



**Chamber Survey
THE ECONOMY IN 2006**

Survey conducted: January 10, 2006 to January 18, 2006

Number of Responses: 136

How do you think the economy will perform in 2006 compared with 2005?

- Better than 2005 29%
- About the same as 2005 61%
- Worse than 2005 10%

How do you think your business will perform in 2006 compared with 2005?

- Better than 2005 74%
- About the same as 2005 23%
- Worse than 2005 3%

What will happen with employment levels in your company in 2006 compared with 2005?

- Increase 41%
- About the same 53%
- Decrease 6%

Which of the following external factors will have the biggest impact on how your company will perform in 2006?

- Business taxes 5%
- Government red tape 8%
- Consumer confidence 47%
- Education (hiring qualified employees) 9%
- Canadian dollar exchange rate 18%
- Other (please specify) 12%

Which of the following operating costs will have the biggest impact on how your company will perform in 2006?

- Employment costs (payroll, benefits, etc.) 40%
- Energy costs 22%
- Transportation costs 10%
- Capital spending 13%
- Technology costs 4%
- Other (please specify) 10%

How will your spending capital and technology items in 2006 compare with that in 2005?

- More than 2005 34%
- About the same as 2005 50%
- Less than 2005 16%

What do you think will happen to your company's levels in 2006?

- Increase by more than the inflation rate 24%
- Increase by the inflation rate 40%
- Increase by less than the inflation rate 10%
- Stay the same as 2005 pay levels 25%
- Decrease from 2005 pay levels 1%

OTHER INTERESTING STATISTICS

- The Business Services/Consulting sector is particularly optimistic about the economy with 56% saying the economy in 2006 will perform better than 2005 (versus an all-sector average of 29%).
- Only 16% of large companies felt the economy in 2006 will perform better than in 2005 (versus an all-size average of 29%).
- Sixty-one percent of large companies felt that employment costs will be the operating cost with the biggest impact (versus an all-size average of 40%).
- Eighty-six percent of retailers felt consumer confidence will be the external factor with the biggest impact on their businesses (versus an all-sector average of 47%).