

ECONOMIC TRENDS

SURVEY RESULTS

The first economic trends survey of 2019 reports on member experiences during January, February and March. This quarterly survey gathers information across a range of metrics to assess business confidence, the operating landscape, skills and the overall perspectives of business at the commencement of the year. The Q1 survey included a focus on international market diversification and the influence of trade agreements on SME business practices.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE / ACCESSING NEW MARKETS

In the Q1 2019 survey we asked businesses about engagement with international trade agreements.

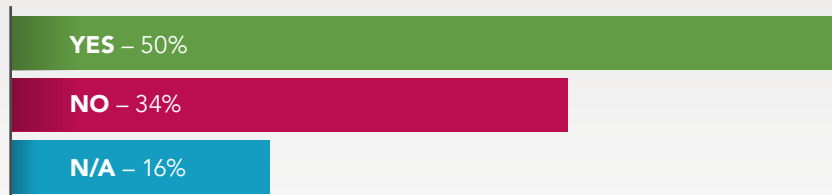
When asked how SME's could be practically supported to overcome challenges and take advantage of opportunities from new open markets, 32% of businesses highlighted the potential for dedicated advice and supports.

A further 16% indicated an opportunity for tailored information sessions, with 14% indicating the development of links to Irish government and EU agencies as having potential to increase their engagement with the existing and future trade deals.

“ Linking inbound Tourism providers in the area with potential customers. I think the Chinese Tourism market will develop over next 5 years and we can provide a unique base for this with planning. ”

Mrs Maire Ni Mhurchú,
Activity Days Ireland Ltd.

% WITH DECISION-MAKING AND STRATEGY INFLUENCED BY EU POLICY AND TRADE AGREEMENTS



% TAKING ACTIONS TO CAPITALISE ON RECENT TRADE AGREEMENTS



BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

Q1 reports a rise in business confidence from 92% in Q4 2018 to a healthy 96%.

This is reflective of the earlier Q3 2018 sentiment.

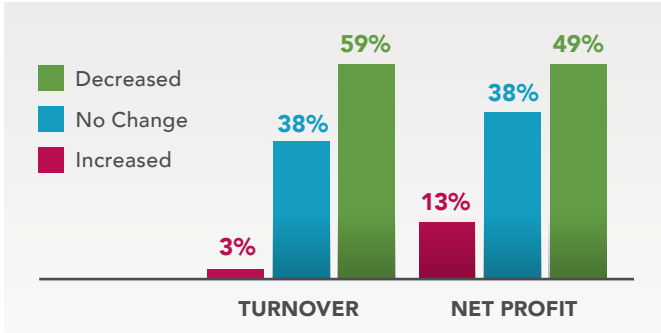
CONFIDENT – 96%

NOT CONFIDENT – 4%

TURNOVER AND NET PROFIT ESTIMATIONS

80% of businesses expect an increase in turnover over the next 12 months.

This compares well with the 75% reported in the Q4 2018 survey. At the same time, 67% expect an increase in net profit over the next 12 months, indicating a slight drop from the 72% in the previous Q4 2018 survey.

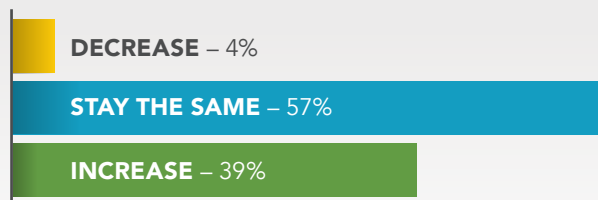


EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

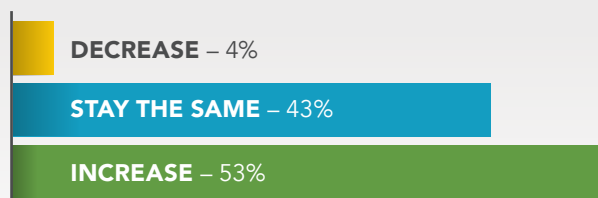
51% of business have vacancies advertised with 34% of these vacancies remaining unfilled for greater than 3 months since the initial advertisement.

These vacancies are mostly in the engineering and surveying, hospitality and finance sectors.

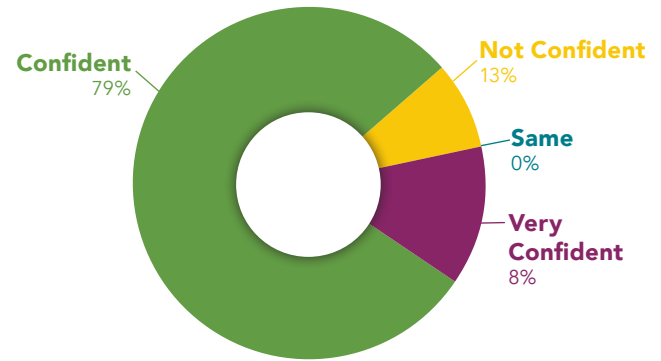
CHANGE TO EMPLOYEE NUMBERS OVER Q1 2019



EXPECTED CHANGES TO EMPLOYEE NUMBERS OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS



CONFIDENCE IN THE IRISH ECONOMY



This compares very similarly with the Q4 2018 survey where 79% of businesses indicated confidence, and 15% reported as not confident.

We have an increase to 8% in those reporting as very confident in comparison to 6% in the last quarter.

TOP 3 THREATS TO BUSINESS GROWTH

- 1 Brexit
- 2 Managing cashflow
- 3 Changing consumer spending/Reduced orders

Very similar to the last quarter with the only variance being the replacement of cost competitiveness with changing consumer spending/reduced orders.

RESPONDING BUSINESSES

