



POLICY DRIVE

23rd June – 3rd July 2018

Top News and Opinion:

Investment in Britain's car industry halves and 850,000 automotive jobs are at risk, warns car industry group

Car manufacturer group the *Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders* (SMMT) has warned the government that Brexit uncertainty is putting thousands of jobs at risk and threatening future investment in the UK's motor industry.

Speaking at the group's annual summit, SMMT Chief Executive Mike Hawes emphasised the "growing frustration in global boardrooms at the slow pace of Brexit negotiations".

"There is no Brexit dividend for our industry, particularly in what is an increasingly hostile and protectionist global trading environment. Our message to government is that until it can demonstrate exactly how a new model for customs and trade with the EU can replicate the benefits we currently enjoy, don't change it".

As a remedy to the growing uncertainty, the SMMT calls for swifter progress on a Brexit deal that as a minimum, maintains customs union membership and delivers single market benefits.

The calls come as the group published its 19th annual [Sustainability Report](#), highlighting the importance of the automotive sector to the UK economy in spite of a decline in year-on-year investment in new models and factory investments by almost 50%.

Read More: [Here](#)

Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Extended

Large employers will now be able to transfer 10% of their apprenticeship levy funds to multiple businesses rather than a single employer as originally intended, as the government allows greater flexibility in use of the levy in an attempt to boost the number of high-quality apprenticeships across the country.

Changes to apprenticeship levy transfer rules come after months of criticism aimed at the 'bureaucratic' nature of the apprenticeship levy and its lack of effectiveness in creating significant numbers of new apprenticeship starts, with latest Department for Education figures [revealing a 28% decline in apprenticeship starts](#).

Under the levy, large employers who have an annual wage bill of more than £3m per annum are charged a levy of 0.5% of their full UK payroll, funds which are then used by employers to fund new apprenticeship programmes.

Making the announcement at a recent event in London celebrating apprenticeships and their contribution to business and the wider economy, Skills Minister Anne Milton MP said that "we want to keep improving apprenticeships for everyone and I am delighted that we are now extending the flexibility of the apprenticeship levy".

Read More: [Here](#)



More teens prefer apprenticeships to university

A new report released by social mobility charity the Sutton Trust suggests that nearly two-thirds of young people would be interested in starting an apprenticeship over going to university.

As part of the charity's *Better Apprenticeships* campaign, the Sutton Trust asked both young people and their teachers for their views on apprenticeships. On behalf of the Sutton Trust, IPSOS Mori surveyed 2,381 young people aged 11-16 at secondary schools across England and Wales between February and May 2018.

Separate polling from the National Foundation for Education Research surveyed 1,246 teachers and school leaders across England, 583 of which were at secondary school level.

Key findings from the report:

- Two thirds (64%) of young people in 2018 say they would be very or fairly interested in taking up an apprenticeship after school, a 9% increase from 2014.
- 41% of young people indicated that a teacher had discussed the idea of an apprenticeship with them at school, however 40% indicated that they never had such a discussion.
- 26% of teachers agreed there are enough Level 3 apprenticeship opportunities for young people, 3% thought that to a 'great extent' there are enough programmes, 22% answered 'not at all'.
- 21% of teachers would 'always' or 'usually' advise a high performing student to opt for an apprenticeship over university, almost two thirds (64%) would still rarely or never advise such an option.

Read More: [Here](#)

Department for Education civil servant: T-Levels should be given more time

The Department for Education (Dfe) should have given more time to allow T-Levels to go to plan, according its senior civil servant Jonathan Slater.

Slater made the claims when questioned by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on the 25th June regarding his ministerial direction to Education Secretary Damian Hinds MP, in which Slater requested that Hinds delayed the rollout of the first cohort of T-Levels from 2020 to 2021.

Designed as technical qualifications on par with A-Levels at Level 3, T-Levels offer students practical skills and knowledge in a chosen industry or occupation, with a minimum 45 days mandatory work placement and core English, maths and digital skills.

T-Level courses in construction, digital and education & childcare will be the first to be taught from September 2020, with a further 22 courses rolled out from 2021 onwards, covering other sectors such as finance & accounting, engineering & manufacturing and creative & design.

"My advice was to buy ourselves more time to allow for the possibility that it wouldn't all go to plan", Slater told MPs at the Committee.

The PAC holds the government to account for its use of taxpayer's money and has pressed for [more action from the DfE in rooting out 'poor apprenticeship provision'](#).

Hinds appeared at the education select committee days after his top civil servant expressed his concerns and defended his decision not to delay the first set of T-Levels, [insisting that the new qualifications are being introduced at a "good pace"](#).

Read More: [Here](#)



Decline in Level 2 apprenticeships blamed in rise of NEET's

New statistics released by the Department for Education show that the number of 16 year olds that are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) has risen by 0.7% to 3.9% for the first time since the end of 2011.

Participation of 16 year-olds in apprenticeships fell from 23,700 to 20,900, nearly a 12% decrease. At Level 2, this fell by 18% from 18,100 to 14,900.

Read More: [Here](#)

UK must make motor manufacturers pay for air pollution damage, say MPs

According to Tony Parish MP, chair of the environment, food and rural affairs committee, the UK has been 'let down' by the government failing to pursue motor manufacturers for compensation arising from the Volkswagen emissions scandal.

Speaking during a commons debate on improving air quality, the Tiverton and Honiton MP said "I find it disappointing the government is not making the automotive industry pay for the damage it has caused".

In 2015, German manufacturer Volkswagen was found to have cheated air pollution tests for 11 million diesel vehicles worldwide – including 1.2 million in the UK.

Read More: [Here](#)

Brexit latest:

- Honda fears of 'unprecedented' disruption from Brexit (Read More: [Here](#))
- Nissan 'left in the dark' over Brexit (Read More: [Here](#))
- What will BMW do post Brexit? (Read More: [Here](#))
- The importance of the European automotive supply chain: (Read More: [Here](#))

Other news:

- BP to buy UK's biggest electric car charger network for £130m (Read More: [Here](#))
- Training the car mechanics of tomorrow (Read More: [Here](#))
- Apprenticeships put automotive firms in fast lane (Read More: [Here](#))
- Car and housing companies should be 'ashamed' over emissions: (Read More: [Here](#))
- Is the UK ready for an electrified future? (Read More: [Here](#))
- Sales of diesels expected to plummet to 5% by 2030 (Read More: [Here](#))

Find previous editions and future updates of the IMI's
Policy Drive on our [ROI and Research page](#)