

Data confirms drop in employer confidence due to coronavirus

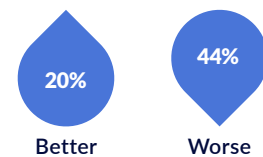
Confidence

Employer confidence in the UK economy plunged by 22 percentage points between February and March to net: -23, following months of improvement in sentiment. This was mainly driven by a sudden dive in sentiment amongst small (0-49 employee) enterprises, from net: 0 in February to net: -32 in March.

As a result of the unprecedented nature of the coronavirus crisis, confidence in making hiring and investment decisions fell by 21 percentage points compared with the previous month. The balance of confidence has now returned to negative territory (net: -5).



Do you think economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting...



In view of the economic conditions, do you/does your organisation expect confidence in hiring and investment decisions to get...



All involved in hiring (n=200).


Key points from March survey

1 Confidence in the economy plummets




Employer confidence in the economy fell to net: -23 while confidence in making hiring and investment decisions returned to negative territory (net:-5).

2 Short-term demand for permanent staff



Short-term demand for permanent staff remained strong at net: +17. By sector, demand was higher than average for Technology workers (net: +25) and drivers (net: +22).

3 Medium-term demand for permanent staff




Medium-term demand for permanent staff fell by 12 percentage points in March, with a drop of 19 points amongst small businesses. By sector, demand in Health & social care (net: +31) was notably higher than the average.

4 Short-term demand for temporary staff




At net: +13, short-term demand for temporary agency workers improved by 15 percentage points compared with the previous month.

5 Availability of permanent workers remains a concern



Almost half (46%) of UK employers continued to express concern over the sufficient availability of workers for permanent hire. Skills areas causing concern included Education, Engineering & technical and Health & social care.

6 More employers worried about availability of agency workers



More than half (52%) of UK employers expressed concern over a shortage of appropriate candidates for temporary roles. This was up from 35% in February.

Savanta ComRes interviewed 200 UK employers involved in hiring between 2 March and 20 March 2020. Data were weighted to be representative of UK adults in employment by region, broad industry sector and public/private split. Savanta ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.