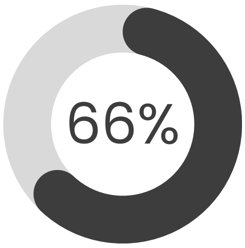
# Quarterly Canterbury Business Survey

August 2026 | In field: 20 August - 4 September

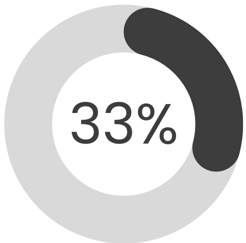
# Canterbury Snapshot

Business Canterbury
Our Chamber of Commerce

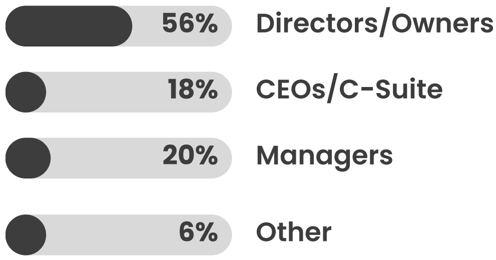
## Respondents




SMEs




Large Businesses




## Top issues

1. Consumer confidence and demand
2. Inflation and interest rates
3. Compliance costs
4. Productivity and growth
5. International trade and geopolitical risks

## Top Industry Response

1. Manufacturing
2. Professional services
3. Construction and civil
4. Primary industries and agriculture
5. Accommodation, retail and hospitality

↑ 20%

**72%**

Expect the Canterbury economy to be stronger in 12 months.

↑ 3%

**71%**

Expect to invest in property, plant, and equipment within the next 12 months.

↑ 2%

**68%**

Expect to hire new staff within the next 12 months.

↑ 12%

**72%**

Expect stronger financial performance over the next 12 months.

↑ 4%

**47%**

Think the Government is managing the economy better than 12 months ago

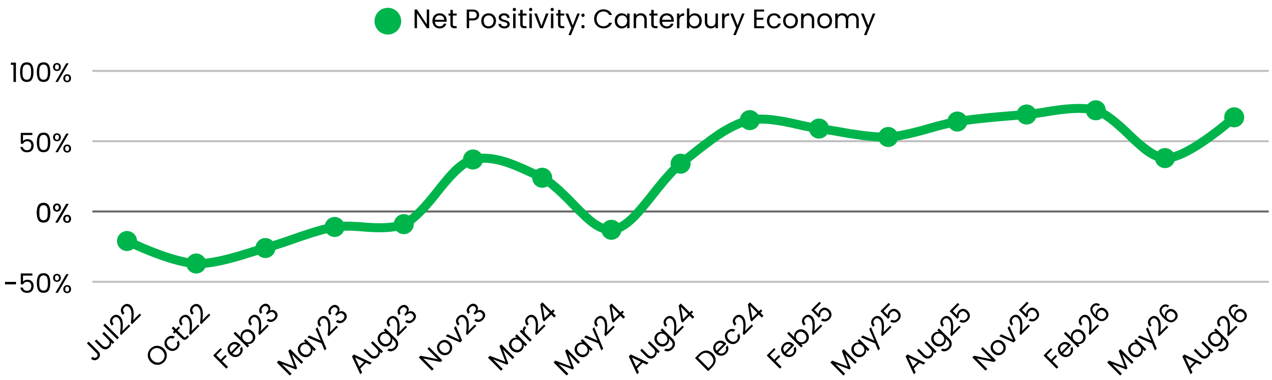
↓ 3%

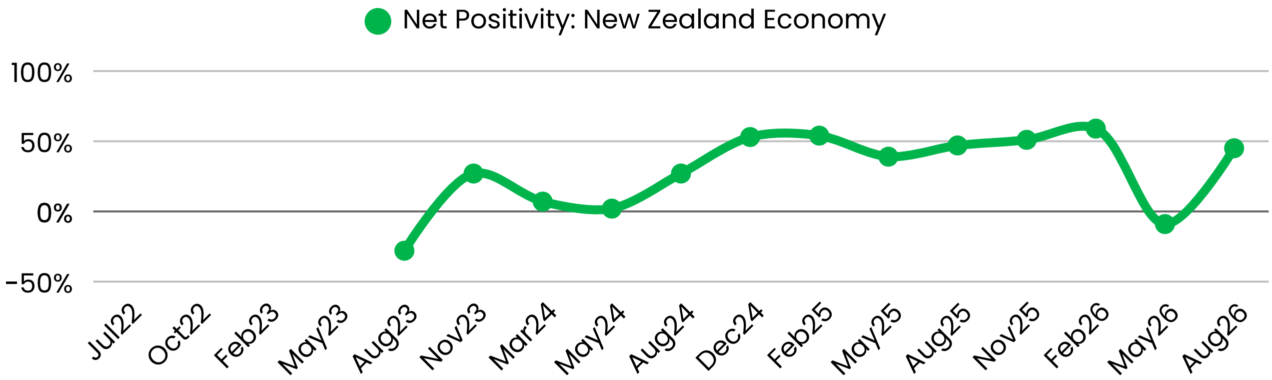
**77%**

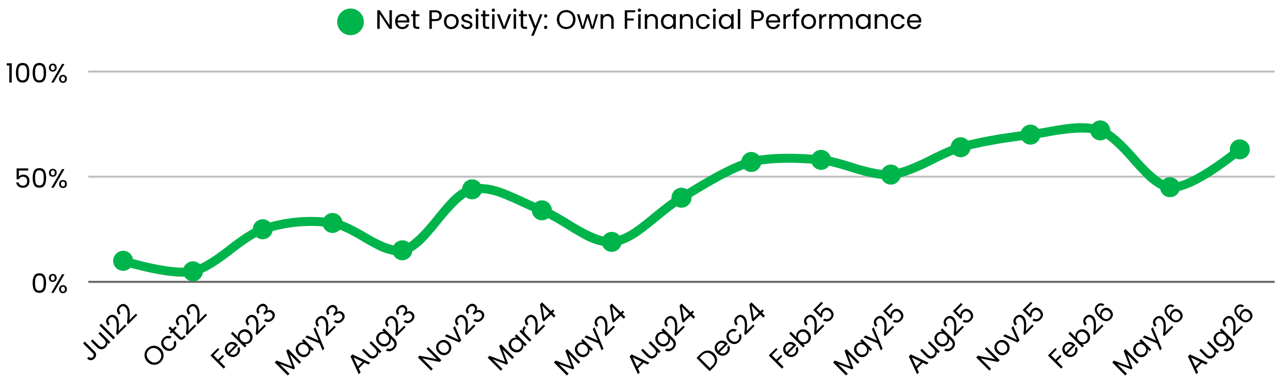
Are confident in their ability to deal with disruption.

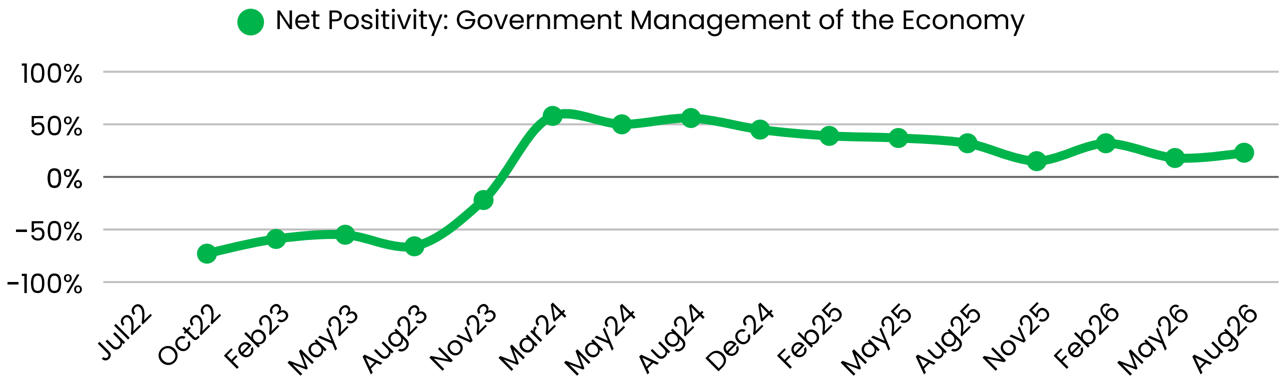
## Business confidence: net positivity scores

To calculate a net positivity score, we subtract the percentage of negative responses from the percentage of positive responses. A higher net positivity score indicates a more positive overall sentiment, while a lower score suggests a more negative sentiment.



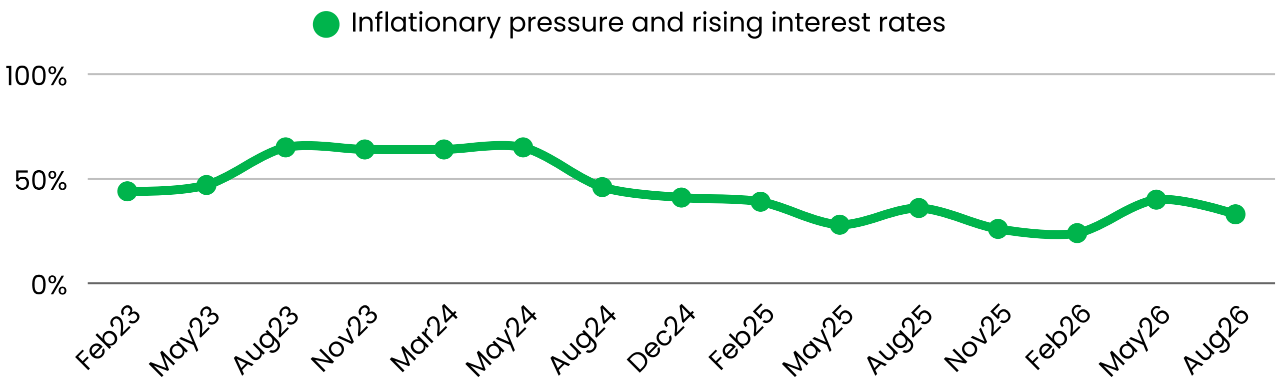



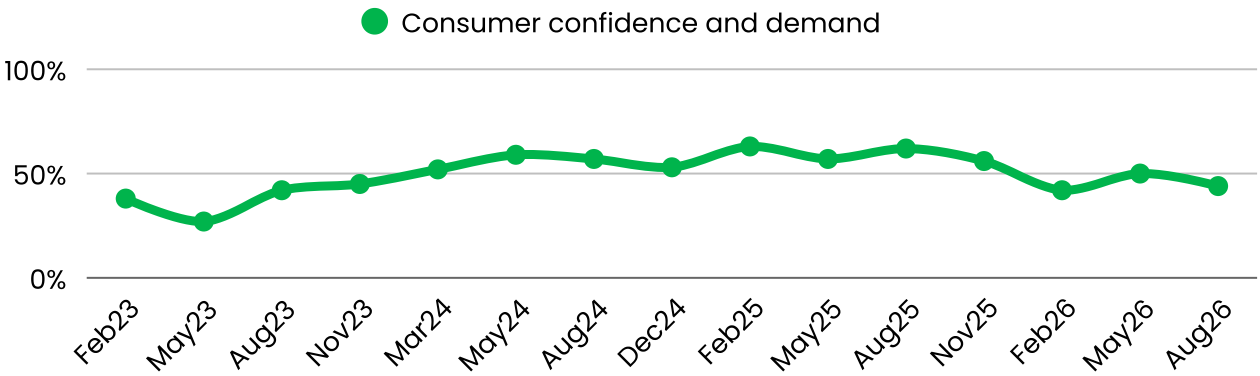



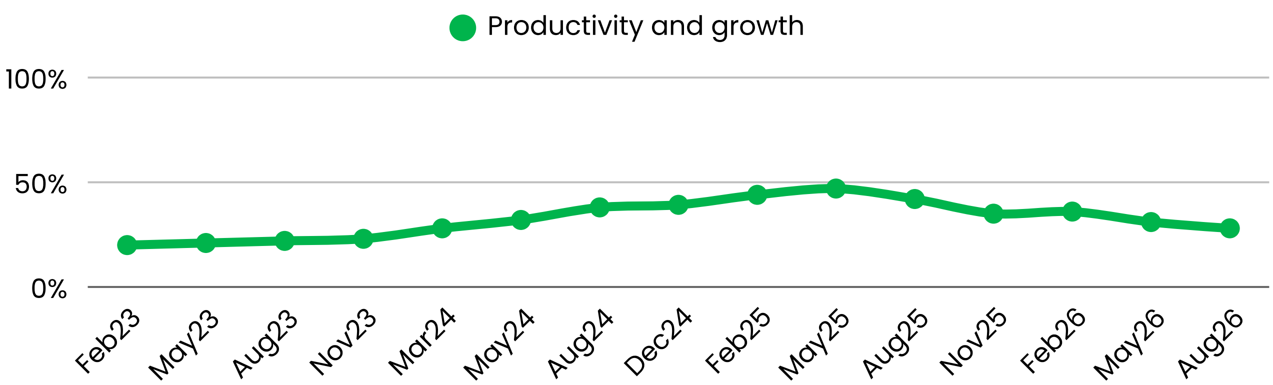



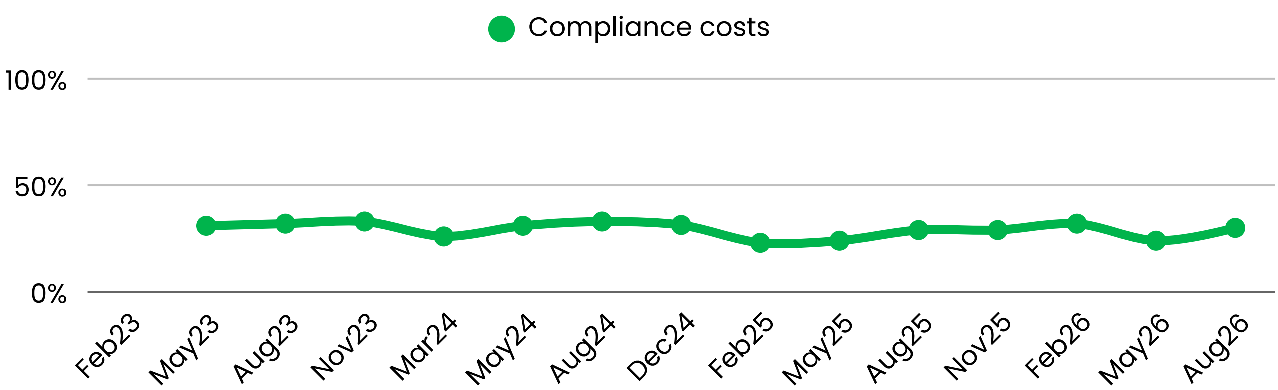
## Top issues

In every survey, we ask respondents to select the three biggest concerns for them. The graph below shows the proportion of respondents who listed one of the following issues among their top three concerns.



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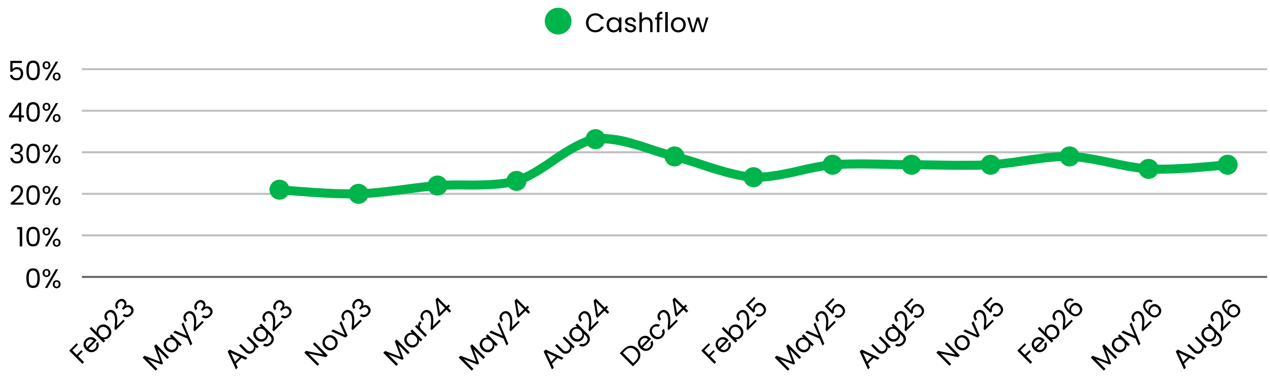


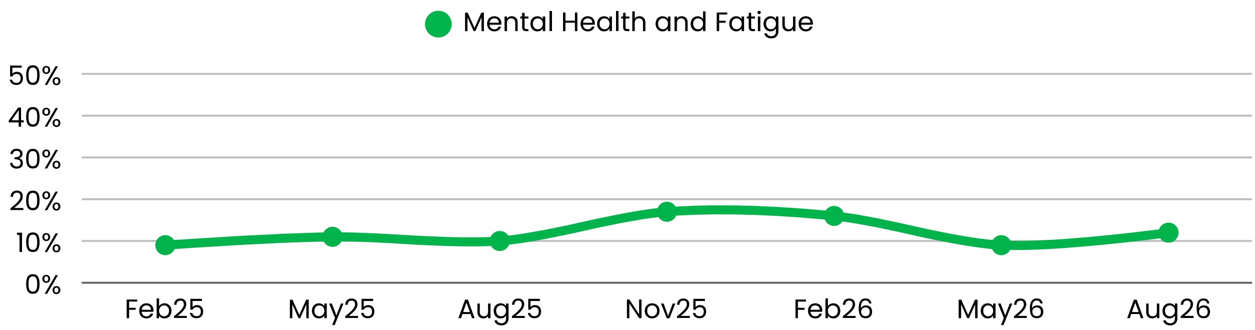


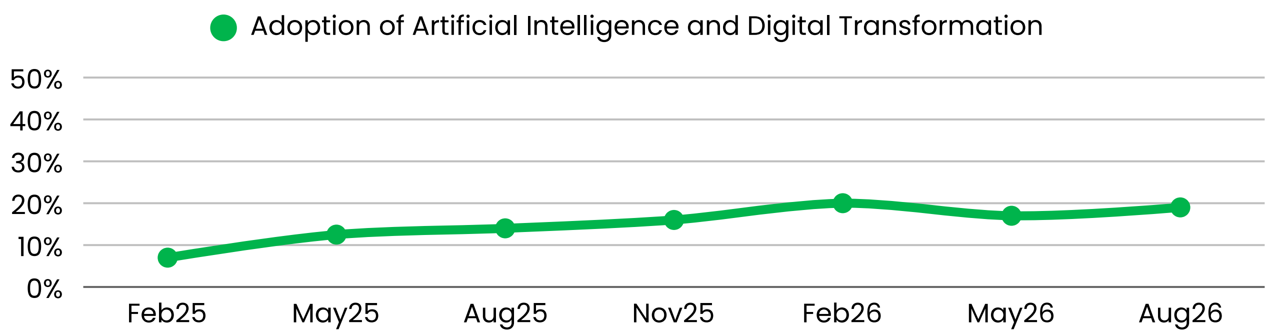

# What respondents are saying

## What do you think is going well for the local economy?

*(mentions → % of all responses)*

- • Agriculture, dairy & primary industries → 25.0%
- • Infrastructure, development & major projects (stadium, housing, city investment) → 18.8%
- • Business confidence, optimism & momentum → 14.5%
- • Tourism, hospitality & visitor activity → 13.1%
- • Population growth, migration & talent attraction → 11.9%

## What is going well for your business right now?

*(mentions → % of all responses)*

**Sales, demand, enquiries & pipeline → 26.5%**

- "High demand in the last quarter."
- "New large contracts, substantial sales pipeline."
- "Orders coming in."

Strong demand was the most commonly cited positive, with businesses reporting improving sales, healthy enquiry levels, strong pipelines and growing customer activity.

**People, staff retention & workforce quality → 15.3%**

- "Being able to retain some good talent."
- "Good people working with enthusiasm."
- "Stable workforce."

A notable feature of this quarter's results is the frequency with which businesses highlighted their people. Staff retention, workforce stability and strong teams were repeatedly identified as key strengths.

**Growth, expansion & new opportunities → 14.7%**

- "Opened a new store in Auckland."
- "Growth in different revenue streams."
- "We are growing and getting our name out there."

Businesses reported pursuing growth through new customers, new markets, acquisitions, geographic expansion and diversification.

**Projects, construction & forward workload → 12.4%**

- "Gearing up for major project delivery."
- "Project works."
- "Workload has picked up."

Healthy project pipelines, particularly across construction, infrastructure, manufacturing and engineering-related sectors, continue to provide confidence about future activity.

**Overall theme**

Compared with last quarter, the strongest shift is the increase in references to confidence, momentum and positivity. While agriculture and infrastructure investment remain the underlying drivers of Canterbury's economy, respondents appear increasingly optimistic about the region's direction. This is notable given concerns earlier in the quarter around the potential economic impacts of the Middle East conflict and associated uncertainty around fuel prices and global markets. Instead, businesses are reporting solid demand, healthy pipelines and a growing sense that Canterbury continues to outperform many other regions.