

EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVES

Northern Ireland Executive a 'hindrance' to the Northern Ireland Economy



A survey of 140 chief executives from across Northern Ireland published recently has revealed that 76 per cent feel that their business is likely to suffer in the next 6-12 months and 83 per cent feel that the Executive is a hindrance to the growth of the local economy.



The survey was conducted as part of a meeting of chief executives and business leaders at Queen's University, Belfast organised by a leading executive recruitment company Clarendon Executive and the Chief Executives' Club at Queen's. Other key findings of the survey include:

- 50 per cent indicated that Northern Ireland will cope better with a national/global recession than other regions in the UK and the Republic of Ireland;
- Chief Executives rated the performance of the Northern Ireland economy on economic issues as 2.7 out of 10;
- 89 per cent feel that not enough is being done to deliver an efficient public sector;
- 72 per cent believe the private sector could deliver many public sector services more effectively;
- Despite business leaders concerns about the political stalemate, 39 per cent indicated that direct rule should never be considered a better option to devolved government. Only 25 per cent indicated that direct rule would be a better option of the political stalemate continues for the next 3-9 months;

The interactive event 'Executive Perspectives' chaired by BBC presenter Jim Fitzpatrick heard from prominent business leaders such as Brain Ambrose, CBI Chair, Sean Dorgan, Chairman of the Ulster Bank Group and David Dobbin, Chairman of Inter Trade Ireland on some of the most pressing business and economic issues facing Northern Ireland.

Ciaran Sheehan, Managing Partner of Clarendon Executive, said: "Given the current economic climate, it's important that business leaders meet to discuss the best way forward for the local economy. This event provided business leaders with a platform to exchange ideas on how the government can best support local businesses and the economy.

The survey findings will provide a gauge of the business community's viewpoint on the impact of the credit crunch on the local economy and the current political stalemate with a view to exploring solutions to both."

The survey also found that a total of 77 per cent indicated that a business champion, similar to the position held by Digby Jones in Great Britain, should hold a ministerial portfolio for business and enterprise in the Northern Ireland Executive.

Stephen McGowan of Chief Executives' Club at Queen's University, said: "We are delighted to have such a high calibre of speakers participating at this keynote event at such a critical time for the local, national and global economies. The Chief Executives' Club at Queen's is committed to providing opportunities for senior business leaders to meet and discuss important issues and to share knowledge and insight to help tackle the key challenges facing the Northern Ireland economy."

Over the next 12 months Clarendon Executive in partnership Chief Executives' Club at Queen's University will conduct a series of surveys and discussion forums to share the opinions, views and the executive perspectives of Northern Ireland's business leaders.