

Rotorua Business Pulse Survey

October 2025

Rotorua business confidence remains grounded in economic and social realities, reflecting a cautious but discernible desire for progress. The high priority on the city's reputational rebuild has evolved into an urgent call for the implementation of bold, visionary strategies and a focus on business resilience. Respondents are now highly focused on securing proactive, innovative leadership to foster a robust and opportunity-driven local economy.

Select Survey Period: October 2025

(1) ▾

Background

The Rotorua Business Pulse programme is a joint initiative between RotoruaNZ and Rotorua Business Chamber. The programme provides Rotorua business leaders (owners, CEOs, GMs) an opportunity to share their thoughts on the local economy and how their business is faring across key metrics. The survey is run on a half-yearly basis with the first survey conducted in April 2022.

This dashboard provides an overview of the topline metrics for all survey periods. [Click here>>>](#) to view the current and previous Rotorua Business Pulse Survey reports in pdf format.

[Click here>>>](#) to register your interest in participating in future Rotorua Business Pulse Surveys.



Explainer

Business confidence questions are based on the perception of situations deteriorating, remaining the same or improving. For these questions, the results are presented as a net score, subtracting the deterioration percentage from the improvement percentage. Other results are presented as a percentage of respondents. Change values are versus the previous survey period.

Key themes

[Gemini AI](#) assisted drafting these key themes

96 Rotorua business people participated in the October 2025 survey. Key themes for the October 2025 report are a result of the responses collected during the survey period from the 15th October to 5th November 2025:

- Despite a challenging view of the past 12 months, respondents maintain a belief in the local Rotorua economy, viewing the regional situation as substantially more resilient and positive than the national outlook. Most notably, the Rotorua business community remains deeply optimistic about the future, expressing a robust double-digit confidence for the upcoming 12 months across New Zealand, Rotorua and their own businesses.
- Respondents show robust confidence for the upcoming twelve months, driven by strong expectations for growth in both volume of business activity and product price. Despite a continuing challenge in the affordability of doing business, strong forecasts across profitability, staffing, and investments reflect a resilient and highly positive operational outlook.
- Rotorua businesses are showing increased internal confidence, with business strategy and organisational culture emerging as the top positive factors. Externally, optimism remains heavily anchored in the visitor sector. Confidence in the broader economy and local leadership also features prominently in the outlook for Rotorua.
- Many respondents report a tangible easing of pressure, with a large increase in respondents who state nothing keeps them awake at night. The primary focus remains squarely on the ability to generate profitability and business survival, however concerns regarding finding and retaining skilled staff continue to trend downwards and remain stable at low levels, suggesting these key staffing pressures have substantially eased.
- Rotorua businesses are successfully navigating several key external pressures, resulting in a significant reduction in geopolitical concern following global events. Furthermore, the pressure from finding skilled staff continues to ease, maintaining a positive trend for business growth. The primary challenge has now shifted to managing input costs, with inflation and energy price increases remaining the chief focus for the business community.
- Businesses are heavily invested in digital transformation, with AI technologies used by over two-thirds of respondents, making it the highest-ranked statement. Respondents are actively exploring renewable energy solutions like solar PV and unique local resources like geothermal energy, but adoption is often hindered by high upfront costs and the need for better investment incentives.
- The new Council's mandate, as voiced by the business community is clear: "Fix the City Centre to Fix the Economy". Business leaders see the highest return on investment in a rejuvenated city centre, through efforts like filling empty shops, improving streetscapes, and providing incentives to attract quality retail and hospitality businesses
- The overall sentiment regarding the RMA reforms is broadly supportive, driven by the necessity to cut red tape and complex processes. Similarly, respondents are generally positive about the earthquake-prone building system refocus, welcoming the relief from high costs and complex compliance.
- Early-outbound/late-inbound flights, better connection times and improved reliability to each existing direct destination are the greatest opportunities for increasing business travel. More than half of respondents indicated Queenstown be considered for direct flights with several respondents indicating it would also be appealing for leisure travel
- While overall sentiment remains cautious, the dominant theme of final, unprompted comments is a strong call for improved business environment and strategy. Respondents emphasised the need for courageous, visionary leadership and strategic planning from both the business community and local government to foster an innovative and opportunity-driven economy.



Congratulations to our 2025 Winners

The [Tompkins Wake](#) Rotorua Business Awards are delivered annually by the Rotorua Business Chamber. These high-profile business awards celebrate innovation and creativity in the business sector and are a highlight of Rotorua's business calendar.

[Rotorua Canopy Tours](#) took out the top accolade and is the only business to have won the Supreme Award more than once in the Awards' 34-year history, having previously also won it in 2016. The world-renowned eco-tourism business won both the 'Manaakitanga Tourism and Hospitality', and 'Kaitiakitanga Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change' categories on its way to scooping up the Supreme Award.

Visit rotoruchamber.co.nz to view all the 2025 winners.



Despite a challenging view of the past 12 months, respondents maintain a belief in the local Rotorua economy, viewing the regional situation as substantially more resilient and positive than the national outlook. Most notably, the Rotorua business community remains deeply optimistic about the future, expressing a robust double-digit confidence for the upcoming 12 months across New Zealand, Rotorua and their own businesses.

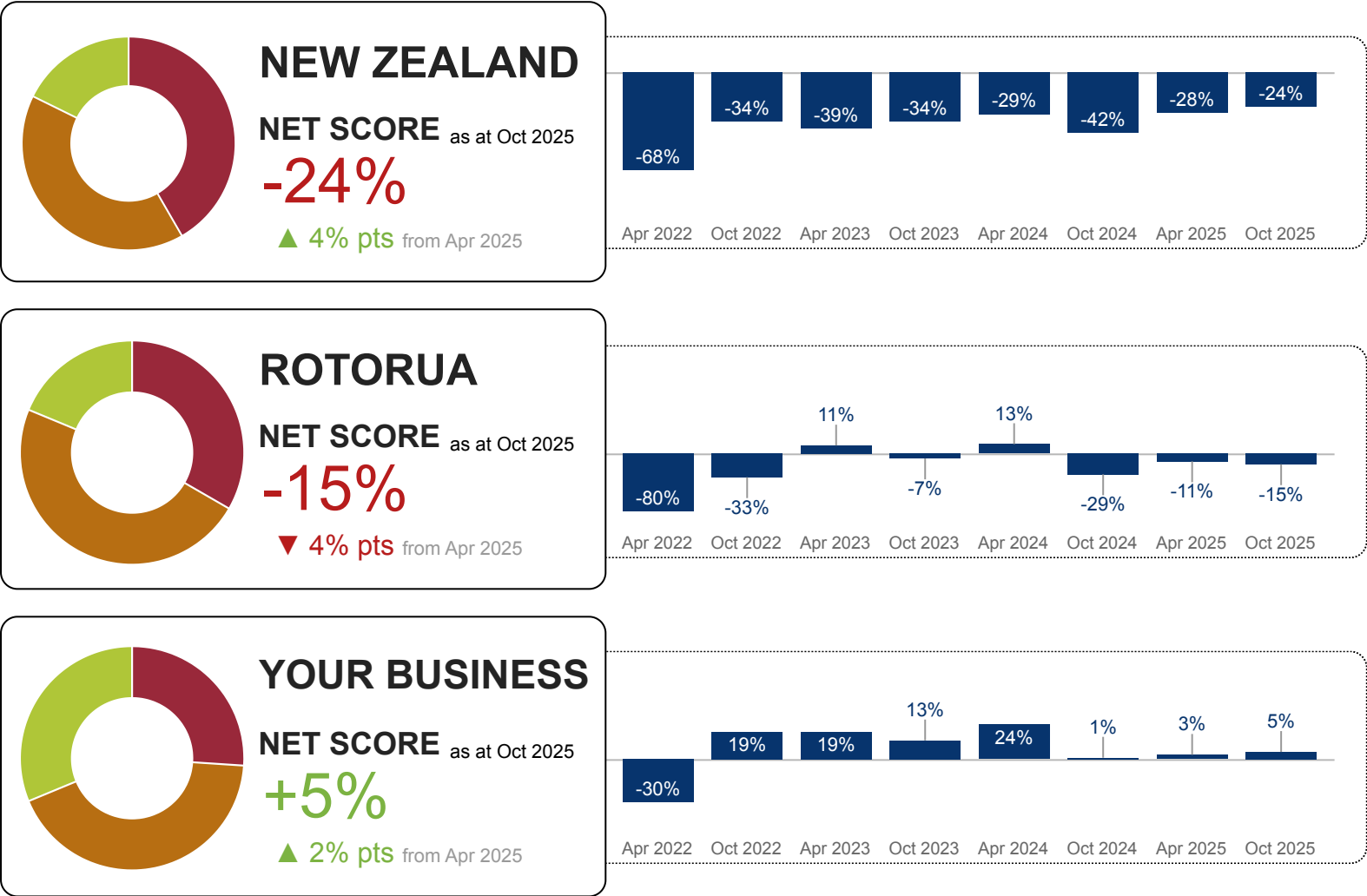
[Gemini AI](#) assisted drafting this narration

Select Survey Period: October 2025 (1) ▾

Select Industry: All Industries (1) ▾

Compared to 12 months ago, how do you think the economic situation has changed for...?

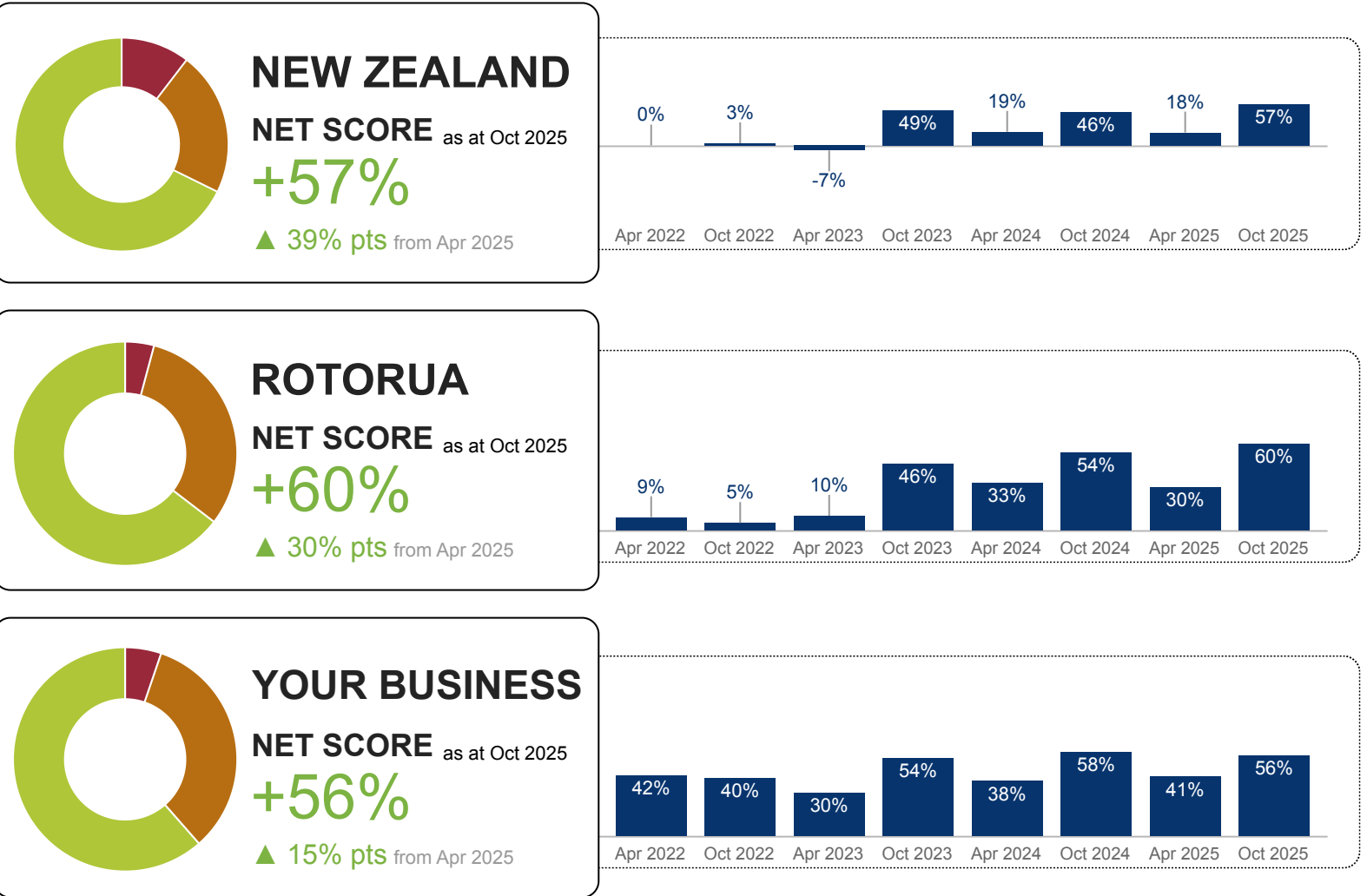
Improved Remained the same Deteriorated



In 12 months' time, how do you think the economic situation will have changed for...?

Improved Remained the same Deteriorated

With the release of the October 2025 results a seasonal pattern has emerged of increased optimism in the October survey periods, which might be at least partly attributable to forward bookings associated with Christmas and the summer tourism season



(96 respondents answered questions on this page in the October 2025 survey)



Respondents show robust confidence for the upcoming twelve months, driven by strong expectations for growth in both volume of business activity and product price. Despite a continuing challenge in the affordability of doing business, strong forecasts across profitability, staffing, and investments reflect a resilient and highly positive operational outlook.

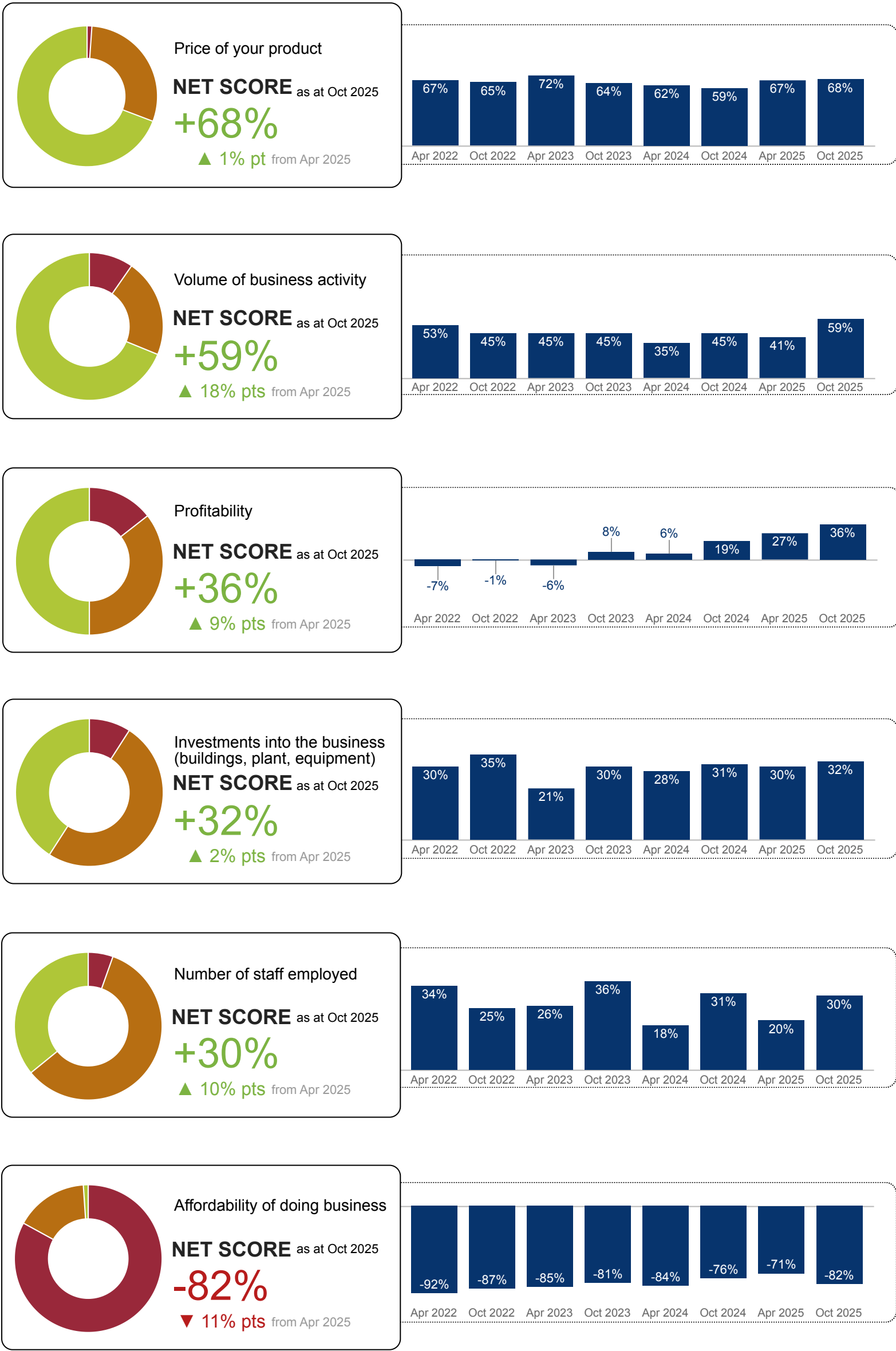
Select Survey Period: October 2025 (1) ▾

Select Industry: All Industries (1) ▾

[Gemini AI](#) assisted drafting this narration

Across the following measures, how do you expect your business to have changed in 12 months' time?

Increased Remained the same Decreased



(93 respondents answered at least one question on this page in the October 2025 survey)





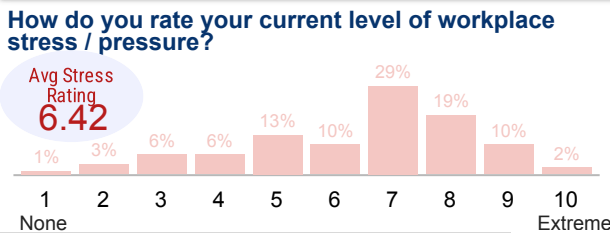
Many respondents report a tangible easing of pressure, with a large increase in respondents who state nothing keeps them awake at night. The primary focus remains squarely on the ability to generate profitability and business survival, however concerns regarding finding and retaining skilled staff continue to trend downwards and remain stable at low levels, suggesting these key staffing pressures have substantially eased.

[Gemini AI](#) assisted drafting this narration

What is the number one thing that keeps you awake at night with regards to your business?

Select Survey Period: October 2025 (1) ▾

Select Industry: All Industries (1) ▾



	Apr 2022	Oct 2022	Apr 2023	Oct 2023	Apr 2024	Oct 2024	Apr 2025	Oct 2025	Oct 2025 change from prior period
Ability to generate profitability	16%	3%	11%	16%	18%	23%	22%	22%	0% pts
Business survival (staying afloat)	8%	5%	7%	7%	11%	10%	12%	15%	▲ 3% pts
Forward work/sales in the pipeline	8%	13%	7%	8%	14%	13%	13%	11%	▼ 2% pts
Finding skilled staff	24%	21%	17%	12%	11%	11%	9%	9%	0% pts
Geopolitical volatility						3%	5%	4%	▼ 1% pt
Ability to invest capital in the business	0%	4%	0%	1%	4%	4%	4%	3%	▼ 1% pt
Regulatory and policy challenges - central Government		8%	6%	4%	10%	7%	4%	3%	▼ 1% pt
Retaining skilled staff	4%	7%	15%	7%	5%	4%	3%	3%	0% pts
Inflation - cost of goods / services sold	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	0%	2%	3%	▲ 1% pt
Regulatory and policy challenges - local Government		1%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%	▲ 1% pt
Debt levels (cost of borrowing)	0%	0%	6%	5%	1%	1%	0%	1%	▲ 1% pt
Export conditions	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%	2%	0%	▼ 2% pts
Climate change			5%	4%	0%	1%	1%	0%	▼ 1% pt
Finding unskilled staff	1%	4%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	▼ 1% pt
Energy price increases						0%	0%	0%	0% pts
Retaining unskilled staff	0%	0%	1%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0% pts
Security of energy supply						0%	0%	0%	0% pts
Other	25%	17%	8%	9%	3%	6%	9%	8%	▼ 1% pt
NOTHING keeps me awake at night	8%	11%	13%	13%	11%	10%	10%	15%	▲ 5% pts

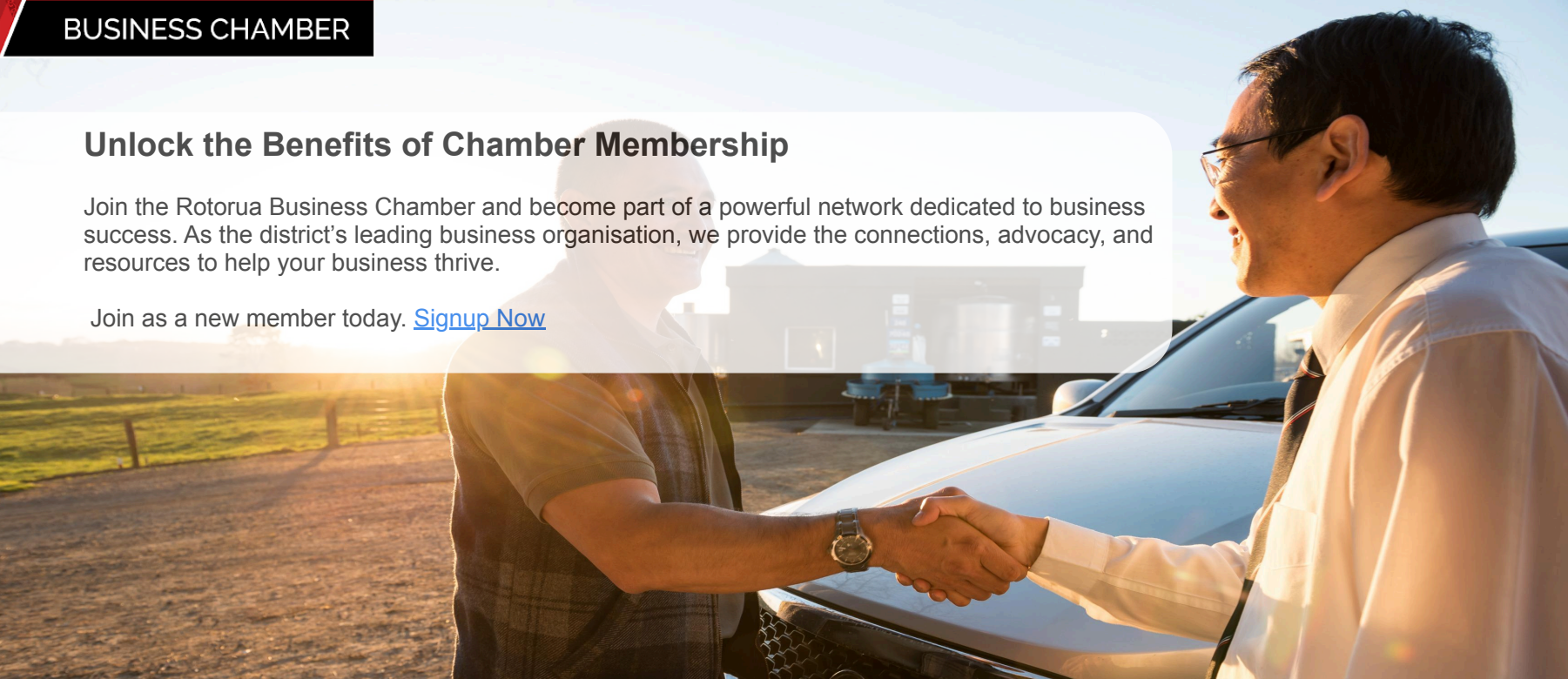
(93 respondents answered this question in the October 2025 survey)



Unlock the Benefits of Chamber Membership

Join the Rotorua Business Chamber and become part of a powerful network dedicated to business success. As the district’s leading business organisation, we provide the connections, advocacy, and resources to help your business thrive.

Join as a new member today. [Signup Now](#)



Rotorua businesses are successfully navigating several key external pressures, resulting in a significant reduction in geopolitical concern following global events. Furthermore, the pressure from finding skilled staff continues to ease, maintaining a positive trend for business growth. The primary challenge has now shifted to managing input costs, with inflation and energy price increases remaining the chief focus for the business community.

Gemini AI assisted drafting this narration

Select Survey Period: October 2025

(1) ▾

Select Industry: All Industries

(1) ▾

Please rate your current level of concern about the following in relation to your business

	Very + Extremely Concerned								Oct 2025 change from prior period
	Apr 2022	Oct 2022	Apr 2023	Oct 2023	Apr 2024	Oct 2024	Apr 2025	Oct 2025	
Inflation - cost of goods / services	71%	68%	57%	52%	41%	33%	35%	41%	▲ 6% pts
Finding skilled staff	68%	63%	61%	53%	38%	42%	42%	37%	▼ 5% pts
Energy price increases						29%	32%	36%	▲ 4% pts
Geopolitical volatility						34%	43%	28%	▼ 15% pts
Ability to generate profitability	40%	31%	39%	30%	30%	24%	32%	23%	▼ 9% pts
Forward work/sales in the pipeline	21%	20%	17%	23%	26%	14%	18%	20%	▲ 2% pts
Business survival (staying afloat)	15%	8%	14%	13%	14%	18%	14%	19%	▲ 5% pts
Retaining skilled staff	48%	53%	51%	39%	25%	26%	28%	18%	▼ 10% pts
Regulatory and policy challenges - local Government		40%	31%	30%	33%	29%	25%	18%	▼ 7% pts
Ability to invest capital in the business	23%	24%	24%	24%	20%	19%	20%	16%	▼ 4% pts
Climate change				43%	25%	34%	20%	15%	▼ 5% pts
Regulatory and policy challenges - central Government		47%	50%	35%	35%	32%	25%	13%	▼ 12% pts
Immigration settings			30%	21%	18%	26%	14%	12%	▼ 2% pts
Debt levels (cost of borrowing)	19%	19%	24%	22%	23%	11%	12%	12%	0% pts
Security of energy supply						14%	16%	11%	▼ 5% pts
Export conditions	19%	20%	11%	8%	14%	13%	20%	7%	▼ 13% pts
Supply chain / shortages	33%	29%	27%	15%	11%	12%	11%	6%	▼ 5% pts
Retaining unskilled staff	25%	24%	24%	13%	6%	7%	9%	4%	▼ 5% pts
Finding unskilled staff	27%	25%	24%	17%	6%	8%	5%	3%	▼ 2% pts

(94 respondents answered this question in the October 2025 survey)

The Post | TE UPOKO O TE IKA



Read the full article

Rotorua biofactory opens the way for a potential \$50 billion economic gain

Rotorua’s newly proposed biofactory isn’t just a regional project, it’s national infrastructure with the power to turn around New Zealand’s economic fortunes by transforming biomaterials into commercial products.

By converting forestry residues, agricultural by-products, food waste and plastics into high-value products, the Biofactory has the potential to unlock a \$50 billion bioeconomy for New Zealand. With recently announced processing facility closures across regional New Zealand, the Biofactory can help to future-proof regional New Zealand.

RotoruaNZ has partnered on this initiative with both Scion and Te Uru Rakau for a number of years, helping define the economic opportunity for Rotorua. We have co-commissioned large pieces of work and made direct contributions to funding applications and business casing. RotoruaNZ will continue our support with advocacy, lobbying and other support as required.



Businesses are heavily invested in digital transformation, with AI technologies used by over two-thirds of respondents, making it the highest-ranked statement. Simultaneously, there's a strong commitment to social responsibility, with a majority of businesses paying the living wage or higher and almost half of respondents reporting having policies in place to reduce carbon.

Select Survey Period: October 2025

(1) ▾

Select Industry: All Industries

(1) ▾

[Gemini AI](#) assisted drafting this narration



Which of the following statements are true for your business?

	Apr 2022	Oct 2022	Apr 2023	Oct 2023	Apr 2024	Oct 2024	Apr 2025	Oct 2025	Oct 2025 change from prior period
AI technologies are being explored/used in our business			23%	49%	41%	49%	66%	68%	▲ 2% pts
We pay the living wage or higher to all staff	62%	68%	65%	68%	62%	60%	60%	60%	0% pts
We have policies in place to reduce carbon emissions	26%	41%	31%	42%	40%	55%	51%	46%	▼ 5% pts
We currently have vacancies that need to be filled	47%	52%	55%	47%	42%	44%	33%	38%	▲ 5% pts
We expect to change our capital structure in the next 12 months			12%	14%	14%	15%	20%	15%	▼ 5% pts
None of the above	20%	18%	11%	13%	13%	13%	9%	7%	▼ 2% pts

(82 respondents answered this question in the October 2025 survey)

What energy sources do you use in your business?

This question was asked only in the October 2025 survey

Grid Electricity is the foundational energy source for nearly all respondent businesses, with Diesel and Petrol also widely used for transport and operations. The single most dominant concern is the rising cost and affordability of electricity, which many describe as a significant operational burden. Respondents are actively exploring renewable solutions like Solar PV and unique local resources like Geothermal energy, but adoption is often hindered by high upfront costs and the need for better investment incentives.

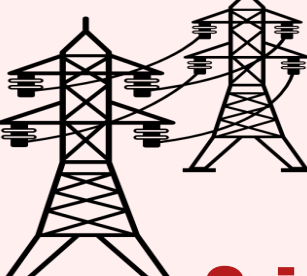
[Gemini AI](#) assisted drafting this narration

EECA

TE TARI TIAKI PŪNGAO
ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Check out [EECA](#) resources:

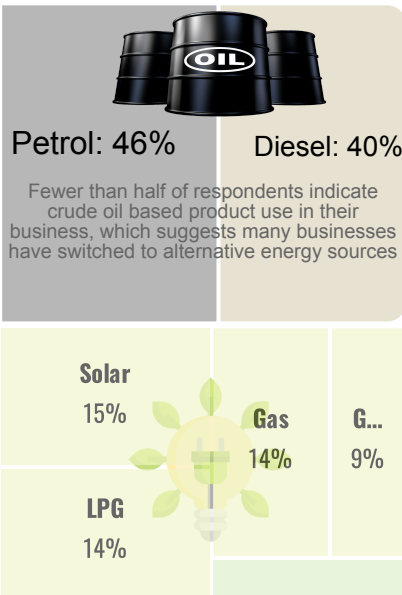
- Improve energy efficiency and cost savings in your business.
- Co-funding opportunities for adoption of innovative clean energy technologies



Grid Electricity

91%

(81 respondents answered this question in the October 2025 survey)



Do you have comments to make around energy relating to your business?

Scroll down within table to see more comments 30 Comments

- As a software company, it's actually our providers and partners that consume significant energy for data centres.
- Shop around for pricing of power.
- Encourage the take up of roof top solar. Most businesses operate during the day when the sun makes the power. Battery installs not necessary.
- We have an energy management plan. We also have a dedicated person now who is managing our carbon footprint.
- Rising costs of gas and electricity are a real concern for us
- We advise the energy sector and it is a fast growing part of our business.
- We would welcome further attempts to co-invest in alternative energy sources for businesses e.g. solar on a larger scale
- The increasing cost of energy is certainly a concern

Rotorua Business Success Story

Designing world changing commercial solutions from science

[Upflow](#) has a mission is to inspire others to use STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) so that they can solve the worlds most pressing problems. With a focus on advancing knowledge, providing expert guidance, and fostering innovation, they are committed to realizing a greener and more sustainable future.

An early challenge was trying to source meaningful relevant words (kupu) in Te Reo Māori for scientific terms used in geothermal research and development. Upflow partnered with 'Geothermal: The Next Generation' research programme and Earth Sciences NZ (previously GNS Science) to develop the [Waiwhatu-Arawhata Comms Toolkit](#) to support the learning of 18 new Te Reo Māori words (kupu) relevant to earth sciences, geothermal and volcanology, and then interpreted these through a Māori lens into a shared language, bringing Mātauranga Māori (indigenous knowledge) and western science into one space.

Innovative projects Upflow is working on include:

- Coupling the production of a [biofeedstock](#) with geothermal waste gases and geothermal-sourced microorganisms. The biomass could be used as an animal feed ingredient (biofeedstock), for human nutrition, and, perhaps, to produce high value nutraceuticals.
- Commercialising [GOOML](#) from a research codebase to a deployable commercial product GOOML is a software package that allows geothermal operators to run myriad scenarios simulating changes to their operations (e.g. shut planning, strategy development, and optimisation), improving the efficiency and electricity output of geothermal steam fields.

Check out the [Upflow](#) website to learn 18 new Te Reo Māori words (kupu) and to learn about opportunities for partnering with Upflow to be involved in their projects.





What should the new council's top priority be for the Rotorua business community?

The new Council's mandate, as voiced by the business community is clear: **"Fix the City Centre to Fix the Economy"**

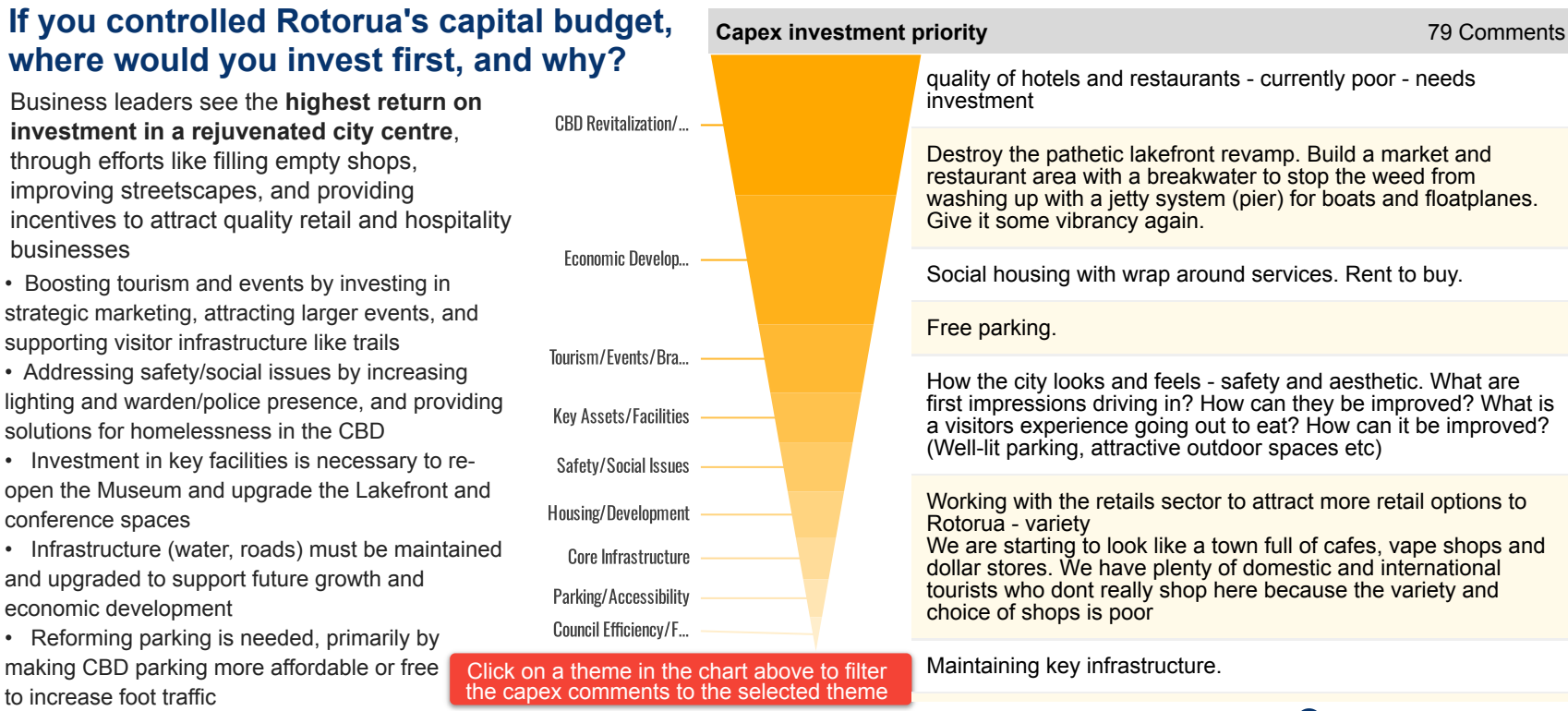
- The central message is that a cleaned, safe, and attractive city centre is the necessary precondition for economic development and a positive reputational brand outcome of Rotorua being a great place to live, work and visit
- For the new Council to succeed in the eyes of the business community, it must demonstrate competence in transforming the physical environment of the inner city while maintaining a tight grip on council efficiency and rates
- In 2022, the business community was highly reactive, demanding immediate action on the visible safety/social issues; by 2025, the urgency to resolve safety/social issues has softened, but remains among the top priorities
- By 2025, the focus has transitioned to a more strategic, long-term challenge: the revitalization and aesthetic restoration of the CBD

October 2022 Top priorities for new council	71 Comments
Fixing Fenton St	
Support business growth and development and sell the destination hard	
Continuing to create a top quality tourist destination with great parks, buildings and infrastructure	
get the homeless situation sorted out no more motel or hotel used as homeless shelter	
Strengthening resilience through providing support to local business people with expos event and training	
Reducing the negative spin	
Developing, communicating, and enacting a plan to solve the homeless in motels situation within a realistic timeframe	
Homeless housing and the bad reputation associated with it	

If you controlled Rotorua's capital budget, where would you invest first, and why?

Business leaders see the **highest return on investment in a rejuvenated city centre**, through efforts like filling empty shops, improving streetscapes, and providing incentives to attract quality retail and hospitality businesses

- Boosting tourism and events by investing in strategic marketing, attracting larger events, and supporting visitor infrastructure like trails
- Addressing safety/social issues by increasing lighting and warden/police presence, and providing solutions for homelessness in the CBD
- Investment in key facilities is necessary to re-open the Museum and upgrade the Lakefront and conference spaces
- Infrastructure (water, roads) must be maintained and upgraded to support future growth and economic development
- Reforming parking is needed, primarily by making CBD parking more affordable or free to increase foot traffic



The current government is reforming various pieces of legislation, which have been identified as costly to business and restrictive to development.

As a business leader, what are your views on the following legislative reforms?

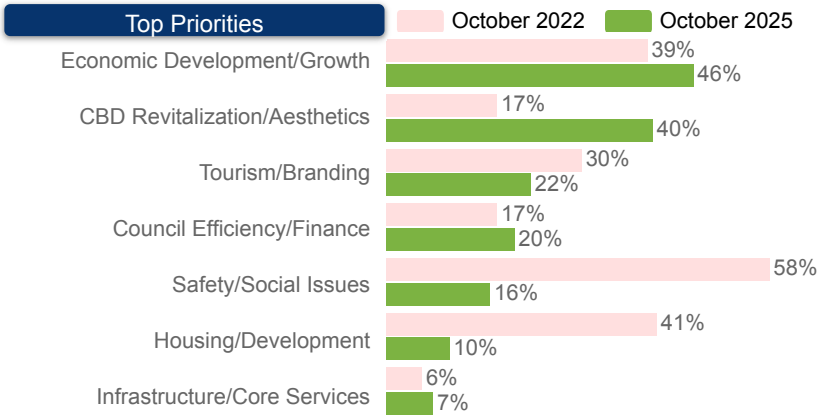
[RMA reforms to deliver jobs and growth](#) (14 Aug 2025)

The overall sentiment regarding the RMA reforms is **broadly supportive, driven by the necessity to cut red tape and complex processes**

- Respondents believe the reforms are long overdue and will accelerate economic growth and investment, particularly around increasing housing stock
- This optimism is tempered by significant caution with the key concern centering on the reforms potentially compromising environmental and cultural safeguards or creating a risk of unintended consequences and shifting legal liability
- The consensus is that while change is essential, it must be balanced with adequate protection and careful implementation

RMA reform views	69 Comments
The sweeping changes seem ill-advised in some areas. I agree that change is important, but care is necessary.	
No comment	
I think it takes away accountability and is probably something that will end up getting overturned by the next government anyway It dilutes some of the protections for the environment and might encourage growth and exploitation of natural resources over protection and sustainability for the sake of quicker permit processing. When we rush reform like this government has become known for we may find that the red tape will appear on the other end ie legal uncertainties, higher costs and unknown unintended consequences	

'Government' questions asked only in October 2025 survey period



Click on a theme in the chart above to filter the comments below to the selected theme

October 2025 Top priorities for new council	82 Comments
attracting tourists back tom pre-covid levels	
Identifying gaps in business support then working with CCOs and business community to close.	
Focus on the most profitable and best employer of the city.Tourism	
Entry Signage around town looking terrible - old and worn. Especially the ones on the way out to the lakes	
Regenerate CBD.	
To make the CBD look and feel safe and attractive - not because CBD's can return to what they were - but to appreciate that it still impacts reputation. The flower islands are a good start. More city art or similar projects would also help.	
Delivering key core services and staying on budget while maintaining the public spaces as they have always done very well to make our city a better	

[Earthquake-prone building system refocused](#) (29 Sep 2025)

[Earthquake-prone building system refocused](#) (29 Sep 2025)

Respondents are **generally positive** about the earthquake-prone building system refocus, **welcoming the relief from high costs and complex compliance**

- The new risk-based approach is praised for potentially saving heritage assets and revitalizing the CBD
- Many see the changes as common sense and a sensible correction of previous regulations with the ability to get deadline extensions viewed as a massive relief for planning and finance
- Key concerns persist regarding ensuring public safety, the legal uncertainty of the new technical standards, and the need for greater government financial support and incentives for owners to upgrade buildings

Earthquake-prone building refocus views	68 Comments
Ok with this with the recent changes	
Great news.	
Who will be accountable if buildings that were deemed to be unsafe on the EPB list cost lives in earthquakes in the future removing Auckland from the EPB list is a bit silly as it is surround by the potential for volcanic activity	
This has been a nightmare especially when sub-letting to large national organsiations.	
Will make hundreds of buildings that were unnecessarily condemned	



Early-outbound/late-inbound flights, better connection times and improved reliability to each existing direct destination are the greatest opportunities for increasing business travel

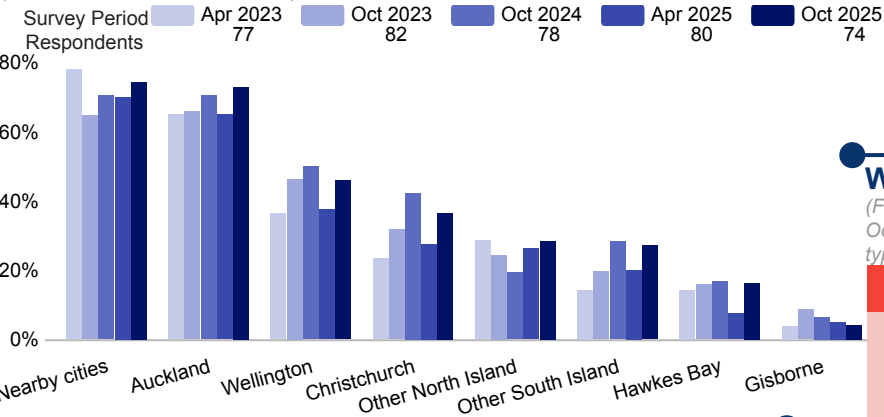
- More than 10% of Rotorua businesses travel once a week or more and many travel at least monthly, with nearby cities and Auckland being the places most frequently travelled to
- More than a quarter of respondents that travel by air use Rotorua Airport at least half the time, while almost a third of air travellers never or rarely use Rotorua Airport
- Better flight schedules and greater reliability are the primary drivers for Rotorua business people to use TRG, AKL and/or HLZ versus using Rotorua Airport
- Similarly, limited flight schedules and flight cancellations challenge more than half of respondents considering using Rotorua Airport, while route availability and ticket prices are challenging for almost as many
- More than half of respondents indicated Queenstown be considered for direct flights with several respondents indicating it would also be appealing for leisure travel

'Airport' questions asked only in some survey periods

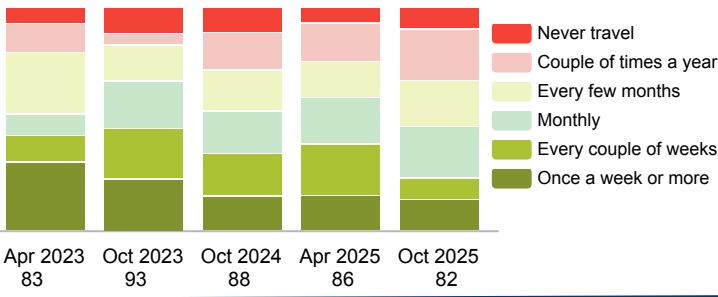
Select Industry: All Industries (1) ▾

Where does your business travel domestically for business?

(Filtered to exclude 'Never travel')

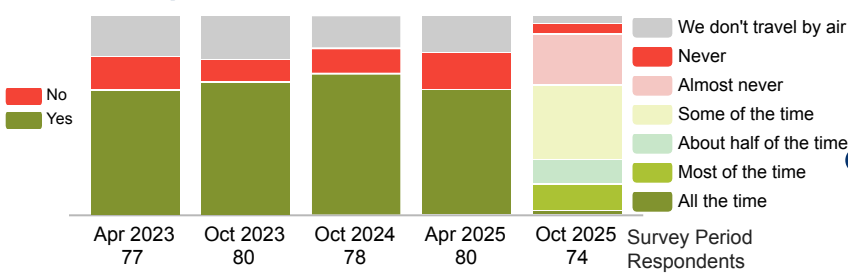


How often do you, or your employees travel for work?



Do you or your employees typically depart from Rotorua Airport?

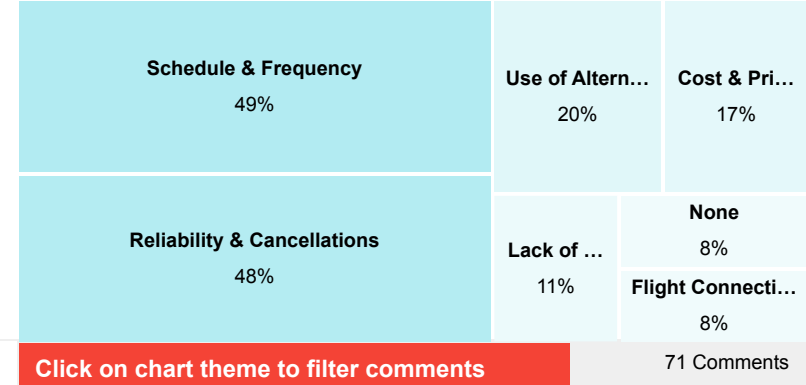
(Filtered to exclude 'Never travel')



October 2025 survey respondents had a scale of responses to choose from versus previous survey respondents were only offered Yes/No option.

What constraints prevent you from using Rotorua Airport for business travel?

(This question was asked only in the October 2025 survey)



Cancelled flights and a limited flight schedule, which means we need to travel to Tauranga to fly out instead

Poor connectivity is the main reason - Tauranga and Hamilton are better timings. Often additional nights' accommodation are required due to poor connections.

reliability of service - always cancelled. Flight schedule connections to international flights

Flight times and numbers are challenging. Cost is unpredictable and can be excessive

Frequency of flights is terrible and service inconsistent

Its unreliable, timing of flights in and out are ridiculous for business

poor schedule from AirNZ and flights having to go via AKL. Weather is also issue with closing airport in winter

Which alternative airports do you depart from and why?

(Filtered to exclude 'We don't travel by air. Additionally, surveys previous to the October 2025 survey also filtered to only include those respondents who didn't typically depart from Rotorua Airport.)

Click on an airport code to filter comments		113 Comments	
TRG 58%	AKL 44%	Oct 2025	Tauranga - its the closest with more flexible timetable. I have flown out of Whakatane before to Auckland with Air Chats, again because their schedule suited better.
		Oct 2025	Drive to Auckland or Tauranga
		Oct 2025	Tauranga or Hamilton
		Oct 2025	Tauranga and Hamilton
		Oct 2025	Auckland or Tauranga. Scheduling
HLZ 14%	Other 10%	Oct 2025	Tauranga or Hamilton

Rate the level of challenge you and/or your colleagues have experienced at Rotorua Airport during the last 12 months:

(This question was asked only in the April and October 2025 surveys)

Significant + Very Significant Challenge			
Survey Period Respondents	Apr 2025 86	Oct 2025 82	Oct 2025 change from prior period
Flight scheduling	52%	56%	▲ 4% pts
Flight cancellations & reliability	58%	51%	▼ 7% pts
Available routes & destinations	42%	41%	▼ 1% pt
Ticket prices	45%	38%	▼ 7% pts
Flight capacity	26%	17%	▼ 9% pts
Overall airport experience	3%	4%	▲ 1% pt

What other domestic direct destinations would be advantageous for business travel?

(This question was asked only in the October 2025 survey)

Click on an airport code to filter comments		61 Comments	
ZQN 59%	None 28%	Whangarei, New Plymouth, Napier, Dunedin and Queenstown.	
		Queenstown, Dunedin, Kerikeri	
		ZQN	
		n/a	
		No extra destinations required for our current business travel	
Other SI 13%	Other NI 13%	Queenstown	
		Happy to use those as hubs, its the reliability and	

What would improve air travel in and out of Rotorua for business travel?

(This question was asked only in the April and October 2025 surveys)

Click on a chart theme to filter comments			124 Comments	
Reliability & Consistency 43%	Improved Scheduling 30%	New Routes & Destinations 25%	Oct 2025	Fixing all outlined as issues above... better schedule, pricing, connectivity and reliability
			Oct 2025	Increasing and reliably scheduling flights to key hubs (Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch) to improve on-time performance, making travel more affordable and flexible with competitive fares, and building strong contingency plans for disruptions.
			Oct 2025	Extra flights and destinations, dry walking path to plane by rain. Free parking.
Increased Frequency & Capacity 33%	Cost Reduction & Connectivity 19%	Airport/Airline Experience 13%	Oct 2025	Frequency and Queenstown addition
			Oct 2025	its the reliability and frequency that are the issue
			Oct 2025	Early morning flights to Wellington, and more options later in the day.

Scroll down within each table for more comments. Random sort order of comments refreshed approximately every 15 minutes. [Gemini AI](#) assisted analysis.



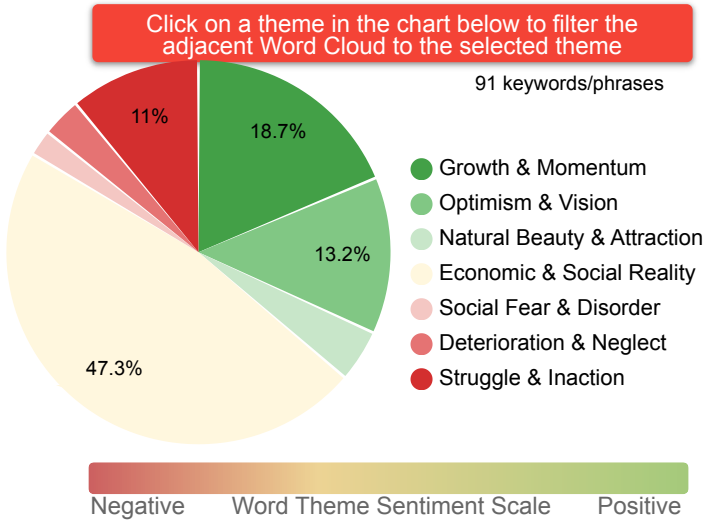
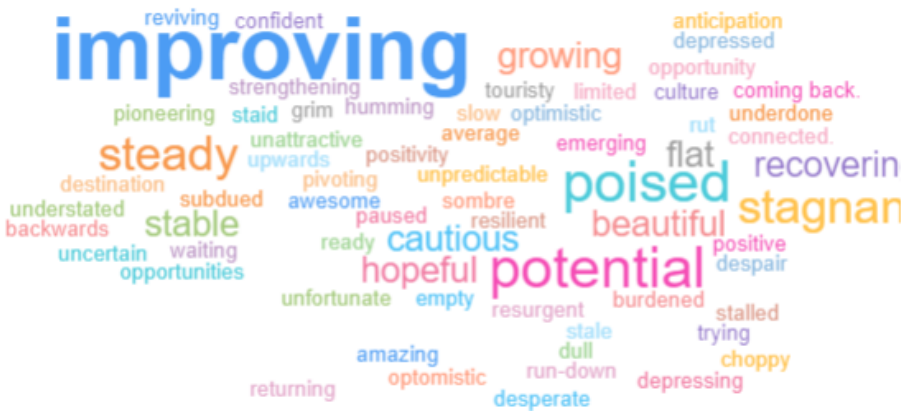
While overall sentiment remains cautious, the dominant theme of final, unprompted comments is a strong call for improved business environment and strategy. Respondents emphasised the need for courageous, visionary leadership and strategic planning from both the business community and local government to foster an innovative and opportunity-driven economy.

Select Survey Period: October 2025 (1) ▾

Select Industry: All Industries (1) ▾

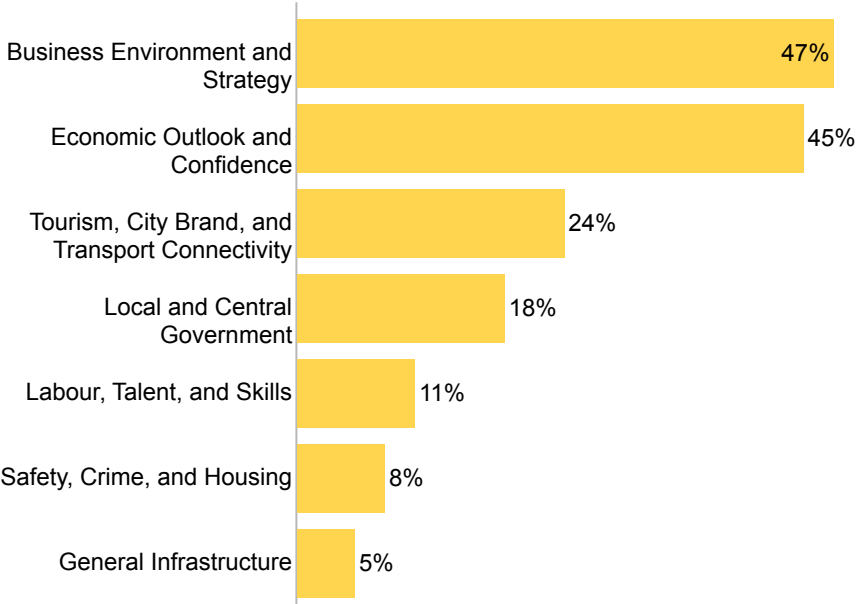
[Gemini AI](#) assisted drafting this narration

What is the ONE word that you would use to describe Rotorua currently?



Finally, do you have any other comments or thoughts on your business or the Rotorua economy?

Click on a theme in the adjacent chart to filter the comments below to the selected theme



Scroll down within the table to see more comments

38 Comments

Other than Eat St, the inner city has not really seen any significant improvement since the footpaths were cobblestoned. CBD's will not return to what they were, but still have critical function. Investment is important. lessons could be taken from Christchurch
Forestry and wood processing have help up in the current recession better than expected. This comes from forestry being a long-term investment by nature and by Rotorua's largest employer being incredibly focused on achieving business excellence from their amazing and large team of committed people.
I think things in general are picking up, but Hospo is hard with very fine margins. It would be great to see anything that can be done to bring visitors to town and showcase all the offerings here (not just eat street and Te Puia, that seem to be the lazy go to for our destination marketing).
Rotorua has so much potential. we just need to bring the buzz back. As a local business owner, I see every day how much people still love this city, but our CBD needs more energy and support to truly thrive again. If we can attract more quality businesses, hold more local events, and make it easier for small operators to grow, Rotorua could be buzzing like it used to be. We've got the culture, the tourism appeal, and the talent. We just need the right focus and collaboration to bring it all together.
Rotorua is on the up. Long may it continue
It has been so dissapointing to have built a successful business and then have it almost cease since the change of government The call for Ministries to reduce spend saw my work dimunsh and a very full forward schedule of work almost entirely dissappear
As a city we just need a couple of big wins to break out of the current rut.
It is not just tourism and forestry that supports Rotorua, a better inner city with free parking in key areas and an infrastructure that is sustainable. Stop spending our rates in investments like drones in the sky, specially in times where every \$ counts, plus do not allow new motels until an old one is demolished. Lift the profile.
A bit concerned about funding from Rotorua Lakes Council for social programmes as they become under pressure to focus on core services.
Increased visibility of how RotoruaNZ supports tourism woudl be great, and a personal touch -- when a major event or significant impact on a local business is known/public, then it would be great for the RotoruaNZ CEO or team members to reach out to offer support, or at least acknowledgement of the impacts, is there any advocacy they can assist with, and introductions, other help?
Overall, feeling very positive. We continue to grow, and have people reaching out across the globe. Would love to see more focus on innovation and technology.
Very tough times. I think we are in for a bleak Christmas
The Rotorua city needs love, it needs art, it needs events, it needs to be a place people actually want to come. Where they feel safe. This is not currently the case. The city I grew up in was busy and vibrant, not sad and empty.
Modernise the city environment, make it attractive to undertake business, live and work. This will open up business consideration to move here, therefore attracting skilled people to live in this beautiful city.



96 Rotorua business people participated in the October 2025 survey, the same as the 96 respondents in April 2025. A cross-section of businesses from different industries participated, with 90% of respondents being the owner or CEO of the business.

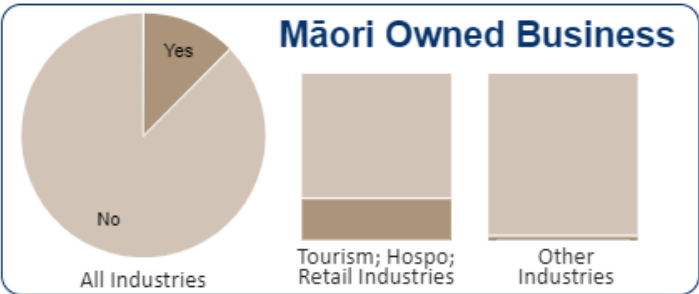
There was a broad distribution of different sized businesses, from small SMEs to large 51+ employee operations. 13% of respondents were Māori owned businesses, a decline from 19% in the April 2025 survey.

Select Survey Period: October 2025

(1) ▾

235 Rotorua business people were invited to participate in the October 2025 Rotorua Business Pulse Survey with 96 people making a submission, which equates to a 41% response rate.

[Click here>>>](#) to register your interest in participating in future Rotorua Business Pulse Surveys.



Which industries does your business operate in?

Businesses which identify as being in the 'Tourism and Accommodation' industry, 'Hospitality and Food Services' industry, or Retail industry are categorised as 'Tourism; Hospo; Retail Industries' even if they also identify as being in another industry.

Businesses which do not identify as being in one of those three industries are categorised as 'Other Industries'.

	Apr 2022	Oct 2022	Apr 2023	Oct 2023	Apr 2024	Oct 2024	Apr 2025	Oct 2025
Tourism and Accommodation	31%	29%	30%	39%	34%	39%	38%	32%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	16%	10%	18%	18%	18%	17%	19%	20%
Hospitality and Food Services	20%	11%	16%	14%	11%	20%	17%	15%
Manufacturing	5%	11%	13%	8%	9%	10%	9%	10%
Building and Construction	4%	10%	10%	11%	8%	7%	5%	8%
Other Services	16%	11%	14%	10%	6%	7%	5%	8%
Retail	9%	10%	10%	8%	8%	9%	7%	8%
Financial, Legal and Insurance Services	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	6%	8%	6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4%	4%	6%	3%	5%	3%	3%	4%
Transport, Logistics, Postal and Warehousing	3%	6%	4%	5%	5%	2%	3%	4%
Wholesale Trade	5%	5%	7%	6%	3%	2%	2%	4%
Agriculture	1%	3%	4%	5%	1%	1%	4%	3%
Information Media and Telecommunications	4%	6%	8%	6%	8%	3%	4%	3%
Education and Training	5%	1%	6%	4%	8%	6%	5%	2%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1%	4%	4%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%
Administrative and Support Services	3%	1%	3%	1%	5%	3%	3%	1%
Arts and Recreation Services	1%	0%	7%	2%	3%	5%	1%	1%
Environmental	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	1%
Forestry, Farming and Fishing	4%	10%	11%	9%	9%	8%	5%	1%
Public Administration and Safety	1%	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	0%	0%