

## Belgium: Disappointing GDP growth

Preliminary figures point to a below-consensus 0.3% GDP growth in 3Q, but previous quarters were revised upwards



According to the flash estimate, Belgian GDP grew by 0.3% quarter-on-quarter and by 1.7% year-on-year in the third quarter. This was slightly below the consensus estimate, looking for 0.4% growth. At the same time, quarterly growth figures for 1Q and 2Q were revised upwards by 0.1 percentage point to 0.7% and 0.5% respectively.

It was to be expected that 3Q would be somewhat weaker than 1Q and 2Q on the back of more subdued business confidence over the summer months. And although consumer confidence was more upbeat in the third quarter, poor confidence in the retail sector seems to suggest that household consumption didn't grow very strongly.

# 1.8%

## Expected GDP Growth 2018

ING Forecast

The fourth quarter started on a stronger footing, with activity in industry picking up significantly,

while construction and retail trade also signalled better prospects. We believe GDP growth will accelerate again in 4Q, with overall 2017 GDP growth likely to come out at 1.7%. For next year, we're looking at 1.8% growth. While these figures might seem low compared to the Eurozone average, one has to bear in mind that the Belgian economy had performed better than average throughout the crisis years. In that regard, it is normal that some of the growth laggards are now catching up, pushing up the Eurozone average relative to Belgium.

We now have figures for both Spanish (0.8%) and Belgian (0.3%) 3Q GDP growth. These figures seem compatible with our estimate of 0.6% growth for the whole of the Eurozone.

## Author

### Peter Vanden Houte

Chief Economist, Belgium, Luxembourg, Eurozone

[peter.vandenhoute@ing.com](mailto:peter.vandenhoute@ing.com)

## Disclaimer

This publication has been prepared by the Economic and Financial Analysis Division of ING Bank N.V. ("ING") solely for information purposes without regard to any particular user's investment objectives, financial situation, or means. *ING forms part of ING Group (being for this purpose ING Group N.V. and its subsidiary and affiliated companies).* The information in the publication is not an investment recommendation and it is not investment, legal or tax advice or an offer or solicitation to purchase or sell any financial instrument. Reasonable care has been taken to ensure that this publication is not untrue or misleading when published, but ING does not represent that it is accurate or complete. ING does not accept any liability for any direct, indirect or consequential loss arising from any use of this publication. Unless otherwise stated, any views, forecasts, or estimates are solely those of the author(s), as of the date of the publication and are subject to change without notice.

The distribution of this publication may be restricted by law or regulation in different jurisdictions and persons into whose possession this publication comes should inform themselves about, and observe, such restrictions.

Copyright and database rights protection exists in this report and it may not be reproduced, distributed or published by any person for any purpose without the prior express consent of ING. All rights are reserved. ING Bank N.V. is authorised by the Dutch Central Bank and supervised by the European Central Bank (ECB), the Dutch Central Bank (DNB) and the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM). ING Bank N.V. is incorporated in the Netherlands (Trade Register no. 33031431 Amsterdam). In the United Kingdom this information is approved and/or communicated by ING Bank N.V., London Branch. ING Bank N.V., London Branch is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and is subject to regulation by the Financial Conduct Authority and limited regulation by the Prudential Regulation Authority. ING Bank N.V., London branch is registered in England (Registration number BR000341) at 8-10 Moorgate, London EC2 6DA. For US Investors: Any person wishing to discuss this report or effect transactions in any security discussed herein should contact ING Financial Markets LLC, which is a member of the NYSE, FINRA and SIPC and part of ING, and which has accepted responsibility for the distribution of this report in the United States under applicable requirements.

Additional information is available on request. For more information about ING Group, please visit [www.ing.com](http://www.ing.com).