

2008-01-07

PRESS RELEASE

Provisional results of the autumn 2007 survey of investment in manufacturing industry

The National Bank of Belgium conducts twice a year a survey of investment in manufacturing industry in the strict sense (i.e. excluding construction firms and firms in the "electricity, gas and water" branch). According to national accounts data, manufacturing industry represented 20.1 p.c. of total business investment in 2006.

According to the provisional results of the November 2007 survey, investment in fixed capital goods in manufacturing industry, expressed at current prices, would have increased by 13.1 p.c. in 2007, after having started to grow again in 2006, at a rate of 3.3 p.c.

In the May 2007 survey, enterprises had predicted a 18.4 p.c. rise in their investment in 2007. Most branches of activity revised their forecasts downwards, as is generally the case between the May and November surveys, but the expected increase is still unusually high. In fact, the autumn survey had not yielded such strong growth for the current year since 1989.

Investment spending is projected to increase by 7.2 p.c. in 2008. This slowdown in the growth rate would come on the back of the big increase seen in 2007. It is also in line with a general context that has been marked by heightened uncertainty for entrepreneurs for some months.