

# Reflecting Business



Attitudes and awareness  
towards Environmental, Social  
and Governance (ESG)

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As Irish Small and Medium businesses navigate a complex economic and political landscape fuelled by challenges both domestically and globally, we see this reflected in levels of economic confidence where expectations for growth are relatively low; with many businesses expecting the economy to remain the same this year. There is however cautious optimism and perceived opportunities for growth for SMEs. Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) is one area that has come to the fore in recent years, with the vast majority planning to incorporate it into their business strategy. There is a strong commercial growth opportunity in sustainability for businesses in Ireland with a significant demand from customers in relation to sustainable products and services.

# Your business and the economy

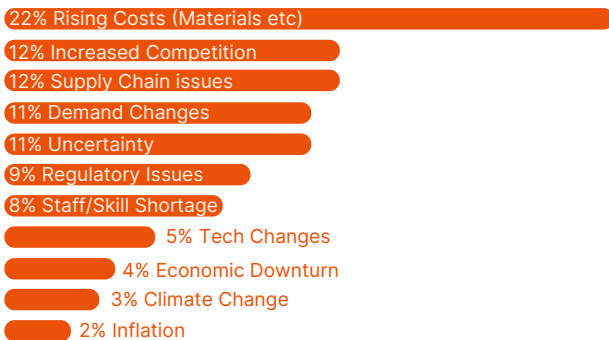
Do you think the economic situation of the country is likely to improve, remain the same or get worse over the next 12 months?



Do you think things are likely to improve, remain the same or get worse over the next 12 months for your business?



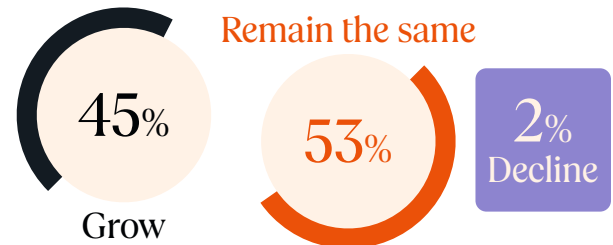
What is the biggest threat to your business at the moment?



What are the biggest challenges you are facing now in terms of growth?



Over the next 12 months, are you expecting your business to grow, remain the same or decline?

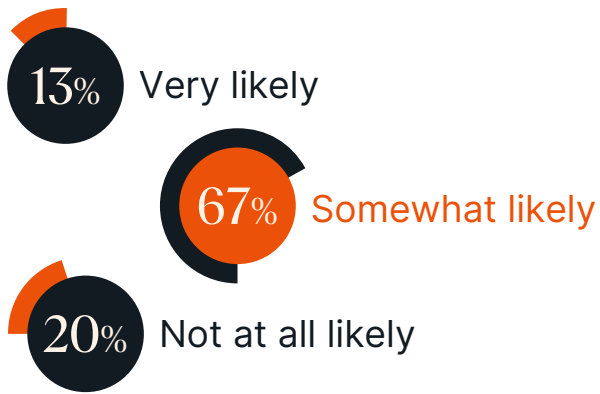


What are the biggest opportunities you see for the growth of your business?

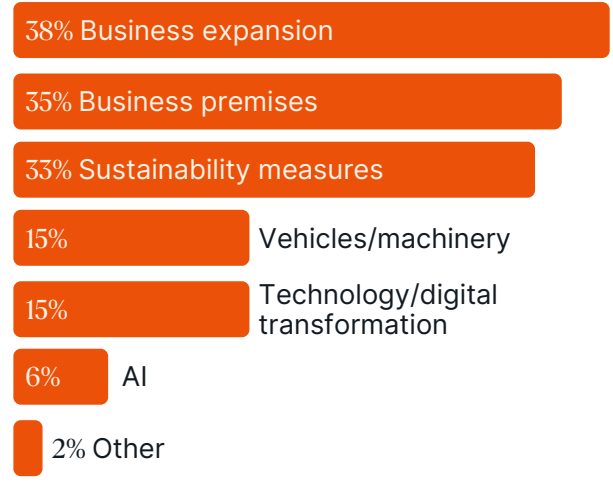


This survey has a sample size of 408 SME businesses based in the Republic of Ireland. The study was conducted through computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) using SME database lists across a mix of industries to contact target respondents. The telephone interviews took place between the 10th April – 6th May 2025.

How likely are you to invest in your business in the next 12 months?

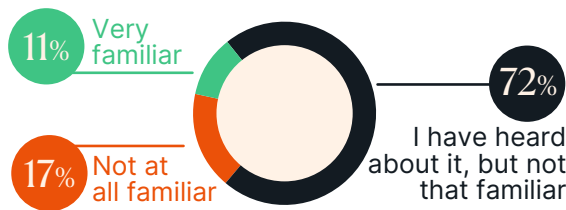


What are you hoping to invest in?



# Attitudes to ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance)

How familiar are you with the concept of ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) for business?



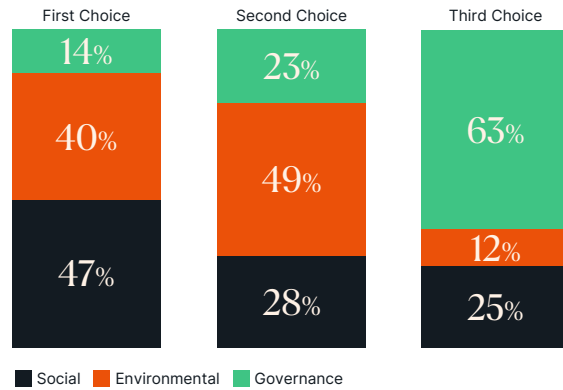
How important is ESG as part of your business strategy in the next 5 years?



What do you believe holds businesses like yours back from investing in ESG?



Please rank in order of most to least important each of the aspects of ESG to your business.



In your business, is there interest from your customers or clients for more sustainable products and services?



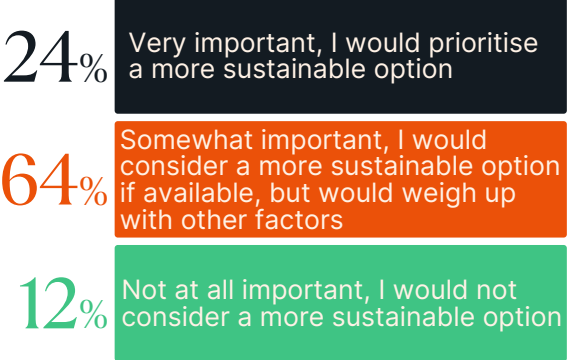
Do you see sustainability as a commercial opportunity for your business in the coming years?



In which areas do you see the most commercial potential for your business?



How important are ESG-focused banking products for you and your business?



Which of the following sustainability-linked actions have you done / planned to do in your business?



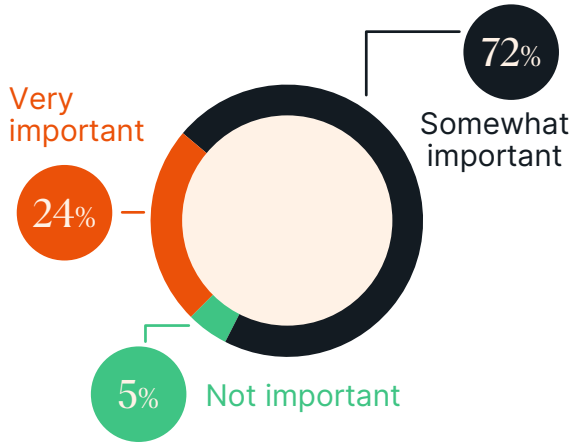
What type of ESG linked products and services would be most valuable to your business?



In the next 3 years are you planning to do any of the following:



When choosing or deciding whether to stay with a bank for your business, how important is that they demonstrate strong ESG credentials in their actions and policies?



What could financial institutions do to support your business in their ESG strategy and sustainability goals?



Would you be interested in Impact Lending, where business loans are issued on the basis of achieving positive environmental or social outcomes?



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