



The
Growth
Company

Growth Company Business Survey

Results for the 2nd June 2025 to 2nd September 2025

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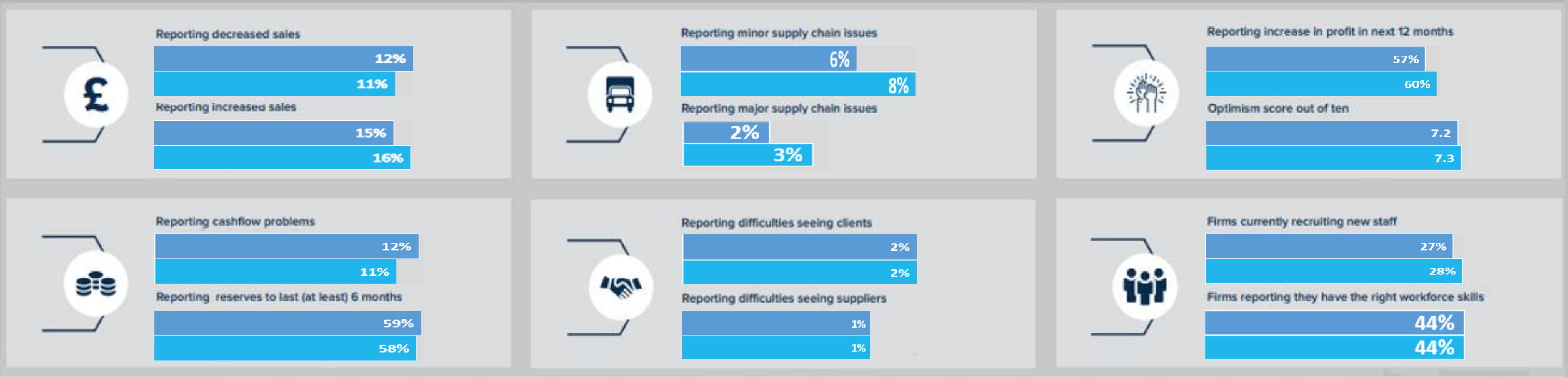
GC Business Survey

The main survey findings reported by businesses from 2nd June 2025 to 2nd September 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 **792 businesses** that participated in our GC Business Survey from **2nd June 2025 and 2nd September 2025**.

The main impacts of the current economic climate on businesses



▶▶ Previous month ▶▶ Current Month

Summary

The GC Business Confidence Index (7.3) increased slightly in August 2025, with confidence highest in BFPS, Construction, Manufacturing, Retail, and Health & Social Care, and lower in Green-Tech, Hospitality, Life Sciences, Education, and Logistics. Sales performance improved marginally, with 16% of firms reporting increases and 60% expecting profit growth, particularly in BFPS, DCTs, Manufacturing, Health, Retail, and Other Services. Lower future profit sentiment was seen in Construction, Education, and Green-Tech.

Capital investment expectations rose to 31%, led by DCTs, Manufacturing, Health Care, BFPS, and Service Activities, with lowest expectations in Life Sciences and Green-Tech. Workforce development investment also increased, with 32% of firms planning to invest, especially in DCTs, Manufacturing, Retail, Health, Other Services, and BFPS. Cashflow issues were reported by 11% of firms, more common in micro businesses, especially in DCTs, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Retail, & Service sectors. Most firms (58%) have cash reserves exceeding six months, though reserves are lower in Green-Tech and Life Sciences. Exports were reported by 22% of firms, with 16% entering new markets, especially in DCTs, Manufacturing, & Green-Tech.

Recruitment activity increased to 28%, driven by SMEs (10–49 employees) and sectors such as BFPS, Manufacturing, and DCTs, while Logistics, Life Sciences, and Hospitality were less active. Firms highlighted ongoing support needs in business planning (36%), sales & marketing (32%), innovation (32%), workforce development (29%), and financial advice (21%).

44% have adopted AI into business, up by 1%. Firms were most likely to have implemented AI into data analytics, sales & marketing systems, customer support automation, and routine process automation.

Key Findings

GC Business Confidence Index (GC-BCI) for August 2025 stood at 7.3 out of 10, up from 7.2 last month. Confidence levels are above average for Business Financial & Professional Services, Construction, Manufacturing, Retail, and Health & Social Care; and lower-than-average confidence was reported in Green-Tech, Hospitality, Life Sciences, Education, and Logistics.

Sales and Profits:16% (vs 15%) of firms reported an increase in sales over the survey period. 60% (vs 57%) expect profits to increase in the year ahead. 2% (unchanged) expect profits to decrease. The sectors most optimistic about future profitability are BFPS, DCTs, Manufacturing, Health, Retail, and Other Services; and future profit sentiment was lower in Construction, Education, and Green-Tech.

Investment: 31% (vs 30%) of firms expect to increase capital expenditure in the year ahead. DCTs, Manufacturing, Health Care, BFPS, and Service Activities are most optimistic, and expectations are lowest in Life Sciences and Green-Tech.

Workforce Development: 32% (vs 31%) of firms plan to increase investment in workforce development. Sectors more likely to increase investment are DCTs, Manufacturing, Retail, Health, Other Services, and BFPS.

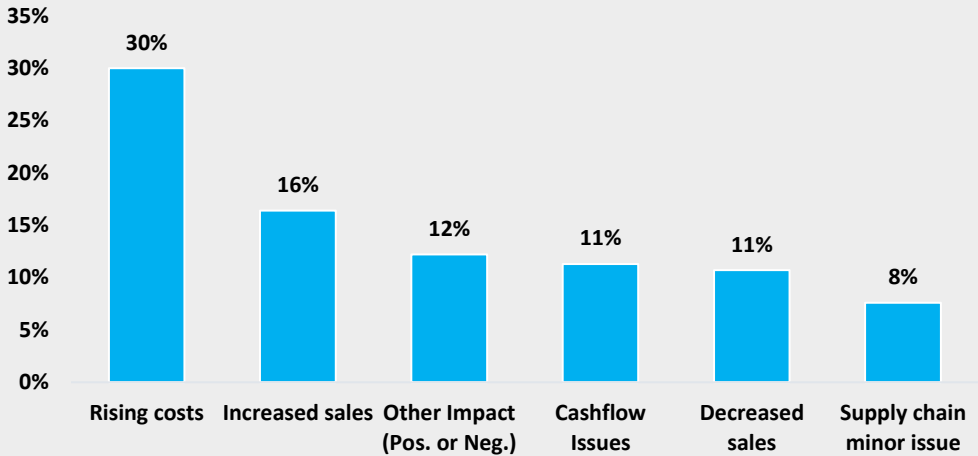
Cashflow Issues & Cash reserves: 11% (vs 12%) of firms reported cashflow problems. Micro-sized firms (<10 employees) were more likely to face cashflow challenges than larger SMEs (50–249+ FTEs), with higher risk reported in DCTs, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Retail, and Service firms. 2% (vs 3%) of firms reported late payments. 58% of firms (vs 59%) report having cash reserves to last over 6 months. Reserves were highest in Manufacturing, DCTs, Health, BFPS, and Retail, while Green-Tech and Life Sciences had the lowest reserves.

Trade: 22% of firms (unchanged) export goods or services, with 16% (vs 15%) expanding into new markets, a trend particularly notable in the DCTs, Green-Tech, Manufacturing. Additionally, 11% (vs 10%) of firms engaged in overseas trade are looking to expand in their current markets.

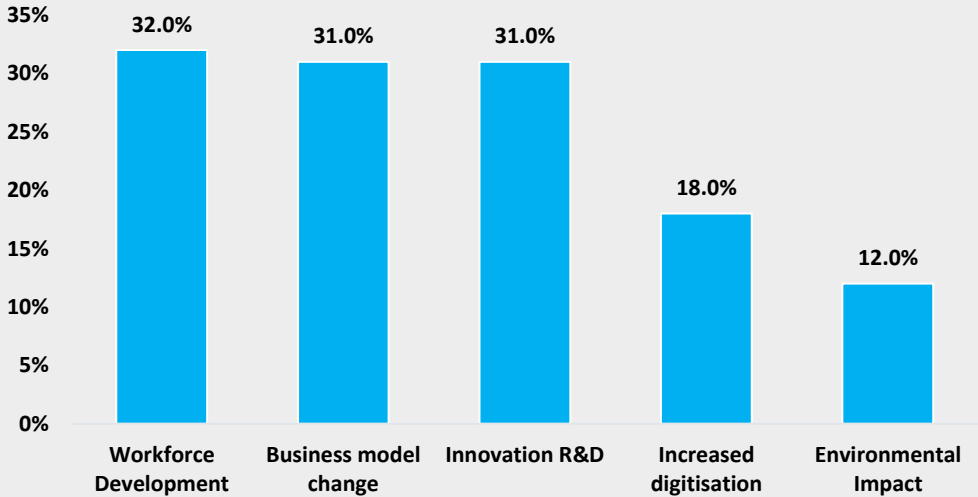
Future support needs include business planning – 36% (vs 35%), sales & marketing – 32% (vs 33%), innovation – 32% (vs 31%), workforce development – 29% (vs 30%), and financial advice – 21% (vs 22%).Micro-size and small firms (0–49 FTEs) were more likely to indicate future support needs in business planning, sales & marketing, and innovation. Firms with 50+ employees were more likely to request support in workforce development & skills, recruitment, managing environmental impacts, and digital transformation.

Recruitment and Skills: 28% (vs 27%) of firms are currently recruiting new staff. Recruitment rates are higher amongst SMEs (10–49 employees).By sector, recruitment is more active in BFPS, Manufacturing, and DCTs. Logistics, Life Sciences, and Hospitality sectors were least likely to recruit.

Main Impacts

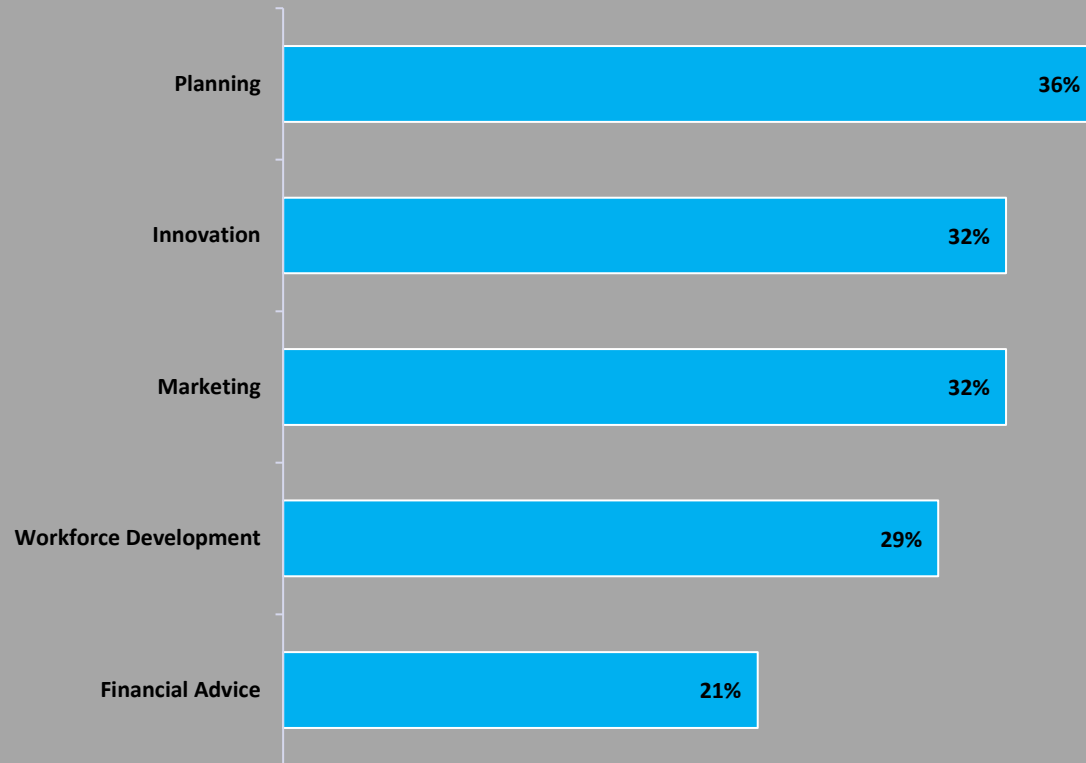


Areas to Increase Investment

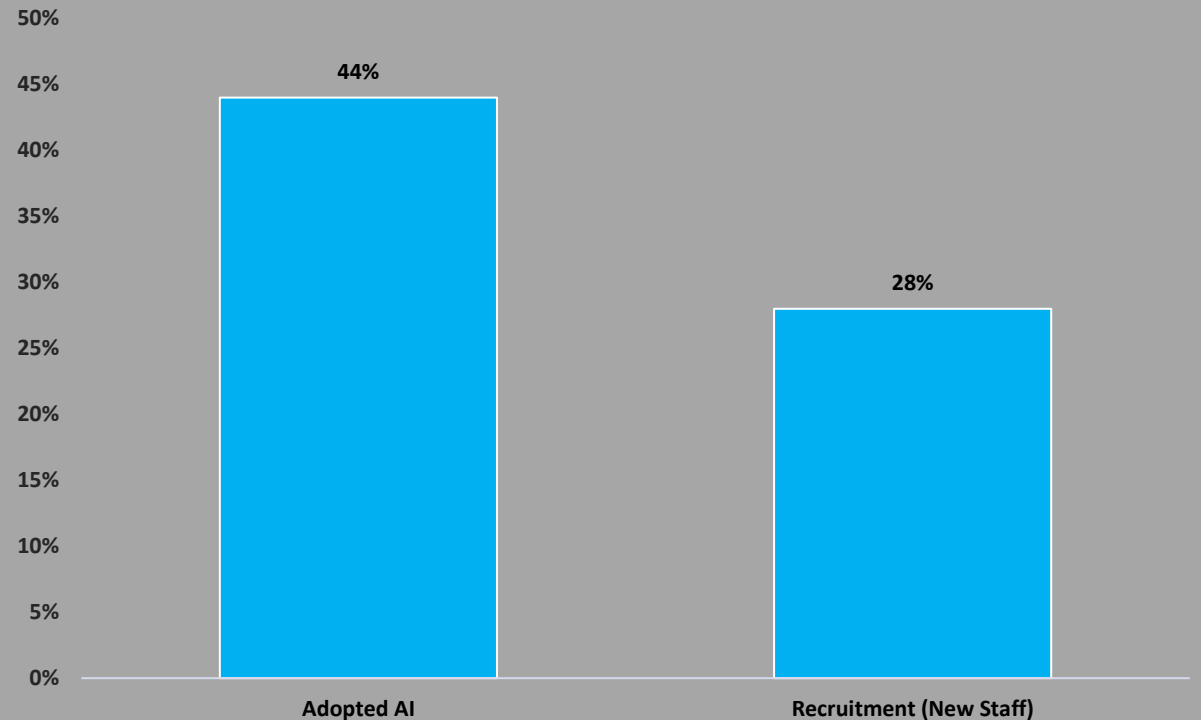


Interest in business support

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: Gautham.Maniyan@growthco.uk or 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>