



The  
Growth  
Company

# Growth Company Business Survey

Results for the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 to 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025

[www.growthco.uk](http://www.growthco.uk)

# GC Business Survey

The main survey findings reported by businesses from 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 to 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025

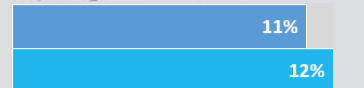
The Growth Company exists to enable growth, create jobs, and improve lives. To inform how we support businesses and the economy, we continually monitor a range of data and intelligence to understand economic risks and opportunities.

The largest regular sub-regional monthly business survey publication of its kind, the following findings are based upon a total of **786 businesses** that participated in our GC Business Survey from **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 and 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025**.

## The main impacts of the current economic climate on businesses



Reporting decreased sales



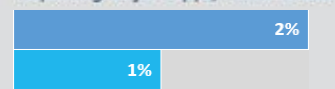
Reporting increased sales



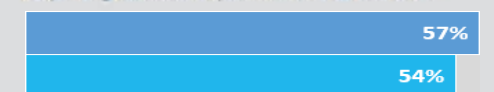
Reporting minor supply chain issues



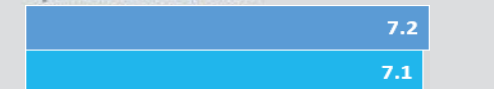
Reporting major supply chain issues



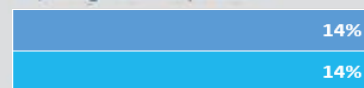
Reporting increase in profit in next 12 months



Optimism score out of ten



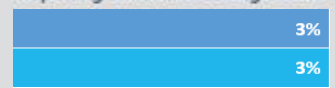
Reporting cashflow problems



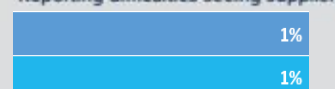
Reporting reserves to last (at least) 6 months



Reporting difficulties seeing clients



Reporting difficulties seeing suppliers



Firms currently recruiting new staff



Firms reporting they have the right workforce skills



▶▶ Previous month

▶▶ Current Month

## Summary

The GC Business Confidence Index (GC-BCI) remains at 7.1 out of 10 for 2024, lower than the previous quarter. Confidence is highest in Manufacturing & Engineering, DCTs, Hospitality Tourism and Sport and lowest in Construction, Life Sciences, Health & Social Care, Green Tech; and the latest responses continue to show increasing uncertainty in BFPS.

Sales increased for 14% of firms, unchanged from last quarter. Investment intentions dropped to 29% from 31%. Sectors like DCTs, Manufacturing, Business Financial & Professional Services, Hospitality & Tourism are most likely to increase capital expenditure. Workforce development investment plans fell to 24% from 26%, with Manufacturing, Business, Financial & Professional Services and DCTs showing the highest interest.

Business challenges include rising costs, cashflow issues, and supply chain disruptions. Manufacturing, DCTs, and BFPS sectors have the highest reserves. Access to new domestic sales opportunities remains top challenge for firms, especially in DCTs, Business, Financial & Professional Services, Manufacturing.

Future support needs focus upon in innovation, business planning, marketing, workforce development, financial advice, and environmental impact which remains same as top 5 business support. SMEs face challenges in domestic sales, product development, business model adaptation, financial management, and digital adoption - while large firms seek more support on environmental impact.

## Key Findings

**GC Business Confidence Index (GC-BCI):** Drops at 7.1 out of 10, lower from last quarter 7.2. Confidence is highest in Manufacturing & Engineering, DCTs, Hospitality Tourism and Sport and the latest responses continue to show increasing uncertainty in BFPS.

**Sales and Profits:** 14% of firms reported increased sales (unchanged). 54% expect profits to increase in the year ahead, down from the previous quarter (58%). 3% expect profits to decrease, which remains consistent with the previous report. The sectors most optimistic about future profitability are DCTs, Manufacturing, and Business Financial & Professional Services; and lower expectations in Engineering, Construction, and Logistics.

**Investment:** 29% expect to increase capital expenditure (down from 31%). Highest in DCTs, Manufacturing, Business Financial & Professional Services, Hospitality & Tourism. 24% plan to invest in skills (down from 26%), DCTs, Manufacturing, Business Financial & Professional Services.

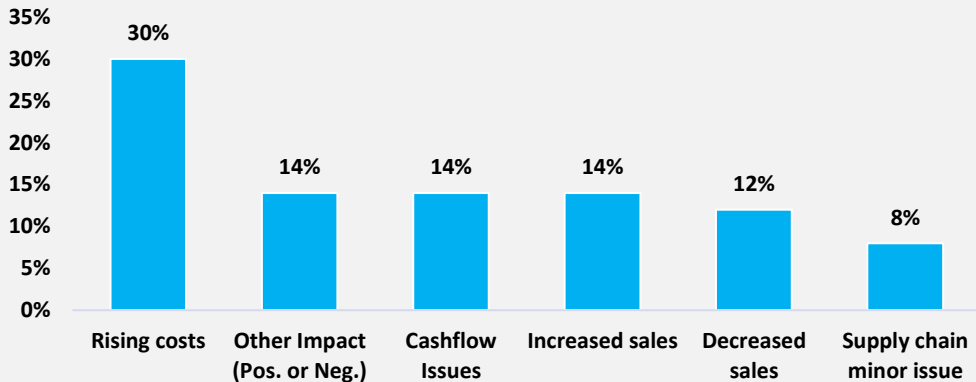
**Cashflow Issues:** 14% reported cashflow problems (unchanged). Micro-sized firms face more challenges than larger SMEs, and higher cashflow risks in Logistics, DCTs, Construction, Business Financial & Professional Services

**Trade:** 21% of firms (vs 19%) currently export goods or services, with 20% (vs 17%) expanding into new markets, a trend particularly notable in the DCTs and Manufacturing

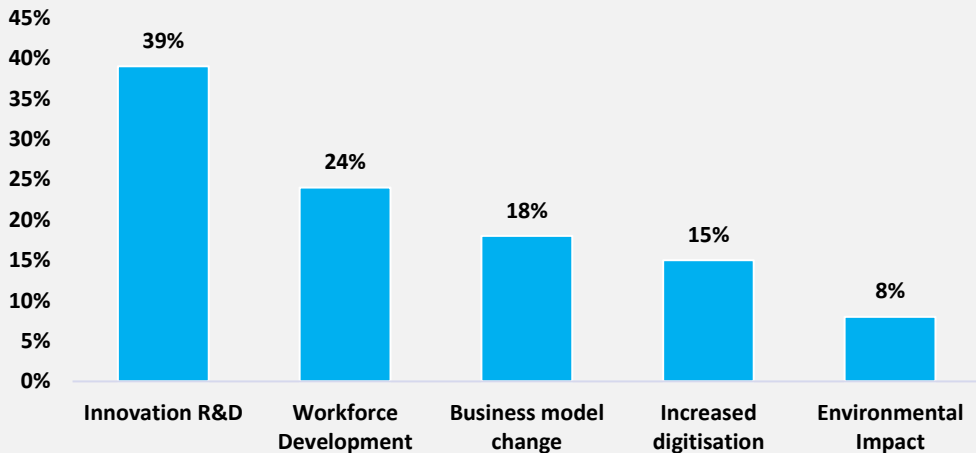
**Future Support Needs:** Priorities include innovation 35% (unchanged), business planning 31% (unchanged), sales & marketing 29% (vs 31%), workforce development & skills 24% (vs 25%), and financial advice & guidance 22% (vs 24%).

**Recruitment and Skills:** 24% of firms (vs 22%) are currently recruiting new staff. Recruitment rates are higher among SMEs than other businesses. By sector, recruitment is more active in DCTs, Business Financial & Professional Services, and Manufacturing. Life Sciences and Engineering sectors are least active.

## Main Impacts

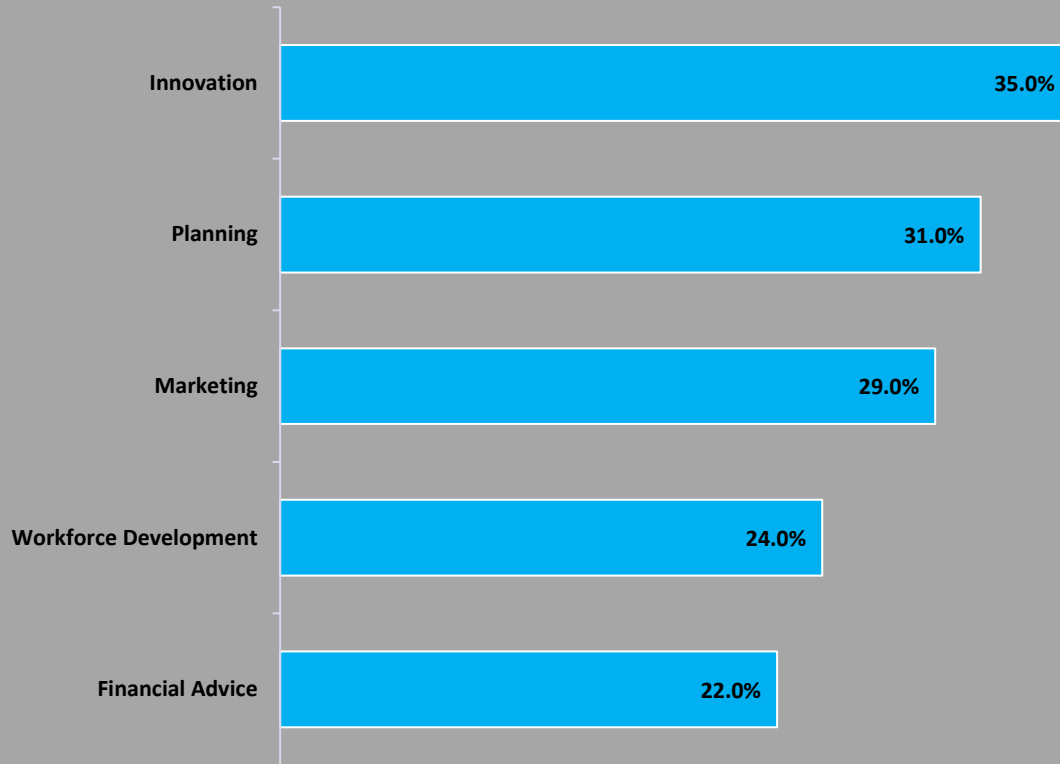


## Areas to increase investment

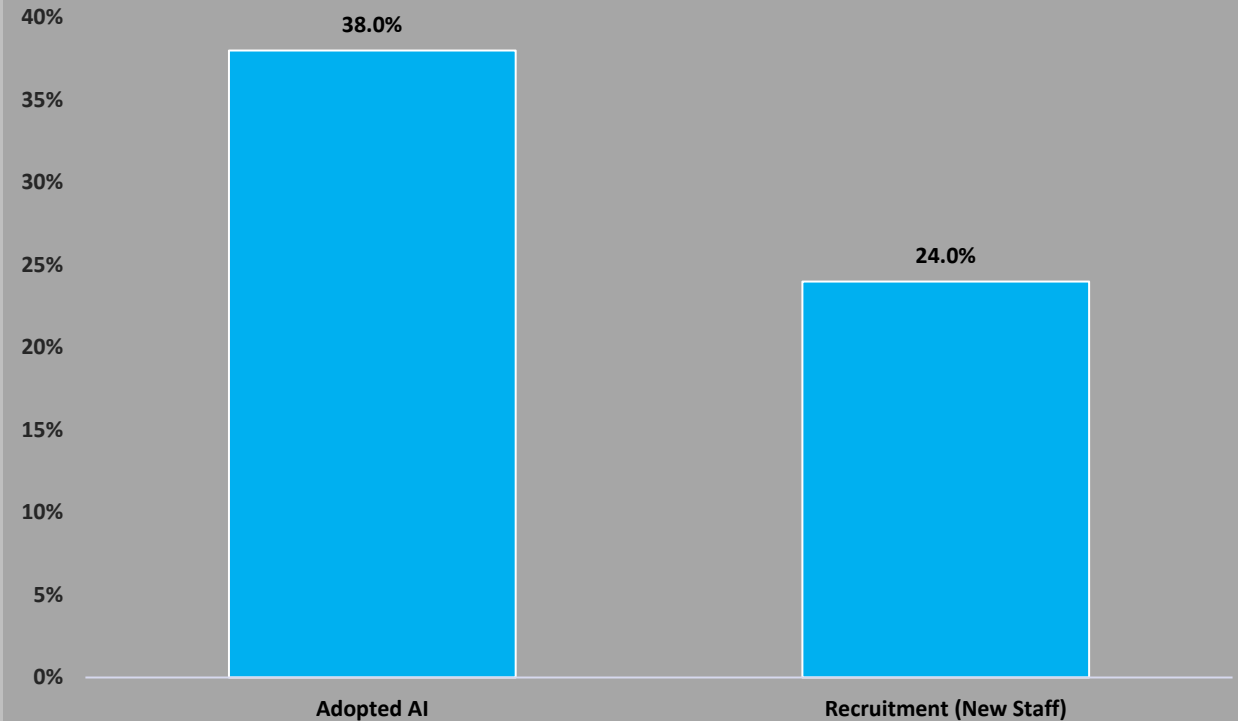


# Interest in business support

## Top 5 areas for business support in the future



## Percentage of respondents interested in the following initiatives



### Access support from the Growth Company

As a market leader in business and economy surveys, the Growth Company has engaged with firms throughout the pandemic and remains uniquely placed to provide invaluable intelligence on the challenges faced by business.

Our survey intelligence reports provide regular weekly input to central Government, as well as supporting a variety of local stakeholders in planning their response.

**For more information on the results presented here, or to take part in future surveys, please contact: [Jake.spires@growthco.uk](mailto:Jake.spires@growthco.uk) or [Atharva.Joshi@growthco.uk](mailto:Atharva.Joshi@growthco.uk)**

### Here are some of the ways we can support you:

- Guidance and practical business support  
<https://www.businessgrowthhub.com/support/services>
- Help for training staff and finding new talent:  
<https://www.businessgrowthhub.com/support/services/people>
- Advice to reduce carbon, boost your competitiveness, and save money  
<https://www.businessgrowthhub.com/support/services/sustainability>