Imports	14.9	26.0	16.4	-6.2	4.0	4.0
HICP Inflation (%)	0.3	0.0	-0.2	0.2	0.8	1.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	11.9	10.0	8.4	6.7	5.8	5.2
Budget Balance (% GDP)	-3.7	-2.0	-0.7	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1
Gross General Gov Debt (% GDP)	105.3	76.9	72.8	70.0	69.0	67.0

*Excludes investment in aircraft and intangibles

Source: CSO, AIB ERU Forecasts

Risks to the Irish economic recovery



- Main risks to Irish recovery no longer internal but external, in particular Brexit
- Brexit major issue for Ireland given its strong trading links with UK and sharp fall by sterling
- Possibility of reduced FDI as US cuts its corporate tax rate from 35% to 21%
- Questions around Irish corporation tax regime (Apple ruling, moves on tax harmonisation in EU) could impact FDI, though Ireland retains right to set its own tax rates
- Supply constraints in new house building activity, which is recovering at a slow pace with output still at very low levels
- Competitiveness issues - high Dublin house prices, high rents, high personal taxes
- Credit constraints – fewer banks, tighter credit conditions, on-going deleveraging

Note: All Irish data in tables are sourced from the CSO unless otherwise stated. Non-Irish data are from the IMF, OECD and Thomson Financial. Irish forecasts are from AIB Economic Research Unit. This presentation is for information purposes and is not an invitation to deal. The information is believed to be reliable but is not guaranteed. Any expressions of opinions are subject to change without notice. This presentation is not to be reproduced in whole or in part without prior permission. In the Republic of Ireland it is distributed by Allied Irish Banks, p.l.c. In the UK it is distributed by Allied Irish Banks, plc and Allied Irish Banks (GB). In Northern Ireland it is distributed by First Trust Bank. In the United States of America it is distributed by Allied Irish Banks, plc. Allied Irish Banks, p.l.c. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. Allied Irish Bank (GB) and First Trust Bank are trade marks used under licence by AIB Group (UK) p.l.c. (a wholly owned subsidiary of Allied Irish Banks, p.l.c.), incorporated in Northern Ireland. Registered Office 92 Ann Street, Belfast BT1 3HH. Registered Number NI 018800. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. In the United States of America, Allied Irish Banks, p.l.c., New York Branch, is a branch licensed by the New York State Department of Financial Services. Deposits and other investment products are not FDIC insured, they are not guaranteed by any bank and they may lose value. Please note that telephone calls may be recorded in line with market practice.