

# Business Outlook and Trends Survey

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK of CLEVELAND



Thank you for participating in the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland's Business Outlook and Trends Survey (BOTS). This voluntary survey is sponsored solely by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. **The questions are best answered by the business owner or a key financial decisionmaker in the business.** The survey takes **five minutes** to complete. Survey responses will be aggregated for research and analysis. The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland will not disclose individual or identifiable survey responses. The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland may make anonymized data available publicly. Aggregate anonymized data collected through the BOTS may also be used to inform Federal Reserve policymakers about current economic conditions. Individual responses are kept confidential except for select survey comments that may be anonymously published. By taking this survey, you agree to this use of your responses. If you have any questions regarding this survey or would like more information about confidentiality, please contact the Cleveland Fed's Regional Analysis Group by email (clev.regional.analysis@clev.frb.org).

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## Firm Demographics

Which of the following most closely matches your job title?

- Entry Level
- Analyst / Associate
- Manager / Senior Manager
- Director / Vice President / Senior Vice President
- C-suite executive (CIO, CTO, COO, CMO, etc.)
- President or CEO
- Owner

In which state are you located?

- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Kentucky
- West Virginia
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify the county in which you are located.

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**Please answer the following questions as they relate to your firm's or organization's locations in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, or West Virginia.**

Is your business ownership considered to be one or more of the following? Select all that apply.

- Woman-owned
- Veteran-owned
- LGBTQ-owned
- Minority-owned
- Immigrant-owned
- None of the above

In what industry does your business operate?

- Retail (general merchandise, grocery, apparel, auto dealers, etc.)
- Leisure and Hospitality (food service, travel and tourism, lodging, etc.)
- Financial Services (banking, insurance services, financial advisors, etc.)
- Civic or Nonprofit (foundations, NGOs, professional associations, etc.)
- Education (colleges, universities, etc.)
- Healthcare (primary care clinics, hospital systems, etc.)
- Energy (utility companies, oil and gas companies, etc.)
- Manufacturing (chemical firms, food manufacturing, metal companies, etc.)
- Construction and Real Estate (general contractors, real estate developers, real estate brokers etc.)
- Professional Business Services (accounting, legal, maintenance, etc.)
- Staffing (temporary staffing, direct hire, etc.)
- Transportation (freight, logistics, etc.)
- Wholesale (specialized wholesalers, export/import wholesalers, etc.)
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Roughly how many individuals does your business employ on a full-time basis?

- 1 to 4 employees
- 5 to 19 employees
- 20 to 99 employees
- 100 to 499 employees
- 500 to 999 employees
- 1,000 to 9,999 employees
- 10,000 or more employees

## Business Conditions

Please mark the circles that best describe your business's conditions in the prior six months.

|   | <b><u>In the prior six months</u></b> |                       |                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|   | Increased                             | No Change             | Decreased             |
| Customer demand                                       | <input type="radio"/>                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Staffing levels                                       | <input type="radio"/>                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Wages and salaries                                    | <input type="radio"/>                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Input costs (excluding employee compensation)         | <input type="radio"/>                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Prices for your products or services                  | <input type="radio"/>                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Capital investments (equipment, new facilities, etc.) | <input type="radio"/>                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please mark the circles that best describe your outlook for your business's conditions in the next six months.

|   | <b>In the <u>next six months</u></b> |                       |                       |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|   | Increase                             | No Change             | Decrease              |
| Customer demand                                       | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Staffing levels                                       | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Wages and salaries                                    | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Input costs (excluding employee compensation)         | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Prices for your products or services                  | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Capital investments (equipment, new facilities, etc.) | <input type="radio"/>                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please comment on any of the above changes in your business's conditions.

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Which of the following are the biggest constraints to growth that your organization faces?  
(Select all that apply)

- Local cost of doing business (high business taxes, real estate costs, energy costs, etc.)
- Local regulatory environment (burdensome permitting policies or long approval times, etc.)
- Labor quality/availability
- Access to capital
- Supply chain issues
- Regional ecosystem (broad regional challenges, such as a lack of public-private collaboration)
- Lack of housing supply
- Federal regulatory environment (trade, immigration, tax policy, etc.)

Please comment on any constraints to growth that your organization faces.

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Where do you get the information that you use to inform business decisions? (Select all that apply)

- Business journals (Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Bloomberg, etc.)
  - Industry association publications (National Association of Manufacturers, National Association of Realtors, etc.)
  - Business blogs (NerdWallet, etc.)
  - Federal government publications (Census Annual Business Survey results, etc.)
  - Chamber of commerce publications (chamber newsletters, etc.)
  - Other (please specify)
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