

VISTAGE

CEO ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Q4 2024 Vistage CEO Confidence Index

VISTAGE APPOINTS NEW UK LEADER TO DRIVE EXECUTIVE MENTORSHIP ACROSS UK AND IRELAND AMID INCREASING ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY

ABOUT THE VISTAGE CEO CONFIDENCE INDEX

Since 2003, the Vistage CEO Confidence Index has captured the sentiment of small and medium sized business CEOs, presidents and business owners in the United Kingdom about the economy each quarter. The Q4 Vistage CEO Confidence Index survey was conducted online and sent to active Vistage members participating in Chief Executive and Small Business groups. It was open between 2 and 16 December, 2024, and captured input from 156 leaders.

For more than 20 years, the Vistage CEO Confidence Index has been recognized as the definitive voice of high-performing, high-integrity leaders. As a trusted resource, the Index provides world-class insights to inform decision-making for CEOs and other key leaders of small and medium sized businesses.

LONDON, UK - 27 January 2024 - Today Vistage, the world's leading business performance and leadership advancement organisation for small and medium sized businesses, has announced Rebecca Drew as Managing Director of UK & Ireland. This strategic hire comes as SMEs observe a marked decline in economic confidence at the tail end of 2024.

As Vistage continues to bring its unique approach to professional executive mentorship, Rebecca brings over 20 years of experience in scaling mentorship programmes, having previously held roles at Chief and LinkedIn. Her deep understanding of organisational dynamics and proven track record of driving transformational outcomes make her uniquely positioned to lead Vistage's ambitions across the UK.

This announcement comes amidst Vistage's quarterly index which suggests that there has been a steep drop in economic confidence amongst SME CEOs falling from 107.1 to 91.4 in the last three months of 2024. According to the report, issued quarterly, over the last year almost half (44%) of businesses have stated that economic conditions have worsened; and similarly, a further 35% feel the trend will continue for the coming 12 months.

The report underscores growing uncertainty within the economy only a third (34%) of all business leaders feel optimistic about their firm's profitability in 2025. As such, Vistage has seen an increased demand for mentorship services to help organisations navigate financial pressures and shifting market dynamics, with a 20% YOY increase in enquiries.

With that said, nearly half of all business leaders (46%) plan to increase hiring across 2025 in a bid to boost their investment into the talent pool.

As organisations grapple with declining economic confidence and increased market pressures Rebecca's leadership will be instrumental in designing Vistage initiatives to better support and protect the UK and Ireland's most vulnerable SMEs. In her new role, Rebecca will spearhead customised mentorship solutions, build strategic partnerships, and enhance the support available to SME leaders and executives across the region.

"I am thrilled to join Vistage at such an exciting phase of growth, where our members need our support the most. Mentorship plays a critical role in helping businesses achieve their full potential, especially during periods of uncertainty. Insights from our latest report highlight a significant decline in economic confidence among SME CEOs, with many citing concerns around revenue and profitability projections. This makes our work even more essential in equipping leaders with the tools and guidance they need to adapt, survive and thrive. I feel confident in our ability to work together with SMEs across the UK and Ireland to continue their growth trajectory and bolster a culture of resilience and innovation despite challenges in the wider business landscape" **said Rebecca Drew, Managing Director, Vistage UK & Ireland.**



Founded in 1957, Vistage has built a reputation for its personalised and impactful mentorship programmes for more than 45,000 executives in 40 countries. With a network of accomplished mentors and a strong focus on measurable outcomes, the company empowers organisations and senior business leaders to improve leadership effectiveness, streamline operations, and foster innovation.

Rob Ristagno, President of International Operations, Vistage Worldwide

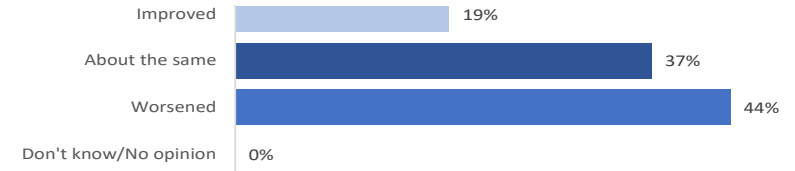
said: *"With confidence levels declining, Rebecca's appointment comes at a key moment. Her expertise in mentorship and organisational transformation gives us confidence that she has the tools to provide the support businesses need to navigate these difficult times and build resilience for 2025."*

Sam Reese, CEO, Vistage Worldwide

said: *"We are delighted to welcome Rebecca to our international leadership team; her well-seasoned experience and vision align perfectly with our mission to provide world-class executive mentorship. As indicated by the results from our Q4 index, economic confidence has fallen by 15 points. Rebecca's deep expertise in empowering business leaders in the face of adversity is exactly what's needed to address the pressure points we know SMEs are currently facing."*

Economy

Compared with a year ago, have overall economic conditions in the UK & IRL improved, remained the same, or worsened?

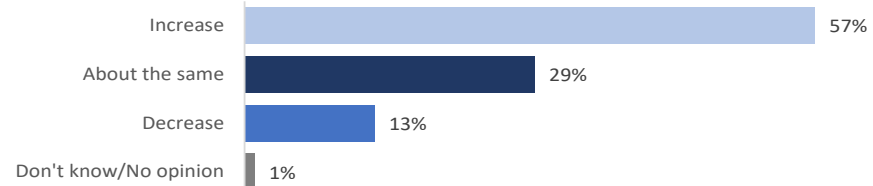


During the next 12 months, do you expect the overall economic conditions in the UK & IRL will be better, about the same, or worse than now?



Prospects

Do you anticipate that your firm's sales revenues will increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?

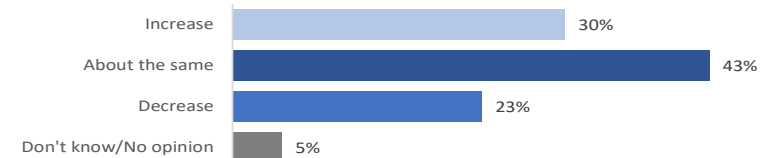


Do you expect your firm's profitability to improve, remain about the same, or worsen during the next 12 months?

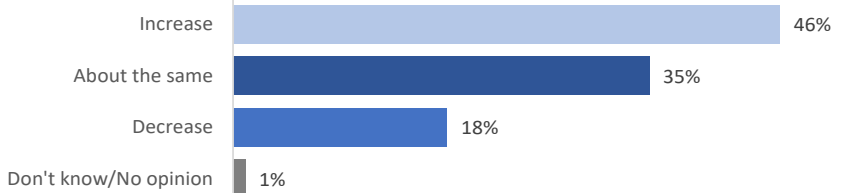


Expansion

Are your firm's total fixed investment expenditures likely to increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?



Do you expect your firm's total number of employees will increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?



ABOUT VISTAGE

Vistage is the world's leading business performance and leadership advancement organisation for small and medium sized businesses. For more than 65 years, we've been helping CEOs, business owners and senior executives solve their greatest challenges through confidential peer advisory groups and one-to-one executive coaching sessions with accomplished business leaders. Today, more than 45,000 members in 40 countries rely on Vistage to help make better decisions for their companies, families and communities. According to Dun & Bradstreet data, Vistage CEO members grew their annual revenue on average by 4.6% in 2020, while non-members with comparable small and medium sized businesses saw revenue decrease by 4.7%.

Learn more at <http://www.vistage.co.uk>.

ABOUT REBECCA DREW

Rebecca is the Managing Director of Vistage UK & Ireland, bringing a proven track record of driving growth and transformational leadership. With expertise in scaling businesses and improving sales effectiveness, Rebecca has delivered impactful results at renowned organisations such as Chief and LinkedIn. Most recently, as General Manager at Chief, she helped shape a thriving executive membership network, empowering female leaders. She also played a pivotal role in advancing LinkedIn's platform's business solutions.

Throughout her career, she has placed a dedicated focus on creating opportunities for all and has personally invested in several technology businesses in the Talent, Education and Impact sectors. She also built internal and external communities to drive positive and inclusive change.

Now at Vistage, Rebecca is dedicated to elevating the brand across the UK and Ireland, supporting CEOs and executives in making better decisions that positively impact their businesses, teams, and communities.

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Capturing sentiment of small and medium sized business CEOs since 2003