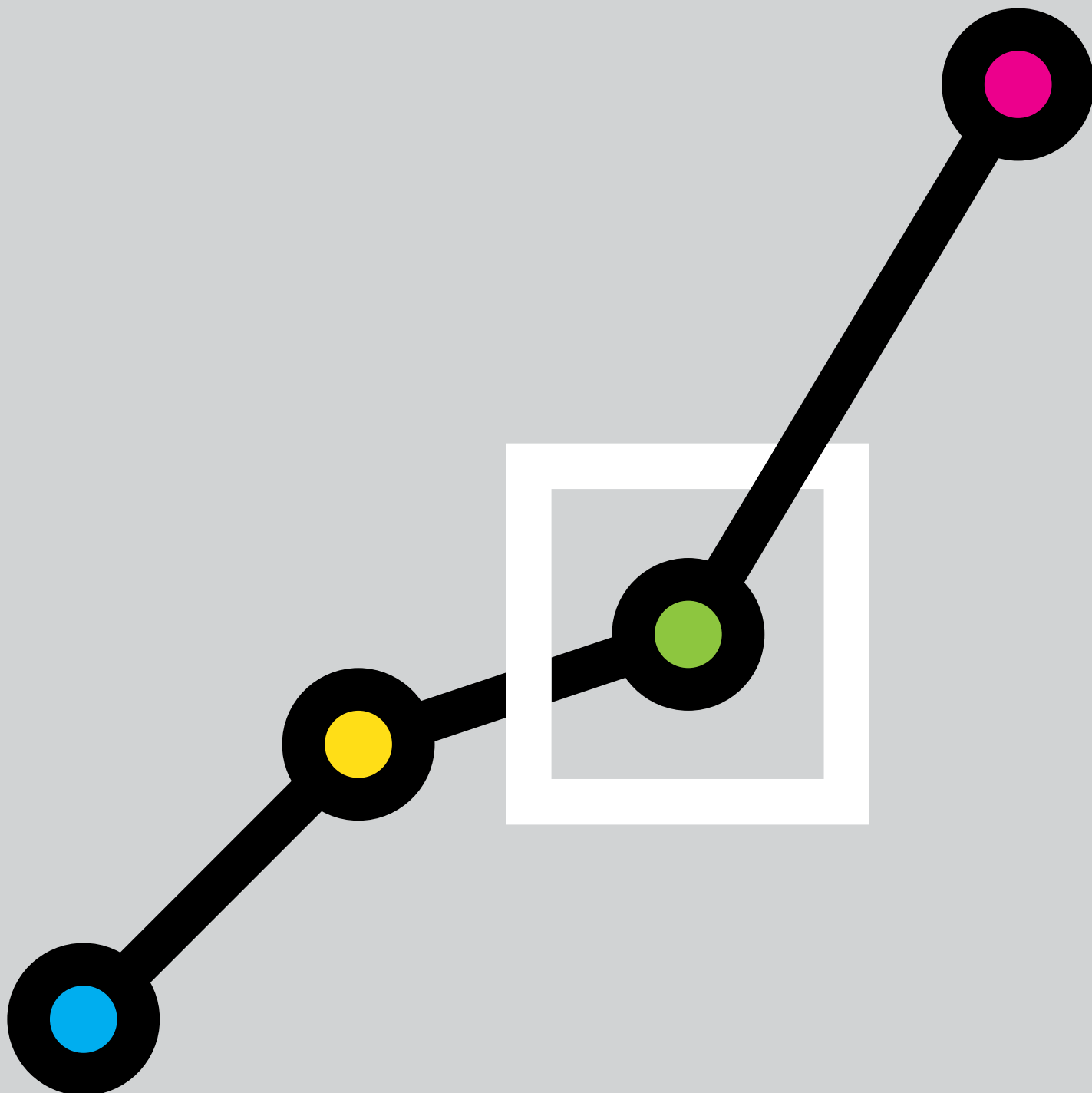


Future Trends Survey:

November 2019



The RIBA's monthly Future Trends Survey

was launched in January 2009 to monitor business and employment trends affecting the architects' profession. Participants give monthly predictions for overall workload and staffing levels over the next three months, and are also asked about their workload predictions in key sectors: private housing, commercial, community and public sector. In addition, practices are asked on a quarterly basis about their current workload and staffing levels. The Survey is carried out by the RIBA in partnership with the Fees Bureau. Results of the Survey, including a full graphical analysis, are published each month on www.architecture.com

The following is a summary analysis of the results from the November 2019 Survey returns.

RIBA Future Trends Workload Index (November 2019)

How do you expect the architectural workload in the organisation you work in or own to change over the next three months?

Overall Expect	%
Decrease	20
Stay the same	57
Increase	23
TOTAL	100
Balance	+3

(The definition for the balance figure is the difference between those expecting more work and those expecting less.)

The RIBA Future Trends Workload Index recovered to a positive balance figure this month. After dropping to -10 in October, it jumped 13 points in November, to a balance figure of +3.

This is one of the largest upward increases that the RIBA Future Trends Workload Index has seen.

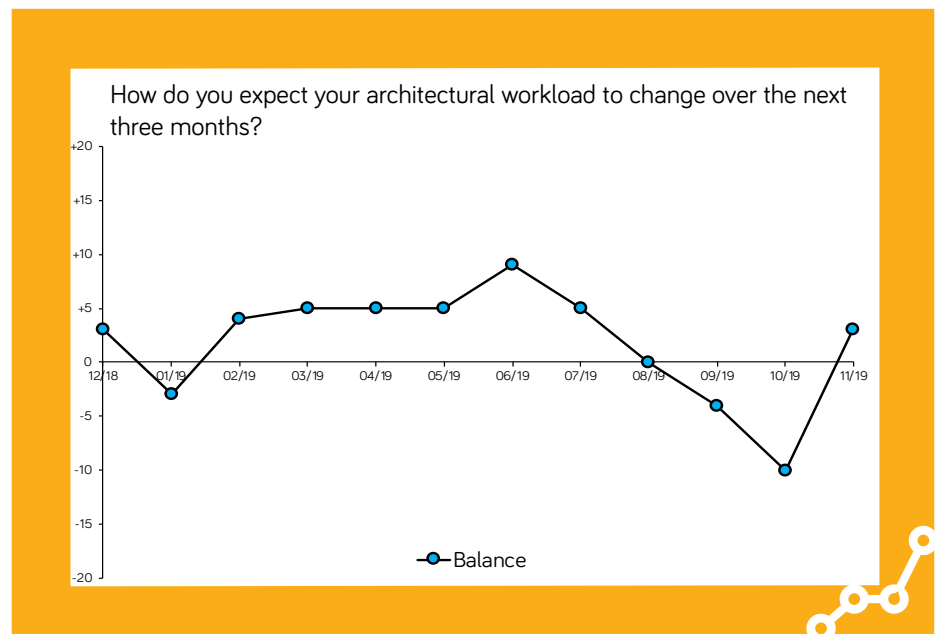
This jump suggests relief among the architectural community that a no-deal, disorderly Brexit has been averted.

It also suggests that the Future Trends Workload Index may be somewhat volatile, as we move from a Brexit postponement, to a general election, and now on to a new Government.

The following graph plots the RIBA Future Workload index over time:

Notes

The balance figure is plotted here. The definition for the balance figure is the difference between those expecting more work and those expecting less.



Analysing the October 2019 RIBA Future Trends Workload Index in terms of practice size, region and sector we can see the following:

All practice sizes have returned a positive balance this month.

Small practices (1 - 10 staff) recorded a sixteen-point increase in their balance figure. The balance figure in November was +1, up from -15 in October.

Medium-sized practices (11 - 50 staff) continue to be positive, returning a balance figure of +42, up eleven points on October's figure of +31.

Large practices (51+ staff) remain steady in their outlook, again returning a positive balance figure of +25, the same as in October.

In terms of the **regions**, the pessimism among London practices has abated. In November London returned a zero balance figure, up from -13 in October.

The South of England similarly recovered, recording a zero balance in November, up from -21 in October.

The outlook of practices in Wales & the West has improved significantly, posting a +10 balance figure this month.

The North of England's positive outlook for future work has grown this month, with a Future Workload balance figure of +16, in November, up from +6 in September.

The general uplift in sentiment hasn't been shared by the Midlands & East Anglia, which returned a balance figure of -6 in November.

In terms of **different work sectors**, the general uplift in positive sentiment has only been partially matched by views about future work in individual sectors. Whilst all sectors record a higher balance than last month, they are all still negative.

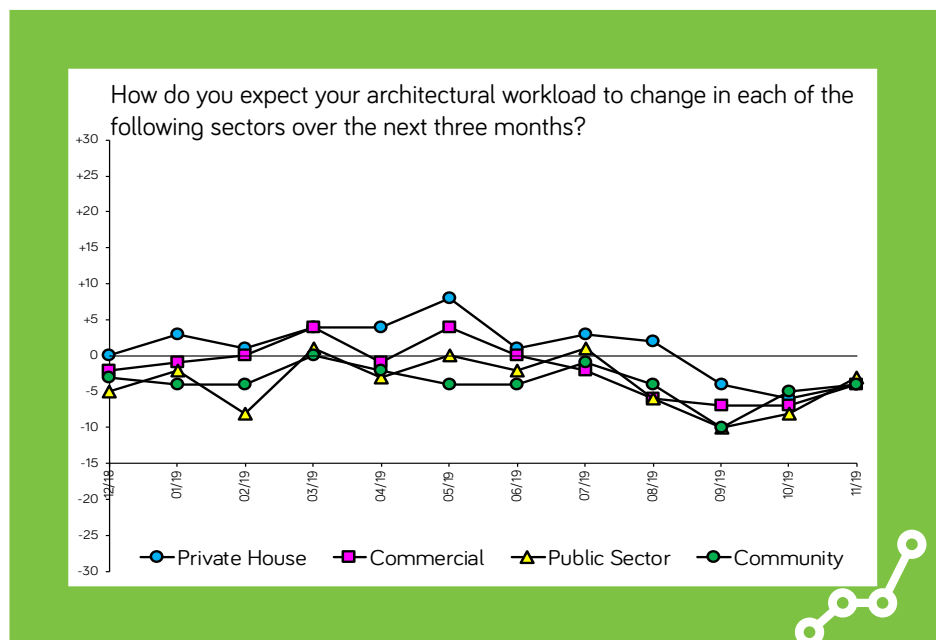
The **private housing sector** rose two points in November, to a balance figure of -4.

The **commercial sector** rose three points in November, to a balance figure of -4.

The **community sector** saw a rise to -4.

The **public sector** also rose. It returned a balance figure of -3, in November. Whilst negative, the public sector balance figure is higher than that of any other sector. This is very unusual, and perhaps reflects anticipation of possible future capital spending by the UK Government.

The following graph tracks the sector predictions in the RIBA Future Trends Survey over time:



RIBA Future Trends Staffing Index
(November 2019)

How do you think the number of permanent architectural staff employed in your organisation will change over the next three months?

Permanent Staff	%
Decrease	6
Stay the same	85
Increase	8
TOTAL	100
Balance	+2

(The definition for the balance figure is the difference between those expecting to employ more permanent staff in the next three months and those expecting to employ fewer.)

The RIBA Future Trends Staffing Index rose three points this month, from -1 in October to +2 in November, suggesting stability in full-time staffing levels over the next three months.

The anticipated demand for temporary staff in the next three months remains subdued. The Staffing Index for temporary staff fell very slightly, from a balance of -1 in October to -2 in November.

Twenty-two per cent of respondents cite a lack of work leading them to be personally under-employed in the last month, consistent with last month's figure of 23%.

Under-employment is notable in the South of England and London, where it stands at 29%, compared to just 3% in the North of England.

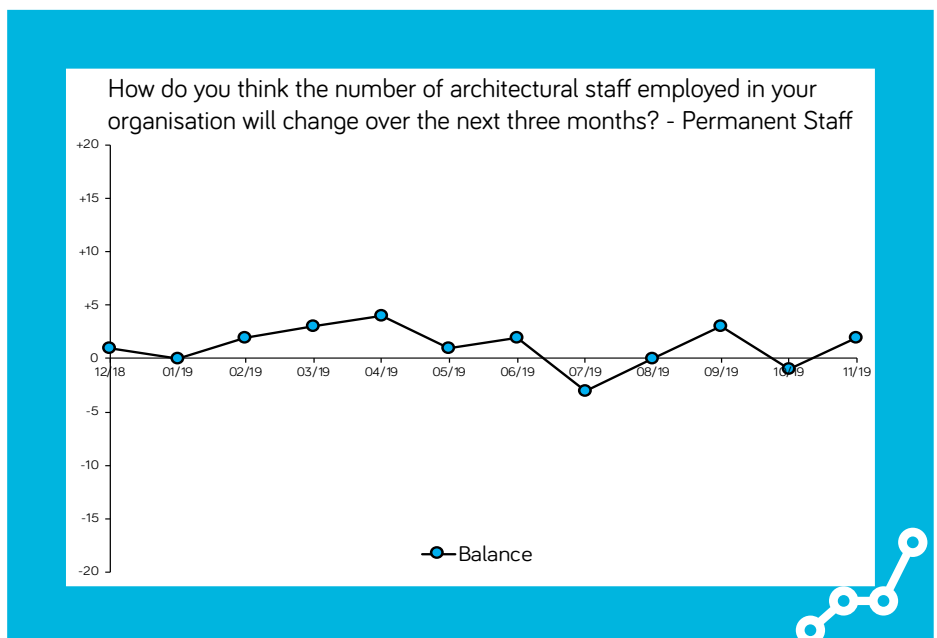
Whilst the RIBA Future Trends Workload Index has returned to positive territory this month, the commentary received is a reminder that the architectural market remains fragile and Brexit uncertainty persists.

Practices continue to report projects failing to move beyond planning, client caution and downward pressure on fees. The commentary received tends to describe current difficulties rather than future opportunities.

That said, some practices are more optimistic describing an increase in enquires, and an expectation of a pick-up in work after the general election.

The following graph plots the RIBA Future Trends Staffing Index over time:

Notes
The balance figure is plotted here. The definition for the balance figure is the difference between those expecting to employ more permanent staff in the next three months and those expecting to employ fewer.



The RIBA Future Trends Survey is based on a representative sample of the range of different practice sizes and geographical locations which enables analysis of the trends in sectors, size groups and by nation and region.

A total of 205 practices took part in the Survey in November 2019. The development of a larger database of respondents will increase the statistical accuracy of the survey, and if your practice would like to participate in future months, please contact the RIBA Practice

Department on 020 7307 3749 or email practice@riba.org. The survey takes approximately five minutes to complete each month, and all returns are independently processed in strict confidence by our partners The Fees Bureau.