



WEST MIDLANDS

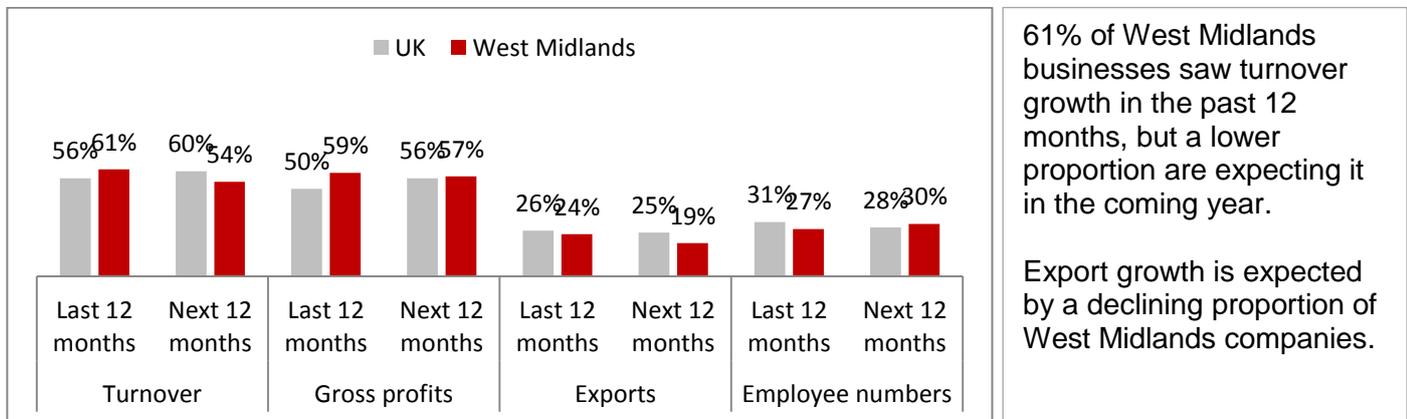
Background

1,010 members in UK businesses were interviewed by phone for the *ICAEW UK Enterprise Survey 2011* between June and Sept 2011 by Kudos Research; 70 of them in the West Midlands region. The survey forms our 15th annual UK Enterprise Report which, along with our Global Enterprise report, can be seen at icaew.com/SMEResearch. The 2011 survey was sponsored by SAP.

Summary

West Midlands companies are similar to the UK average in terms of expected growth. Late payment is more of a pressure here than in some other regions.

Growth – % reporting growth in last 12 months and expecting in next 12 months



Challenges and opportunities

- The greatest anticipated business opportunity for West Midlands businesses (as in other regions) lies in new customers and markets, in some cases internationally.
- Challenges which are expected to become more pressing for four in ten West Midlands businesses are competition in the marketplace and customer demand. Late payment is expected to become an increasing challenge for 25%.
- The key objective for businesses here is to increase profitability – the single main objective for 41% (higher than any other region).
- 53% say the UK tax and regulatory environment is not business-friendly, in line with the UK average.

Globalisation

- Over half (51%) of West Midlands businesses believe that increasing globalisation of business does not affect them while 45% expect globalisation to have a positive impact.
- About two thirds of the region's businesses have international activities, in line with the UK average; 41% in the West Midlands export (average 44%), and above average proportions import (52%).
- Those interested in exporting would benefit from country and sector intelligence, and information on commercial and product regulations.