

Executive Perspectives

The Northern Ireland Economy ...avoiding the crunch!

**Keynote Panel Discussion, audience Q&A and live interactive electronic survey
in the Great Hall, Queen's University Belfast.**

The Chief Executives' Club at Queen's (CEC) is a prestigious business forum supporting networking, innovation and knowledge transfer between higher education and industry. It provides outstanding opportunities to meet with keynote speakers of international regard and facilitates access to the global networks and research strengths of Queen's University.

In a CEC event in October 2008, a panel of leading local business figures, chaired by the BBC's Jim Fitzpatrick, explored the economic challenges and opportunities facing Northern Ireland. Audience participation was central to the evening and hand-held electronic voting devices canvassed audience opinion on key issues. Around 130 members of the CEC and the wider business community took part in the survey.

The findings of this electronic survey, outlined in this document, also launched a new partnership initiative between the Chief Executives' Club at Queen's and Clarendon Executive, Northern Ireland's leading executive search and interim management consultancy, to encourage business debate and to share widely the opinions, views and the executive perspectives of Northern Ireland's business leaders.

The panel:

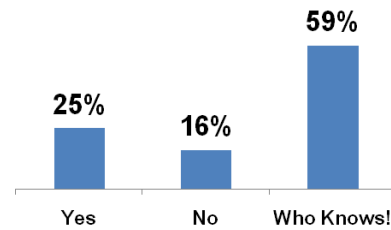
- Chairman: **Jim Fitzpatrick**, BBC
- **Sean Dorgan**, Chairman, Ulster Bank Group
- **David Dobbin**, Group Chief Executive, United Dairy Farmers and Chairman, InterTrade Ireland
- **Joanne Stuart**, Director, Attrus, and Chairman, Institute of Directors, N.Ireland
- **Brian Ambrose**, Chief Executive, George Best Belfast City Airport and Chairman, CBI N.Ireland
- **Mark Nodder**, Group Managing Director, The Wright Group

THE SURVEY RESULTS

Question 1

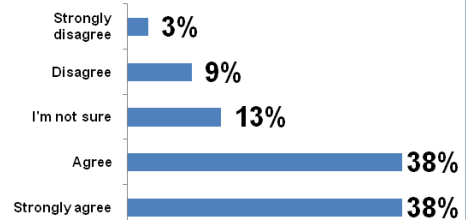
The £50 Billion rescue plan for UK banks and the recent support from the Irish Government

Will it work and get the economy back on track?



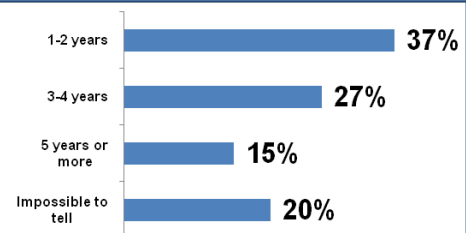
Question 2

My business is likely to suffer in the next 6-12 months



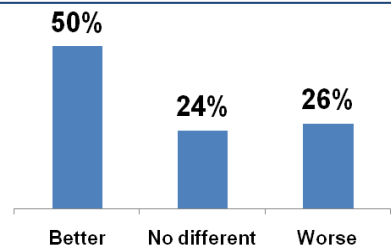
Question 3

The 'credit crunch factor' and availability of credit is likely to influence my business operations for the next:



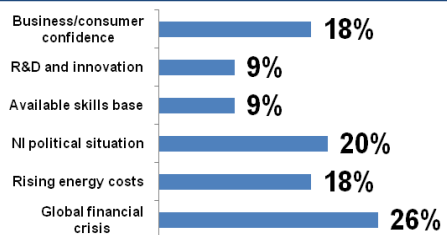
Question 4

How will Northern Ireland cope with a national/global recession compared to other UK and ROI regions?



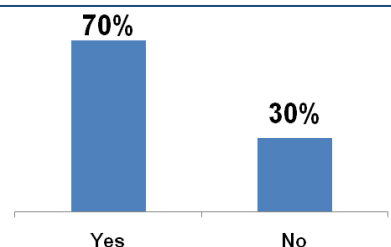
Question 5

What are the current most important issues facing NI business among the following:



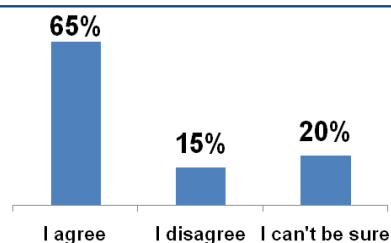
Question 6

The success of my company depends on more R&D and innovation



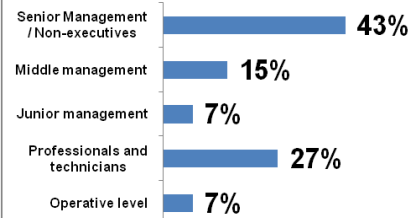
Question 7

Realistically, the current climate will negatively impact on R&D and innovation budgets



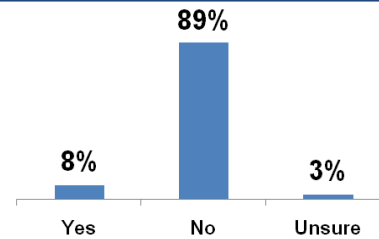
Question 8

The biggest challenge for business in Northern Ireland in terms of attracting and retaining world class skills and talent lies in the recruitment of ...



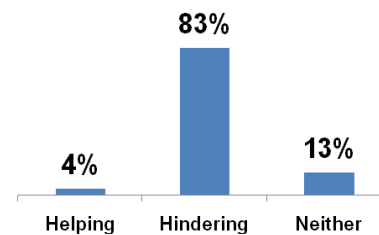
Question 9

Do you really believe that economic development is the primary focus of NI politicians?



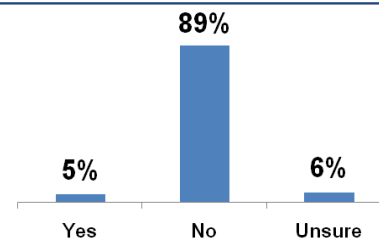
Question 10

Is the NI executive currently helping or hindering the growth of the Northern Ireland economy?



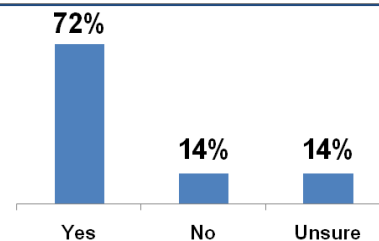
Question 11

Is enough being done to deliver an efficient public sector?



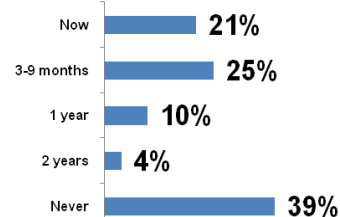
Question 12

Would the private sector deliver many public services more effectively?



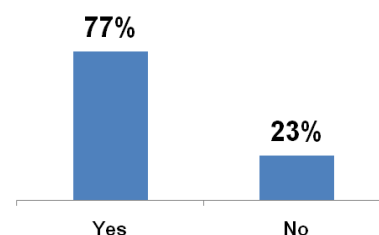
Question 13

If political stalemate continues – at what stage would direct rule be a better option for the economy?



Question 14

Should we leave the economy only in the hands of the politicians? Or should a business champion hold a ministerial style portfolio for business and enterprise – similar to the position held by Digby Jones in GB?



Question 15 The NI Executive: marks out of 10 for economic performance:

2.7
Average score