

# Q3

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## FSB VOICE OF SMALL BUSINESS INDEX

QUARTER 3, 2024

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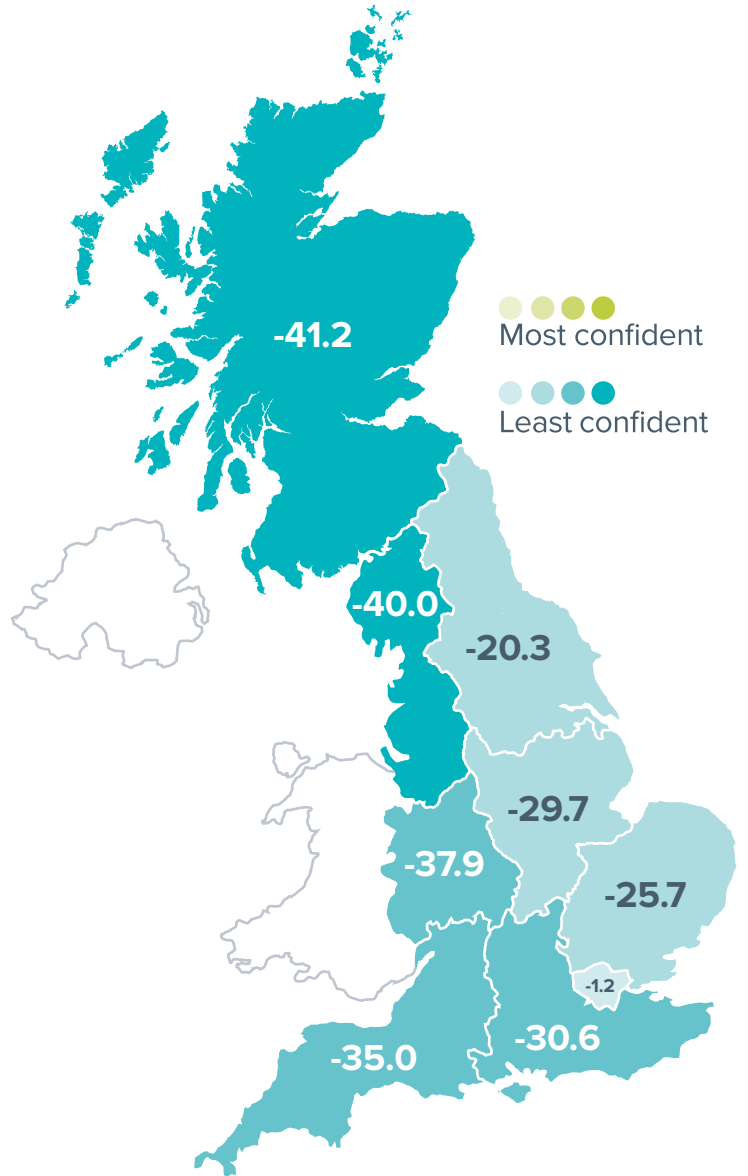
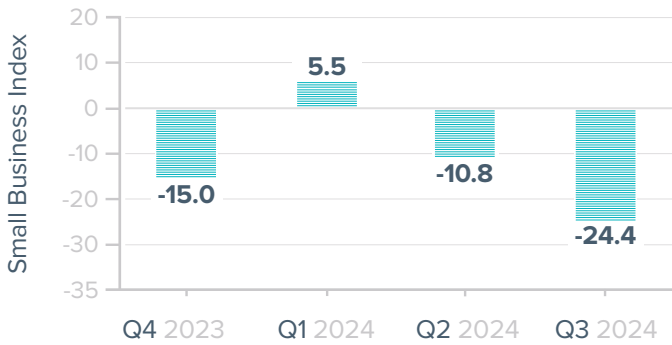
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Small Businesses

# SBI Q3 2024

“ Significant fall in confidence as small business momentum weakens ”



## Small businesses' revenue growth remains anaemic



**-13.8%**

Net balance of **small businesses reporting revenue growth** in Q3, with future expectations for **Q4 remaining negative**

## Employment growth falls for ten consecutive quarters



**-2.6%**

Net balance of small businesses reporting a growth in employee numbers, with more small businesses seeing **decreases in staff levels than increases**

## Small businesses growth aspirations weakened in Q3

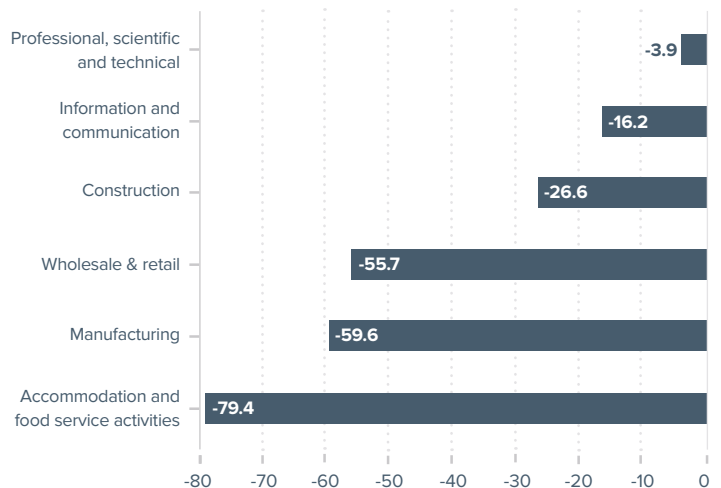


**51.2%**

of small businesses **aspire to grow over the next 12 months**, down from **54.1%** in Q2

**Please note:** Sample sizes for Wales and Northern Ireland are insufficient for accurate reporting. The North East is combined with Yorkshire and the Humber to produce a combined region, due to low sample sizes for the former region.

## Small business confidence by sector



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# ECONOMIST'S VIEW

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As the UK economy moves into a phase of slower growth for the second half of 2024, small business confidence has also shifted – from quite pessimistic to very pessimistic.

The worsening picture of small business confidence was broad-based across regions and sectors, but a few sectors saw a particularly marked deterioration from last quarter. One common thread across these sectors (hospitality, wholesale and retail, manufacturing) is that they tend to have low margins, so it may be that cost concerns play a role in this quarter's data.

While small businesses have reported slightly lower cost growth overall, there is a chance that expectations for an increase in taxation and employment costs played a role, given government messaging on these topics when this quarter's survey was in field, which was before the Budget on 30 October.

Another common thread across these three sectors is that they are, on the whole, more highly linked to the consumer. Given that household spending continues to be subdued, it is not surprising that pessimism is more commonplace amongst businesses in these sectors. Indeed, expectations around the Budget might have also been a factor in relation to its impact on household finances.

Small firms have also faced a noticeable change in offered interest rates this quarter. Only 10.2% of firms were offered a rate of up to 4%, down from 21.6% last quarter. At the other end of the spectrum, 35.6% of firms were offered a rate above 11%, up from 26.1% last quarter. This is likely linked to the increase in UK bond yields seen over September as markets digested news of the changing fiscal rules.

Fortunately, the combination of higher interest rates and lower optimism didn't have much impact on investment plans in this quarter's data, with the net balance remaining only slightly positive. Growth ambitions also remain broadly similar to Q2, with just over half of small firms hoping to grow over the next 12 months, compared to 14.6% that expect to shrink. There was a small uptick in the percentage of firms looking to sell over the next year to 3.1%. This is the highest share since Q4 2022 and aligns with news suggesting that UK dealmaking has seen a recent resurgence.

The outlook for small businesses is a nuanced one. Our central forecast is for conditions to improve, but risks are increasingly weighted to the downside. The Bank of England should continue its rate cutting trajectory, supporting firms both through their finance costs and by supporting household spending power. Consumers are also expected to be supported by continued real wage growth, which should boost spending gradually over time.

Other risks to businesses are continuing to crystallise. Perhaps the most pertinent of these is the ongoing exacerbation of conflicts across the Middle East and in Ukraine, which threaten to lead to further disintegration of economic and political ties. The outcome of the US election will also have an impact, given its role as a global superpower.



Christopher Breen,  
Head of Economic  
Insight

# FSB EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Key findings this quarter:

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- **The FSB Small Business Index (SBI) decreased to -24.4 in Q3 2024 from -10.8 in Q2.** This marks the lowest reading in almost two years.
- The fall in the headline index was reflected across the regions. **Small business pessimism over the next three months was most prevalent in Scotland.** London was the only region to record an improvement from Q2, but nevertheless still remains in negative territory.
- In Q3 2024, the net balance of small businesses reporting realised revenue growth was -13.8%. **Expectations for future revenue also remain negative, with a net balance of -4.0% anticipating an increase.**
- **A similar trend is observed in exports, in which the net balance has shown a decline at an accelerating rate, dropping from -0.4% in Q2 2024 to -10.6% in Q3 2024.** Looking ahead, businesses expect a deterioration in export value in Q4 2024, with a net balance of -6.6% of exporting businesses forecasting a decline.
- **The net balance of small businesses reporting an increase in operating costs fell this quarter to 73.7%.**
- **Small business headcounts failed to record growth for the tenth consecutive quarter. On net, businesses now expect to cut their staffing levels over the next three months.**
- **The share of small businesses aspiring to grow over the next twelve months fell to 51.2%.** The domestic economy led the factors reported by firms to be weighing on their growth prospects.
- **There was an increase in the share of small businesses applying for credit, up to 16.5% in Q3.** However, the share of successful applicants among those who applied fell, and the average interest rate increased to 8.3%.
- Despite this, small business perceptions of credit availability and affordability improved over the quarter. **The credit index increased 4.5 points on Q2 2024 but remained negative, at -29.7.**
- **The net balance of small businesses expecting to increase investment fell further, to 4.0%, having stood at 7.6% in Q2 2024.**

# UK MACROECONOMIC OVERVIEW

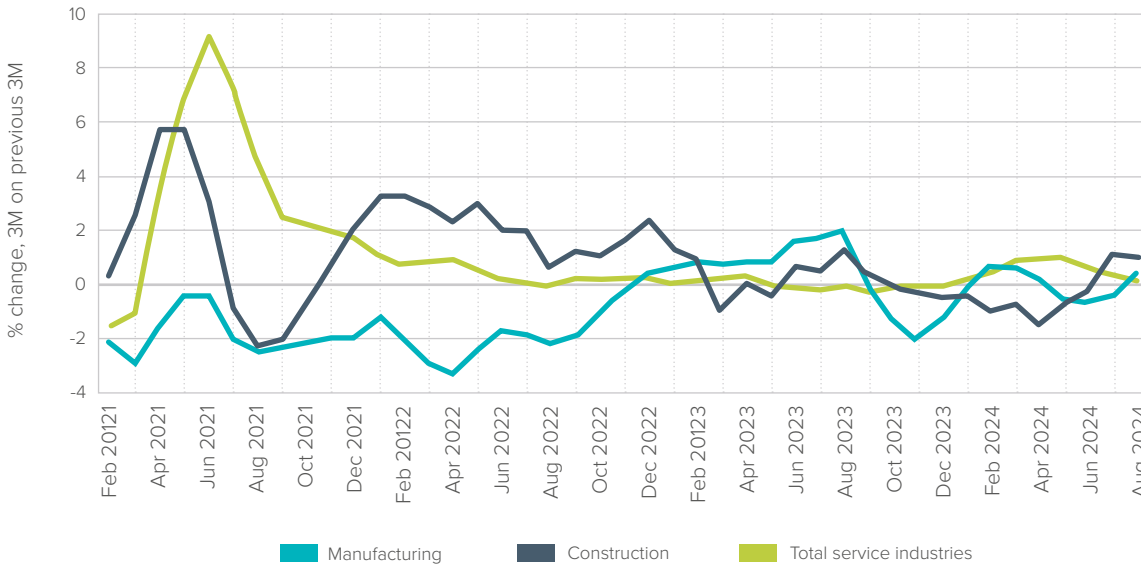
## UK growth momentum shows signs of slowing down

The economy grew by 0.2% in August, according to the latest data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This marked a return to growth, after no growth in June or July. However, in the three months to August, the economy grew by 0.2%, a drop from the 0.8% recorded in the previous three-month period. It is clear that the economy has shifted to a slower rate of growth following the initial post-recession bounce in the first half of this year.

In the three months to August, the construction sector recorded the strongest growth, amounting to 1.0%, largely due to favourable weather conditions in this time frame. Services grew by only 0.1% after driving growth across the rest of the first half of the year, while the production sector showed no growth in the three months to August.

Cebr forecasts GDP growth to slow in the next two quarters to 0.4% and 0.3% in Q3 and Q4, respectively. Across 2024, an overall growth of 1.0% is projected for 2024, up from 0.3% in 2023, before rising to 1.3% in 2025. This subdued growth is expected to continue in the coming years, with growth rates unlikely to surpass the pre-Covid trend average of 1.8% until 2028.

**Figure one:** Monthly growth rates by sector of the UK economy, latest three months on previous three months  
 Source: Office for National Statistics.



# SMALL BUSINESS INDEX

## Q3 2024's Small Business Index hits two-year low as growth momentum slows

The Small Business Index (SBI) fell to -24.4 in Q3 2024, the lowest reading on this index in almost two years. This reading of net pessimism implies that the share of businesses that expect a worsening performance in the coming quarter outweighs the share of businesses expecting an improvement in the coming quarter. Expectations among small businesses indicate that 29.3% anticipate improvements, while 53.7% foresee worsening conditions, resulting in a net balance of -24.4 points. The Q3 reading marks the second consecutive quarter of net pessimism, following a one-off period of optimism in Q1 2024, which suggests that despite the recent uptick in economic growth, the average small business is still relatively pessimistic about business conditions.

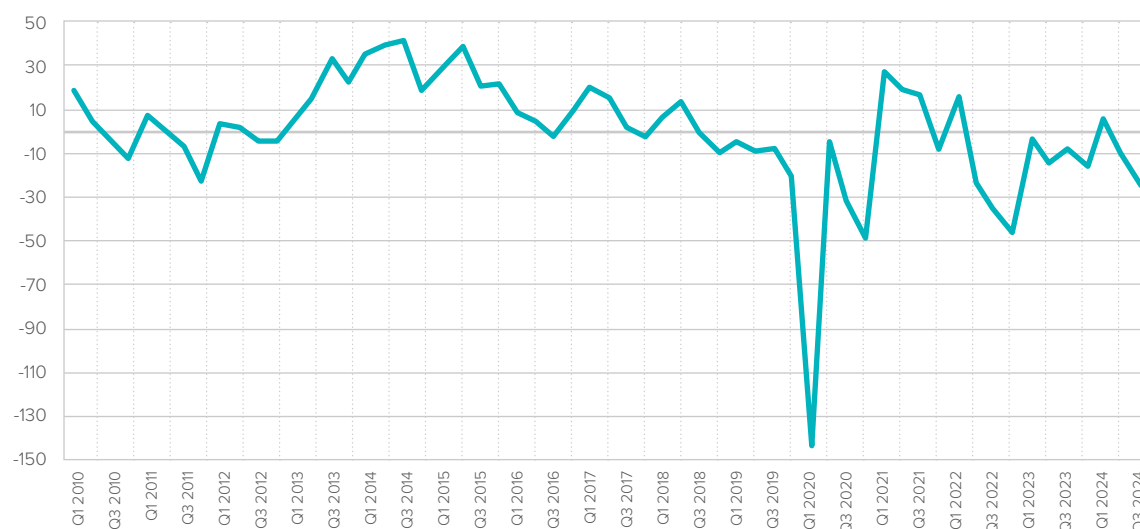
This growing pessimism among small businesses likely reflects ongoing challenges in the UK's domestic economy. The net balance of businesses reporting an increase in revenue stands at -13.8% in Q3 2024. This indicator has remained negative throughout the year, indicating that more businesses report

revenue declines than increases. Furthermore, each quarter has shown a progressively worsening trend, indicating a growing number of businesses experiencing revenue declines.

The ongoing weakness in revenue is likely partially driven by household consumption remaining below the level last year, according to the most recent official data. The Q3 decline in the SBI may also reflect heightened uncertainty in the UK policy landscape, as many small businesses awaited clarity on the Budget while this quarter's survey was in field, while geopolitical tensions and exacerbated conflicts may be harming optimism further.

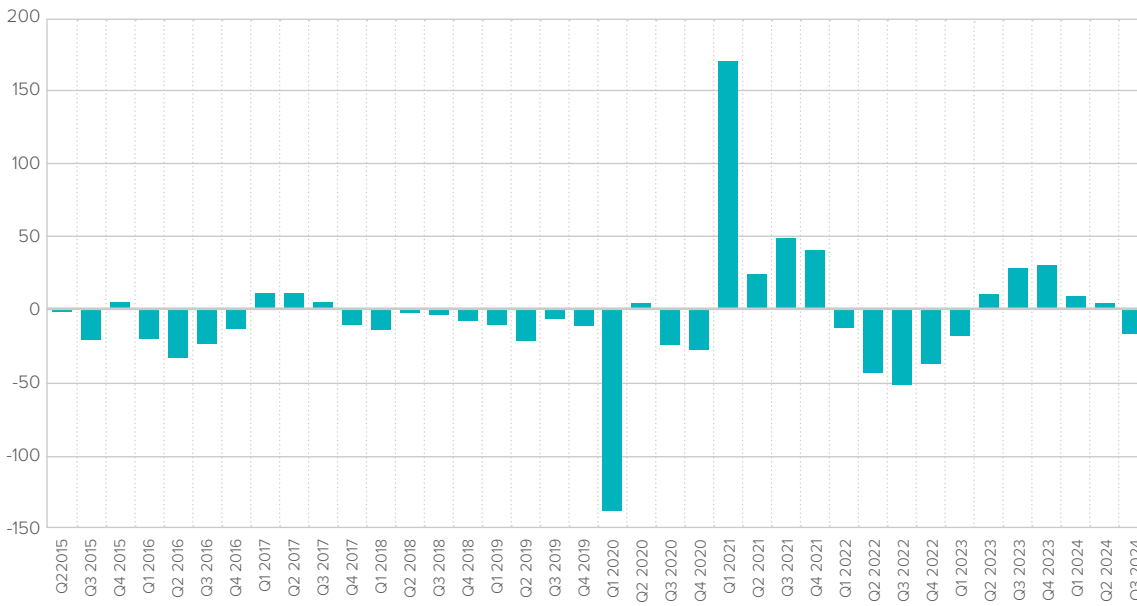
Small business sentiment should be supported by monetary policy starting to loosen, and wage growth continuing to outstrip inflation, which should gradually support higher household spending and, therefore, growth. However, mounting global and domestic pressures pose additional risks to the Q4 outlook, with most small businesses anticipating that challenging conditions will persist.

**Figure two:** The FSB Small Business Index<sup>1</sup>: small business prospects over coming three months  
Source: FSB- Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey

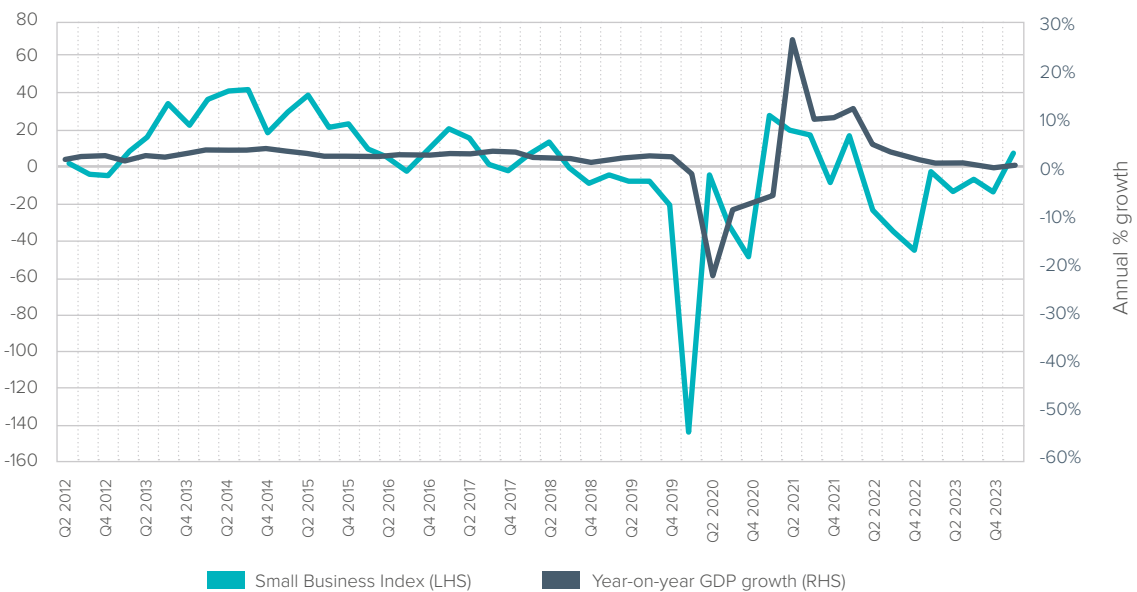


<sup>1</sup> The Small Business Index is a weighted index of the responses to the question: 'Considering your overall business performance, and ignoring any normal seasonal variations at this time of the year, how do you view business prospects over the next three months, compared with the previous three months?' The share of firms reporting are given the following weightings: 'much improved' +2; 'slightly improved' +1; 'approximately the same' 0; 'slightly worse' -1; and 'much worse' -2; the Small Business Index is derived from the sum of these factors.

**Figure three:** Year-on-year change in the FSB Small Business Index  
 Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



**Figure four:** UK SBI against year-on-year UK GDP growth  
 Source: ONS, FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey





# REGION AND NATION SMALL BUSINESS INDICES

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# ALL UK REGIONS’ SMALL BUSINESSES EXPRESS PESSIMISM OVER THEIR PERFORMANCE OUTLOOK FOR THE COMING THREE MONTHS

All UK regions saw a negative reading on the regional SBI in Q3 2024, indicating that small business pessimism seen at a national level was broad-based, although London was only marginally below neutral. London was also the only region not displaying increased pessimism compared to Q2. A negative score means that the proportion of small businesses expecting an improvement in performance in the coming quarter was outweighed by the proportion expecting a worsening.<sup>2</sup>

Scotland emerged as the most pessimistic region in Q3 2024, with an SBI score of -41.2. London, on the other hand, was the only region to show improvement from the previous quarter, with businesses becoming less pessimistic in Q3. Although still negative, this score is much higher than the double-digit pessimism levels seen across other regions.

Compared to a year ago, London and the North West were the only regions with net positive figures. However, all regions now report net negative figures for the current year, highlighting a significant shift in business sentiment.

**Figure five:** FSB Small Business Index – Regional variation in small business prospects over coming three months  
Source: FSB - Verve ‘Voice of Small Business’ Panel Survey



<sup>2</sup> Sample size for Northern Ireland and Wales is insufficient for accurate reporting. The North East is combined with Yorkshire and the Humber due to low sample sizes for the former region.

# SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR INDICES

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# ALL SECTORS ACROSS THE ECONOMY DISPLAY PESSIMISM OVER THE COMING THREE MONTHS

In line with the headline index, the SBI readings across all surveyed industries remained negative in Q3 2024. The broad negative scores across the different sectors indicate growing pessimism amongst small businesses regarding their performance over the coming quarter.

Accommodation and food services recorded the most broad-based pessimism in Q3 2024, with an SBI reading of -79.4 points, a steep decline from -15.9 in Q2 2024. Manufacturing, wholesale, and retail trade sectors also reported heightened pessimism. The negative sentiment in the accommodation and food services, as well as the wholesale and retail trade sectors, corresponds with the recent monthly declines in GDP across these sectors.

Furthermore, subdued consumer sentiment, driven by the lingering effects of the cost-of-living crisis, continues to exert downward pressure on demand. This is evidenced by the consumer savings ratio reaching its highest level, suggesting that individuals are prioritising saving over spending. Consequently, this trend is likely to exacerbate the challenges faced by both the accommodation and food services sector and retail, as decreased demand hampers performance.

Looking ahead, Cebr expects Q3 and Q4 growth rates to slow further, which will have spillover effects across all industries, sustaining the overall pessimism. However, there is a potential silver lining; overall price pressures appear to be easing, which could provide some relief for businesses across all sectors.

**Figure six:** FSB Small Business Index by sector – small business prospects over coming three months  
 Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

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# SMALL BUSINESSES HAVE A PESSIMISTIC OUTLOOK ON REVENUE, WITH MORE BUSINESSES EXPECTING A DECLINE

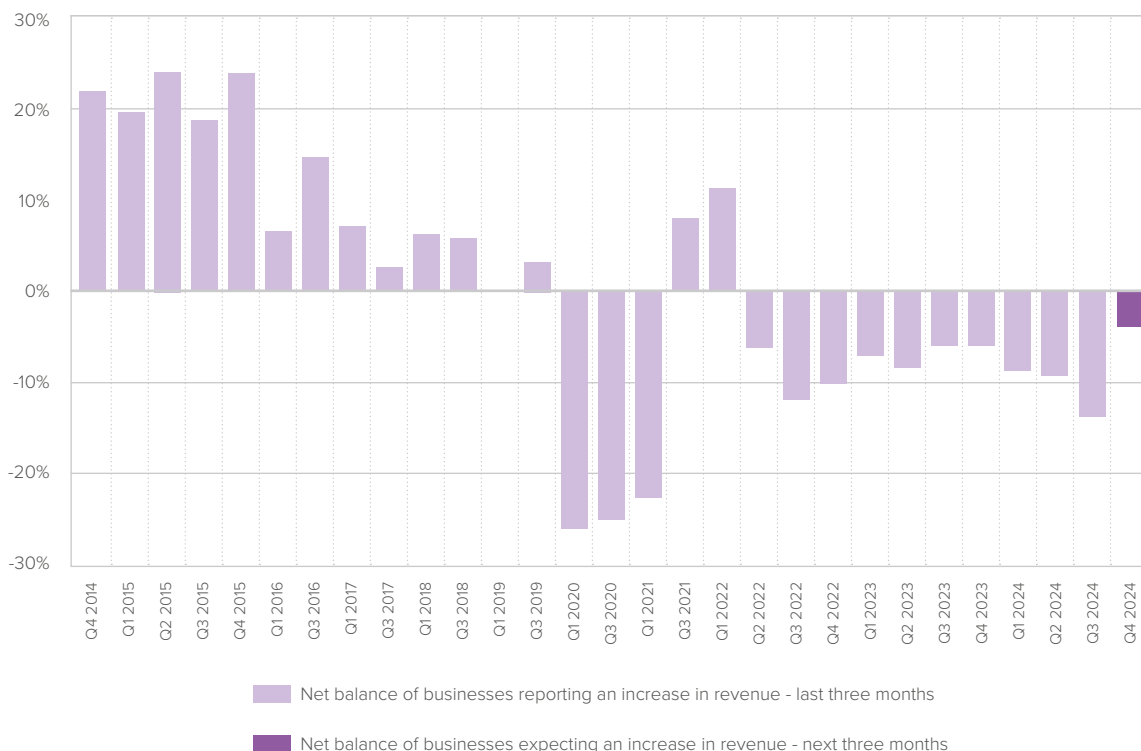
In the previous SBI survey, the net balance of small businesses expecting revenue growth in Q3 2024 stood at 4.6%. However, over the past three months, the net balance of small businesses that reported actual revenue growth stood at -13.8%. This negative balance indicates that the number of businesses reporting a decrease in revenue outweighed those reporting an increase, the ninth consecutive quarter for which this has been the case.

The unexpected decline in revenue growth in Q3 likely reflects broader economic conditions. In the first two months of Q3, the economy stagnated in July and grew by a modest 0.2%

in August. These subdued conditions will likely result in a slower growth rate for Q3 than seen in the previous two quarters. Among surveyed sectors, manufacturing had the highest share of businesses reporting a net decrease in revenue, with this figure standing at -35.0%.

Looking ahead, for the first time in 2024, small businesses no longer expect revenue growth, with expectations for Q4 reverting to pessimism, reflected in a net balance figure of -4.0%.

**Figure seven:** Small business gross profit, net percentage balance – Proportion reporting / expecting increase less proportion reporting / expecting decrease  
Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



# EXPORTS

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# EXPORTERS ANTICIPATE DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN Q4 2024

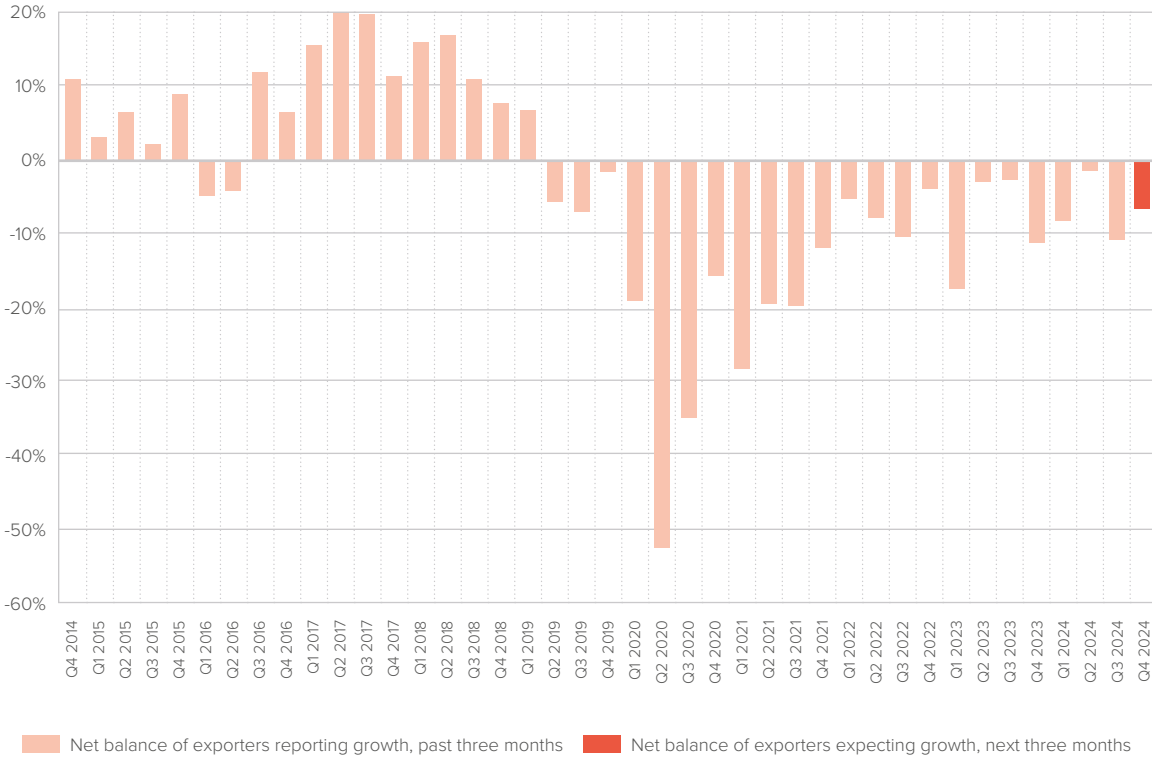
In Q3 2024, a net balance of -10.6% of exporting businesses reported an increase in the value of their exports. This represents a sharp dip from last quarter's figure of -0.4%.

Notably, this index data does not align with the latest trade statistics. Recent official data shows that the pace of growth in UK exports accelerated to 1.8% in the three months to August, from 0.5% in the three months to May. Both goods and services exports increased, with exports rising by 2.8% and services by 1.0%. The export growth rate of 1.8% in the three months to August exceeded the 0.5% growth

recorded in the preceding three months. This disparity suggests that smaller businesses may be struggling more than the overall trading economy.

Looking ahead, small businesses anticipate a further decline in export value in Q4 2024, with a net balance of -6.6% of exporting businesses expecting an increase. Small businesses may also be cognisant of uncertainties in the global economy, including ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and the US election results, both of which could have far-reaching implications for international trade.

**Figure eight:** Changes in value of exports over the previous three months and expectations for the coming three months; net percentage balance (proportion reporting increase, less proportion reporting decrease)  
 Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey





# COSTS AND INFLATION

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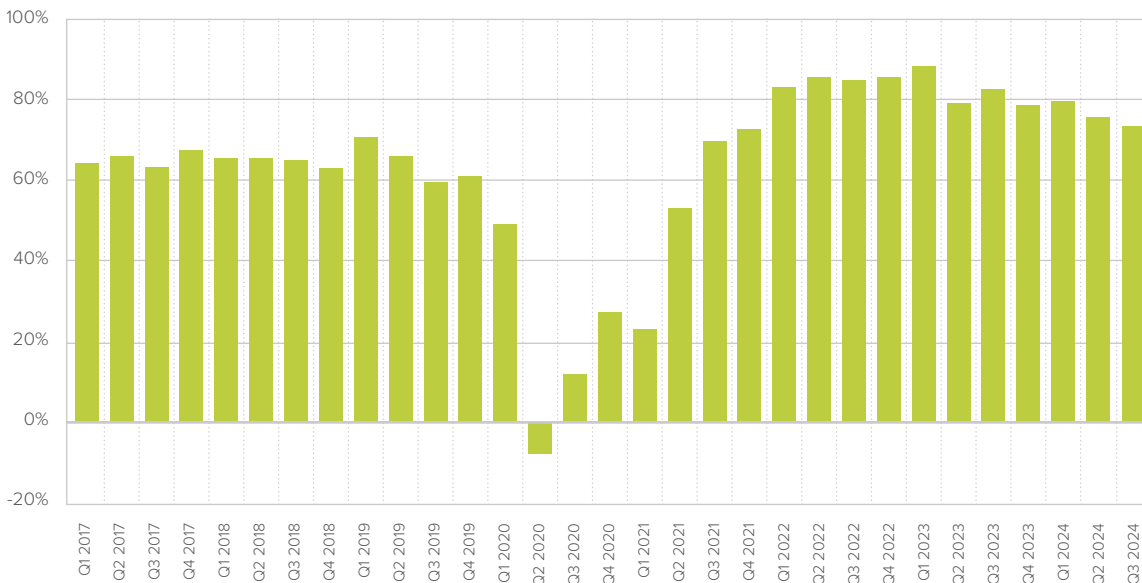
# COSTS PRESSURES CONTINUE TO EASE, DESPITE PERSISTENT CONCERNS ABOUT LABOUR AND UTILITY COSTS

The net balance of small businesses reporting an increase in operating costs fell in Q3 2024 to 73.7% from 75.4% in the previous quarter. This is the second consecutive decrease, and the balance is now down by 9.8 percentage points on the year.

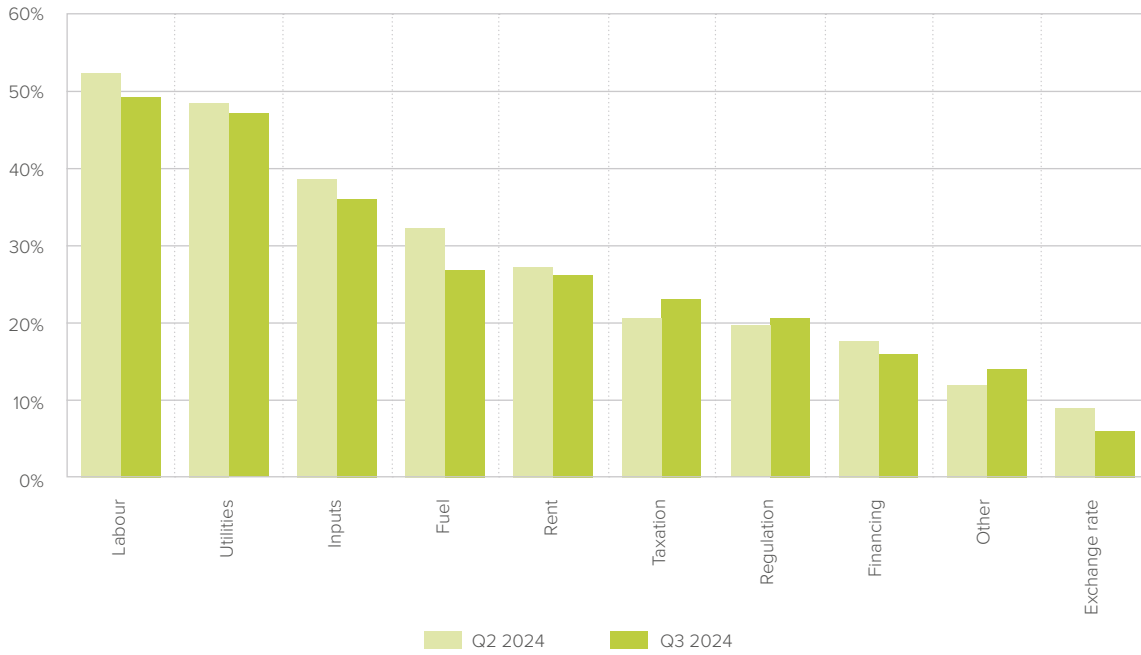
This finding aligns with the broader easing of cost pressures throughout the economy, with producer input price deflation accelerating in recent months. After slowing in Q2 2024, producer price deflation reaccelerated this quarter. Particularly sharp deflation was recorded in September, at an annual rate of 2.3%, marking the fastest rate of price decline since March 2024. On the consumer side, prices are continuing to grow, albeit at much slower rates than those recorded in recent years. These dynamics open the path for further rate cuts by the Bank of England, which would reduce cost pressures on businesses through financing.

As was also the case in Q2 2024, labour remains the most cited source of changing business costs, selected by 49.3% of respondents. There was a quarterly decline of 2.9 percentage points in the share of businesses selecting this category as one of the main causes of changing costs. The share of businesses selecting utilities as their main source of changing costs has declined in each successive quarter this year. Nevertheless, with 47.0% of businesses selecting this category, it remains the second most cited factor. Only the taxation and regulation recorded increases in the share of businesses selecting them as amongst the main sources of changing costs this quarter.

**Figure nine:** Small businesses reporting an increase in overall cost of operation over past three months, compared with the same period a year ago; net percentage balance  
 Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



**Figure 10:** Main causes for changing business costs (Respondents could select multiple answers)  
Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



# EMPLOYMENT

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# SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYEE NUMBERS EXTEND CONTRACTION TO TENTH SUCCESSIVE QUARTER

A net balance of -2.6% of small businesses reported growth in employee numbers in Q3. The negative reading means that the number of businesses expanding their workforce was outweighed by the number of businesses reporting a contraction. This marks the tenth consecutive quarter of net contraction on this metric. The pace of contraction accelerated in Q3 2024, after having decelerated through the first half of 2024.

The latest ONS data revealed a decline in the unemployment rate to 4.0% in the three months to August, while the employment rate edged higher to 75.0%. These changes suggest that small businesses face a tougher environment than the wider economy, which is retaining labour. However, there remain methodological concerns behind the Labour Force Survey, the

key data source behind these metrics. Other indicators, including falling vacancies and payrolled employees, point to worsening labour market conditions and align more closely with the sentiment expressed by small businesses in our survey.

Looking ahead, small businesses expect to decrease their headcount further. A net balance of -1.5% of businesses expect to expand their number of employees over the next three months. This represents a reversal in sentiment from previous quarters this year, when net balance readings were positive, signifying that businesses expected to increase headcount. The shift into negative territory suggests expectations may be adjusting to recent outturns in this metric.

**Figure 11:** Net percentage balance change in number of people employed – proportion reporting increase, less proportion reporting decrease

Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



# GROWTH ASPIRATIONS AND CHALLENGES

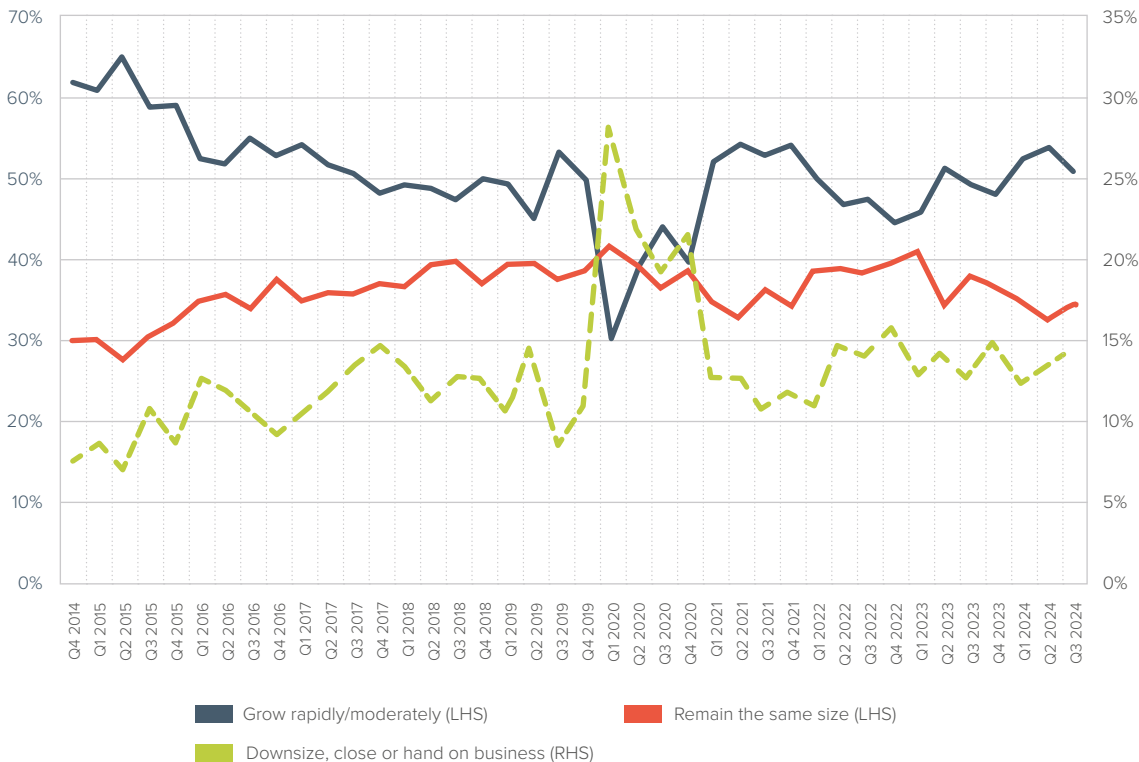
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# OPTIMISM ABOUT GROWTH PROSPECTS OVER THE COMING YEAR FALLS IN Q3

In Q3 2024, the proportion of small businesses aspiring to grow over the coming year decreased to 51.2%, marking the first decline in the share of businesses looking to expand since Q4 2023. There has also been a moderate increase in the proportion of small businesses seeking to contract their operations, reaching 14.6%, 1.3 percentage points higher than in the previous quarter.

Construction recorded the lowest level of overall optimism, with 29.8% of firms seeking to expand over the next 12 months. As an interest rate-sensitive sector, the outlook for construction is heavily linked to Bank of England rate decisions. All else equal, optimism in this sector may increase in line with anticipated interest rate cuts across the rest of 2024 and into 2025. In contrast, businesses in professional, scientific and technical activities are the most optimistic, with 56.5% of these small businesses aspiring to expand over the next 12 months.

**Figure 12:** Growth aspirations for next twelve months  
Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



# TAX AND REGULATION CONCERNS GREW ACROSS Q3

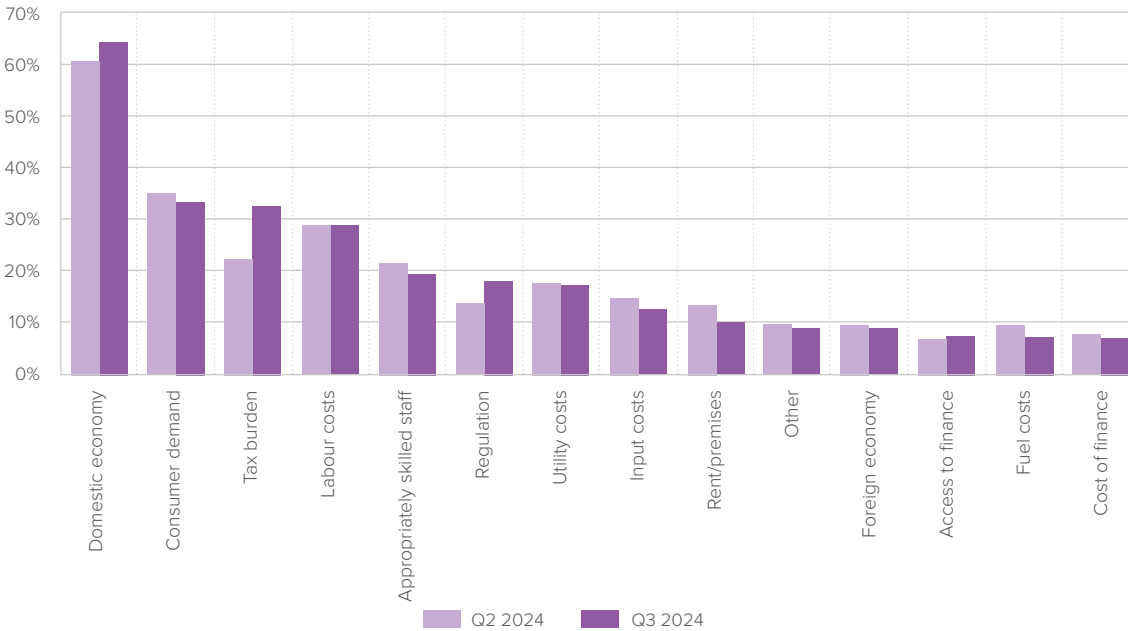
Concerns regarding the future of the domestic economy are returning, with the economy showing weaker momentum since the end of H1 2024. Businesses expecting growth over the next year named the domestic economy as a potential barrier to growth most frequently, being the case for 63.8% of respondents. This share was up by 3.3 percentage points on the quarter. Whilst the share of small businesses selecting consumer demand declined again this quarter, it remains the second most commonly selected barrier to growth, being the case for 33.0% of respondents.

In addition to these concerns, many small businesses are worried about changes to the tax burden and regulatory environment. The Chancellor, as widely expected at the time of this survey, made changes to increase taxes at

the Budget, while Labour recently published its new Employment Rights Bill, which is expected to increase the costs of maintaining staff for employers. Reflecting these expectations, the share of businesses selecting tax burdens and regulatory changes as barriers to growth increased by 10.1 and 4.1 percentage points on the quarter, respectively.

The selection of labour costs as a barrier to growth held steady, with 28.4% of businesses citing this. This comes despite moderation in nominal wage growth, which slowed to 3.8% in the three months to August. Meanwhile, in line with continued producer input price deflation, the share of businesses selecting input costs as a potential barrier to growth fell by 2.2 percentage points this quarter.

**Figure 13:** Potential barriers to achieving growth aspirations – multiple answers possible  
 Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



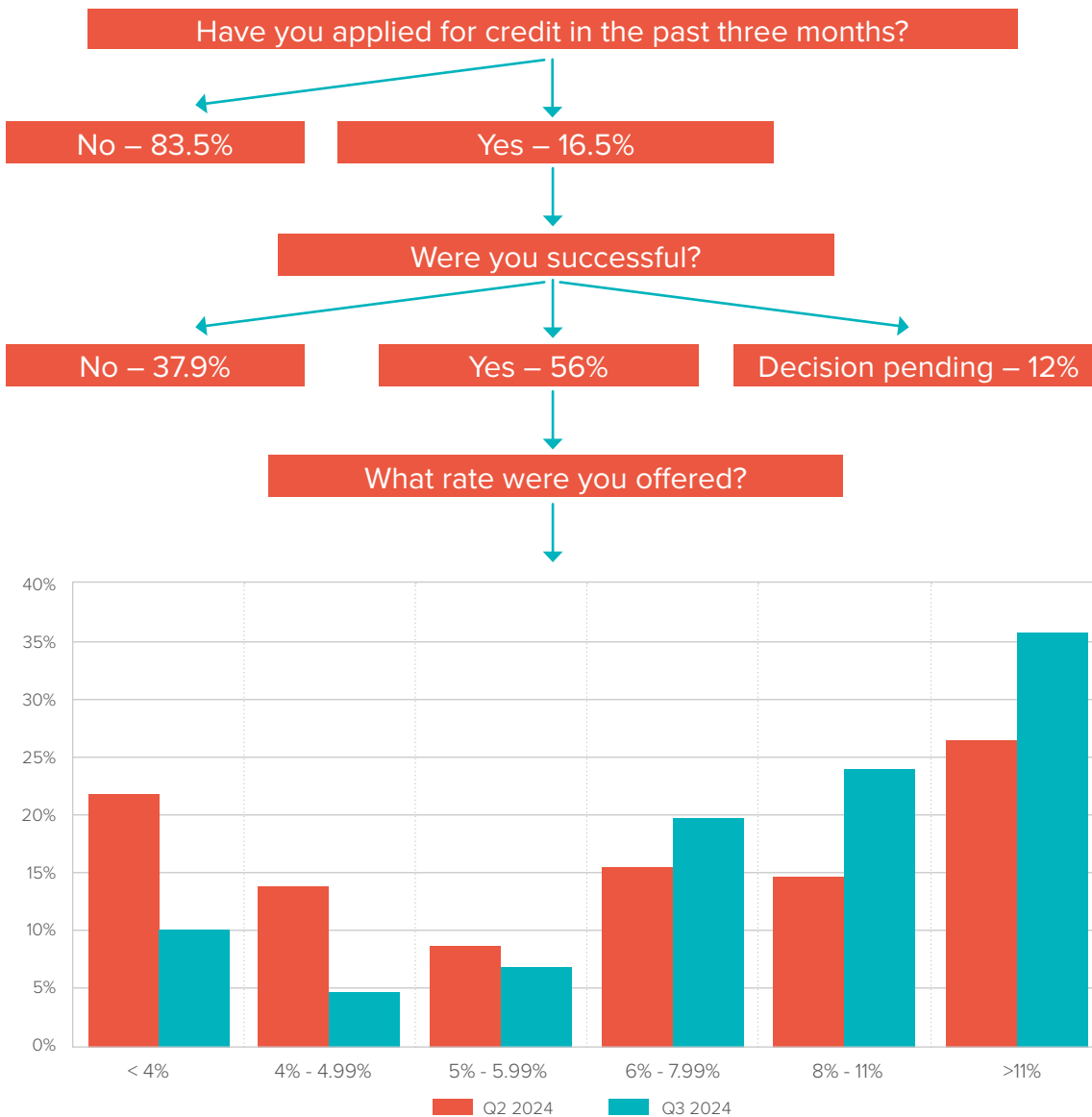


# CREDIT

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# SHARE OF SMALL BUSINESSES APPLYING FOR CREDIT RISES FOR SECOND CONSECUTIVE QUARTER

**Figure 14:** Credit applications and interest rates offered  
 Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey  
 Respondents were able to give multiple answers to this question.



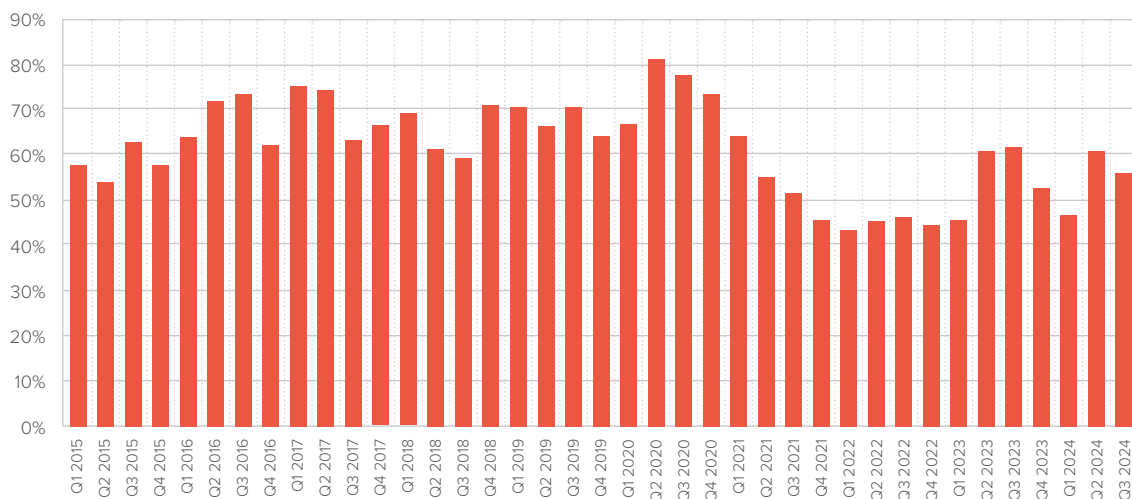
In Q3 2024, 16.5% of small businesses reported applying for credit, up from 15.7% in Q2. Amongst those making a credit application, the share of successful applications fell 4.5 percentage points.

The share of applicants awaiting final decisions increased by 2.8 percentage points on the quarter to reach 12.0%. The share of unsuccessful applicants also increased on the quarter, reaching 31.9%.

The average interest rate offered to successful credit applicants rose substantially to 8.3%, from 6.9% in Q2 2024. The proportion of credit applications receiving rates in the range of 8% to 11% range increased sharply to 23.6% in Q3 from 14.7% in Q2. The percentage of successful credit

applications offered rates lower than 4% fell from 21.6% in Q2 to 10.2% in Q3. In general, the changes in this quarter suggest that applicants are less able to access credit and those that do find themselves on less favourable terms.

**Figure 15:** Proportion of small businesses successful in their credit applications in the past three months  
 Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



# SMALL BUSINESSES' PERCEPTIONS OF CREDIT AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY IMPROVE THIS QUARTER, DESPITE TIGHTER LENDING STANDARDS

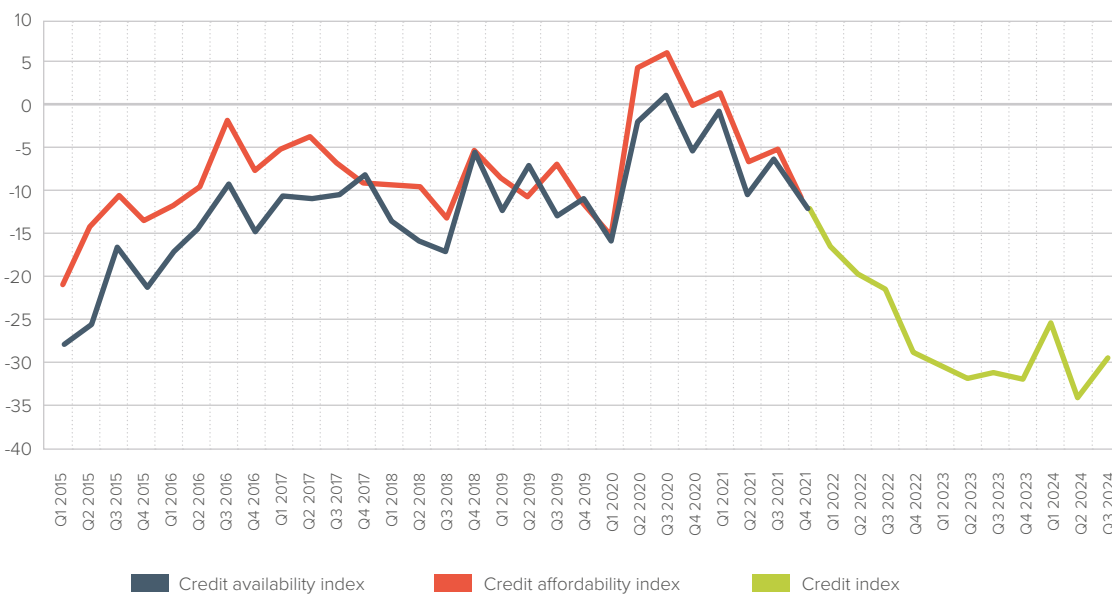
Perceptions of credit affordability and availability rebounded in Q3 despite the decline in approval rates and increase in the average interest rate offered. The credit index rose by 4.5 points on the quarter, reaching -29.7.

The proportion of businesses expressing a positive attitude on credit availability and affordability recorded 13.8% in Q3, a 2.2 percentage point increase on Q2. The share of respondents rating affordability and availability of credit rating as 'quite good' increased to 12.4%, whilst those rating it as 'very good' fell to 1.4%.

The proportion of small firms with a negative attitude towards credit availability and affordability fell to 49.7%, from the 53.2% recorded in Q2. The negative attitude includes those who consider affordability and availability as either quite poor or very poor. The share of respondents citing the former metric increased by 0.3 percentage points on the quarter, but the latter fell by 3.8 percentage points.

**Figure 16:** Indices of credit perceptions over time, a weighted net balance of those with negative responses subtracted from those with positive responses<sup>3</sup>

Source: FSB - Verve 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey



<sup>3</sup> Due to methodological changes to the survey, the Credit Availability and Credit Affordability Indices have been superseded by a composite Credit Index, taking into account both of these factors.

# INVESTMENT

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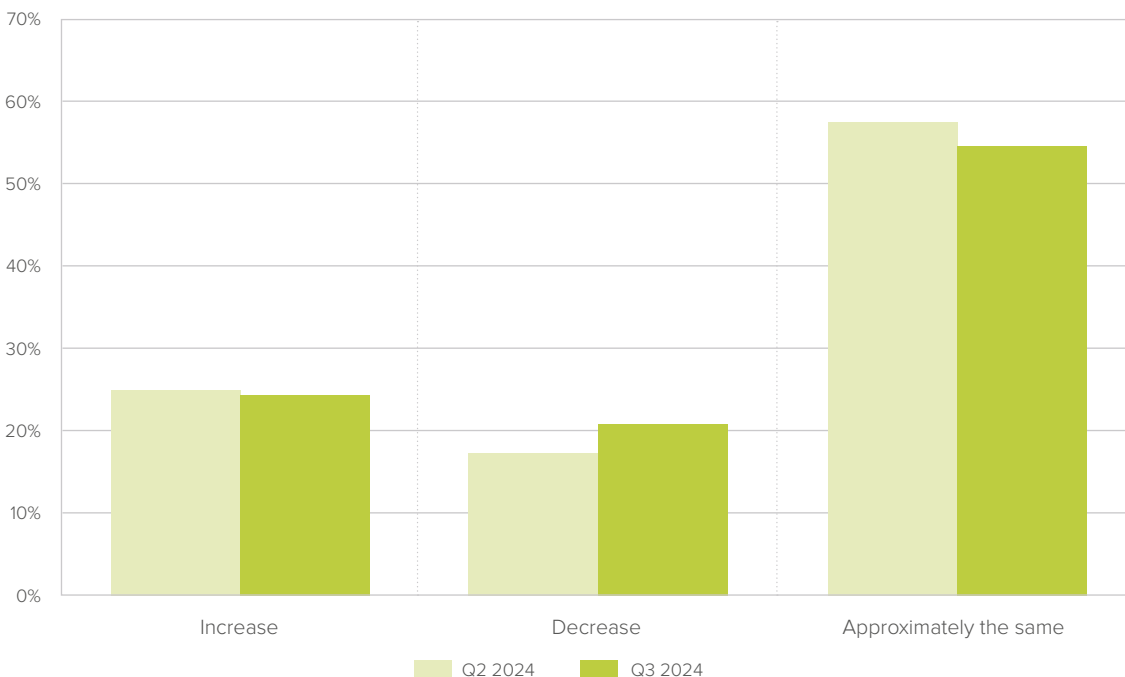
# INVESTMENT INTENTIONS REMAIN POSITIVE ON NET, BUT LARGER SHARE OF BUSINESSES NOW EXPECT TO CUT BACK

The share of small businesses expecting to increase their capital investment over the coming quarter fell marginally to 24.6% in Q3 from 24.9% in Q2. Meanwhile, the number of businesses expecting to decrease their capital investment over the coming quarter increased by 3.4 percentage points to 20.7% in Q3. As a result, the net balance of small businesses expecting to increase their investment fell to 4.0%. In Q1 and Q2 the equivalent net balances were 9.9% and 7.6%, respectively. These declines indicate worsening investment intentions, albeit still positive on net.

The dampening of investment expectations is in line with the loss of momentum the UK economy has experienced over the last quarter. The economy has shown little growth recently, while small firms are seeing worse access to finance and higher rates, which will further weigh on investment.

In line with the sector’s general optimism, businesses in professional, scientific and technical activities recorded the highest net balance of firms planning to increase investment over the next quarter, at 13.9%. On the other hand, interest rates remain a drag on the construction and manufacturing sectors, with 23.0% and 27.0% of small businesses in each sector respectively expecting to cut investment this quarter. Accommodation and food services recorded pessimistic investment expectations, with a net balance of 33.2% of respondents expecting to decrease investment. A combination of falling real wage growth, deteriorating consumer confidence, and general sector weakness are weighing on the sector.

**Figure 17:** % of small businesses expecting to increase and decrease capital investment over next quarter, compared with previous quarter  
 Source: FSB - Verve ‘Voice of Small Business’ Panel Survey



# METHODOLOGY

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This report is based on the September/October 2024 research survey of FSB members carried out by Verve. 1,203 responses were received. The data are weighted by regional gross value added to match the profile of small businesses across the UK. The survey was undertaken between 30 September 2024 to 14 October 2024.

# SUMMARY DATA TABLE

	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024
Small Business Index	-45.8	-2.8	-14.2	-8.0	-15.0	5.5	-10.8	-24.4
Employment - previous three months	-6.1%	-0.8%	-2.4%	-0.2%	-4.5%	-3.9%	-1.4%	-2.6%
Employment - coming three months	3.2%	8.3%	6.1%	2.6%	-1.2%	9.1%	2.4%	-1.5%
Exports - previous three months	-3.3%	-17.7%	-2.9%	-2.6%	-10.8%	-8.2%	-0.4%	-10.6%
Exports - coming three months	7.9%	-6.4%	-0.6%	7.3%	0.8%	-1.6%	6.7%	-6.6%
Credit availability and affordability - rated good or very good	14.7%	12.3%	11.8%	14.4%	14.4%	16.4%	11.6%	13.8%
Credit availability and affordability - rated poor or very poor	50.5%	50.9%	52.0%	53.1%	52.0%	45.9%	53.2%	49.7%

The Small Business Index weights strong responses (much improved or much deteriorated conditions) double and subtracts the weighted proportion of firms reporting deterioration in business prospects over the coming three months from the weighted proportion expecting an improvement.

The employment and revenue indicators are net percentage balances, with the proportion of firms reporting a decrease subtracted from the proportion reporting an increase.

Responses are also weighted according to regional gross value added.



# Q3

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