

Divided but determined: SME confidence in the South nudges up, but remains fragile

The latest Business Barometer from Wilson Partners, the accounting, tax, advisory and corporate finance firm, shows confidence rising to 60 (from 57 in Jan 25)

MAIDENHEAD, BERKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, July 24, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Confidence among SMEs in the South has edged up slightly in the past six months—yet remains close to the lowest levels seen since the pandemic began.

The latest Business Barometer from [Wilson Partners](#), the accounting, tax, advisory and corporate finance firm, shows confidence rising to 60 (up from 57 in January 2025), though the results reveal a stark divide. While 43% of respondents rated their confidence at 70 or above, 30% gave it a score of 50 or less.

Allan Wilson, Managing Director at Wilson Partners, commented:

"It's the broadest spread we've seen since we began the survey in 2020, and it reflects what we're seeing on the ground. Many businesses are feeling the squeeze—with uncertainty around tariffs, rising costs driven by NI increases and inflation, and a generally cautious market. But we're also seeing some clients turning volatility into opportunity—investing in sales and marketing, making acquisitions, and doubling down on their niche. This year will continue to challenge many businesses, but those staying close to their numbers, their clients and willing to innovate will be best placed to weather the storm, doing nothing is definitely not an option."

Other highlights include:

- 36% of businesses plan to increase their workforce before the end of the year, while just 7% expect reductions
- Half anticipate turnover growth, but only 37% expect profit to rise—pointing to growing margin



Allan Wilson, Managing Director, Wilson Partners Ltd



We're seeing some clients turning volatility into opportunity—investing in sales and marketing, making acquisitions, and doubling down on their niche"

Allan Wilson

pressure

- 52% cite increasing sales as their biggest challenge, followed by hiring, cash flow, and rising costs
- 61% say their biggest opportunity lies in deepening client relationships
- AI sentiment is shifting: 29% believe it will enhance their work, and 41% will adapt as it evolves

About Wilson Partners

Founded in 2008 in Maidenhead, Berkshire, Wilson Partners exists to champion UK SMEs and their leaders. Since securing investment in 2021, the firm has completed nine acquisitions, expanded to nine locations, and grown revenue more than eightfold.

Today, Wilson Partners is one of the UK's fastest-growing accountancy firms—serving SMEs, private clients and investors with joined-up thinking and a commercial mindset.

Recent accolades include 'Best Accountant' at the EISA Awards, 'Outstanding' status from Best Companies, and a shortlisting for 'Large Firm of the Year' at the 2025 Accounting Excellence Awards.

Jeremy Cuthbert

Wilson Partners Limited

+44 7774 860998

jeremy.cuthbert@wilson-partners.co.uk

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/833563617>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.