



Florida Small Business Index

2020 Quarter 1 Survey Results

Presented by the Florida Chamber of Commerce Small Business Council

January 2020

About the Florida Chamber's Small Business Council

Florida's small businesses are essential to the continuing development of the Florida economy. The Florida Chamber's Small Business Council works directly with state and national leaders to pass important legislation such as reducing the business rent tax and reducing the cost of healthcare.

The Florida Chamber's Small Business Council provides a unified voice for all small businesses in our mission to secure Florida's future. Participants meet with legislators, contact media, and testify before both Florida's House and Senate on issues important to small businesses.

Survey Overview

Many in Florida's small business community are experiencing both challenges and successes as our economy grows. As we work to secure Florida's future, it is crucial that the Florida Chamber of Commerce understands what issues are most important to small businesses.

The purpose of the Small Business Index Survey is to track trends and issues affecting small businesses in Florida. Small business owners are surveyed in order to monitor small business trends and identify emerging issues that may be addressed by the Florida Chamber's Small Business Council. The Council's previous surveys were performed in May 2010, September 2010, February 2011, July 2011, March 2012, June 2012, September 2012, December 2012, April 2013, July 2013, September 2013, January 2014, May 2014 and August/September 2014, May 2015, September 2015, December 2015/January 2016, March 2016, June 2016, August/September 2016, December 2016, March/April 2017, June/July 2017, September/October 2017, December 2017/January 2018, March/April 2018, June/July 2018, September/October 2018, November 2018/January 2019, March/April 2019, June/July 2019, and September/October 2019.

This survey is a nonscientific, random sampling of small business owners in Florida. It was conducted November 25, 2019 through January 3, 2020 and received 80 responses. The electronic survey was e-mailed to small businesses in Florida; and distributed by local chambers of commerce throughout the state; and posted on social media including Facebook and Twitter.

Of those responding:

- 24% of respondents employ less than 5 employees;
- 50% employ 5 to 49 employees;
- 9% employ 50 to 99 employees; and
- 17% employ 100 to 500 employees.

Additionally:

- 73% of respondents employ less than 5 part-time employees;
- 24% employ 5 to 49 part-time employees;
- 0% employ 50 to 99 part-time employees; and
- 3% employ 100 or more part-time employees.

Survey Analysis

The Florida Chamber's 1st Quarter survey of 2020 shows that Florida's small businesses continue to be most concerned about "Workforce Quality", with 28 percent of respondents citing it as their top issue. "Workforce Quality" has been the number one issue for most of the past 12 quarters, with the only exception being the 1st Quarter survey of 2019 where it was second behind "Economic Uncertainty."

In second place this quarter is "Healthcare Costs" with 13 percent of respondents indicating it was their top issue. Rounding out the top 5 issues is "Government Regulations" at 12 percent, "Economic Uncertainty" at 10 percent, and "Lawsuit Abuse" which had 4 percent of Florida's small businesses indicating that those categories were their top issue respectively.

The top five issues – "Workforce Quality", "Healthcare Costs", "Government Regulations", "Economic Uncertainty" and "Lawsuit Abuse", cover the top concerns of 67 percent of Florida's small businesses taking the survey during the first quarter of 2020.

When asked about their outlook for the Florida economy over the next three years, 56 percent of respondents expect the economy to improve, up from 51 percent one year ago and down from 71 percent two years ago. Notable is the percentage of respondents that expect the economy to weaken over the next three years at 31 percent on this survey, compared to only 19 percent two years ago.

When asked to predict their own company sales over the upcoming year, 69 percent of companies expect to have higher sales than the previous year, compared to 71 percent one year ago and 69 percent two years ago.

Small Business Employment Outlook:

- 49 percent of respondents expect to hire in the next six months – this is up from the 42 percent one year ago. Interestingly, this is the first survey in recent history where none of the respondents had any layoff plans
- An indicator of small business expansion in Florida – 51 percent of businesses have plans to make investments in plants or equipment, up from 43 percent one year ago.

When asked about their ability to obtain financing over the past six months, 45 percent were able to get financing, up from 34 percent last survey and 29 percent one year ago. Respondents' expectation of the ability to obtain financing over the next six months was that 26 percent expected it to be easier, double the percentage from one year ago.

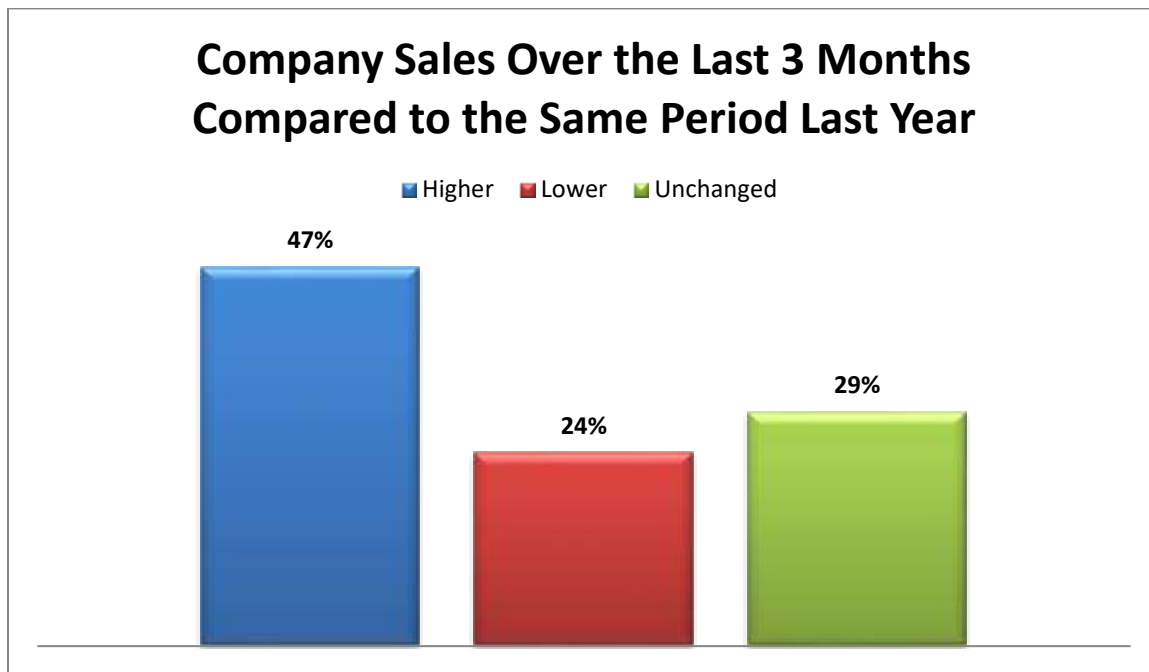
Survey Results

Comparisons

Q1: Top issues facing Florida small businesses today:

1. Workforce Quality – 28%
2. Healthcare Costs – 13%
3. Government Regulations – 12%
4. Economic Uncertainty – 10%
5. Lawsuit Abuse – 4%

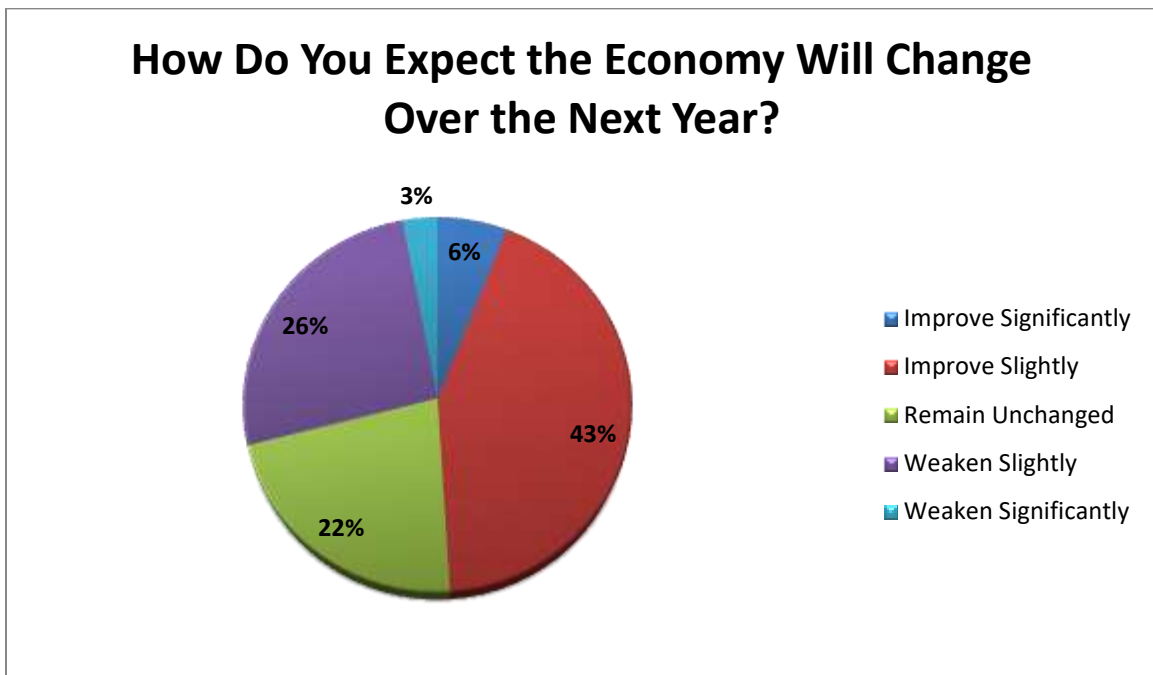
Q4:



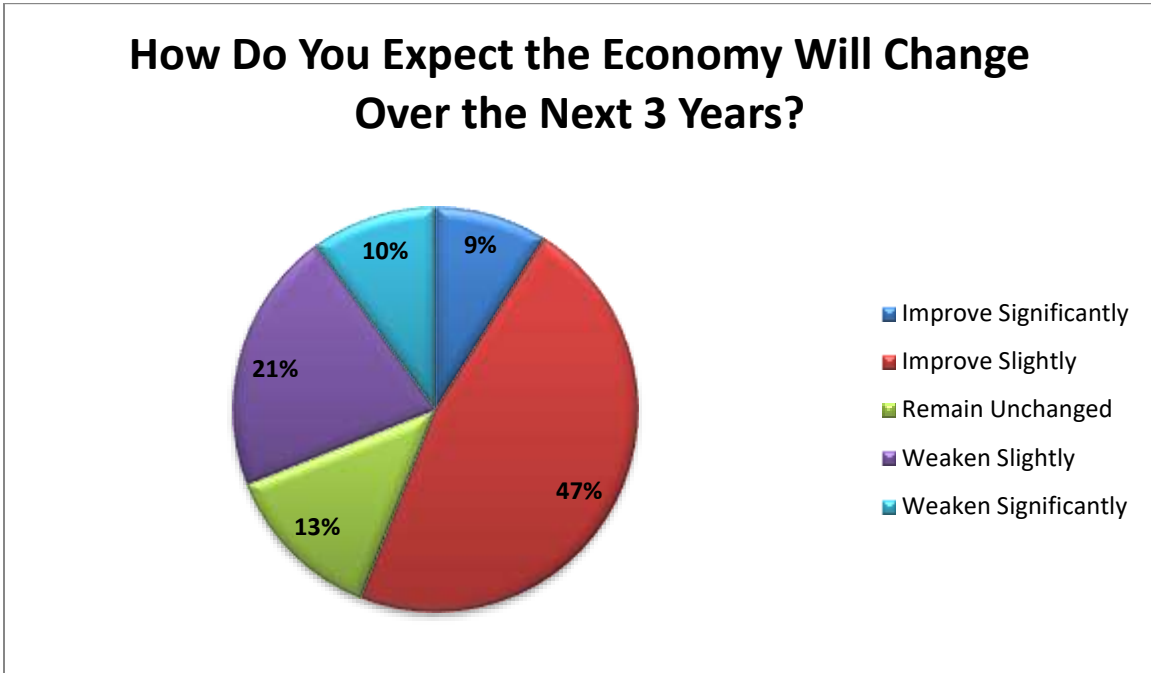
Q5:



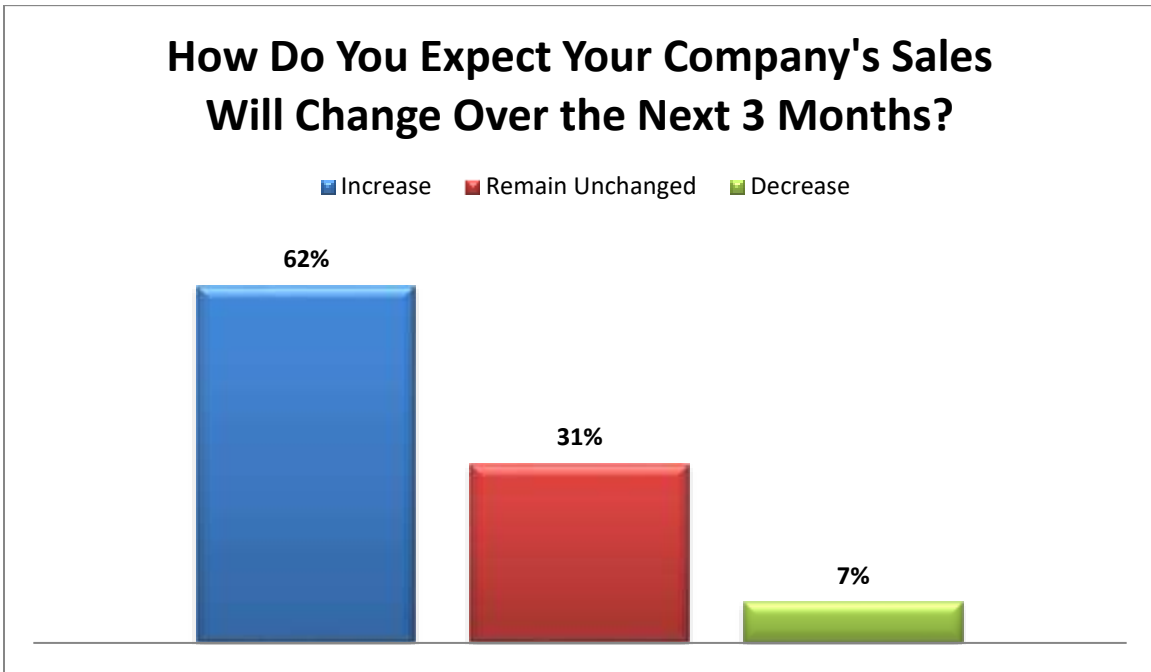
Q6:



Q7:



Q8:



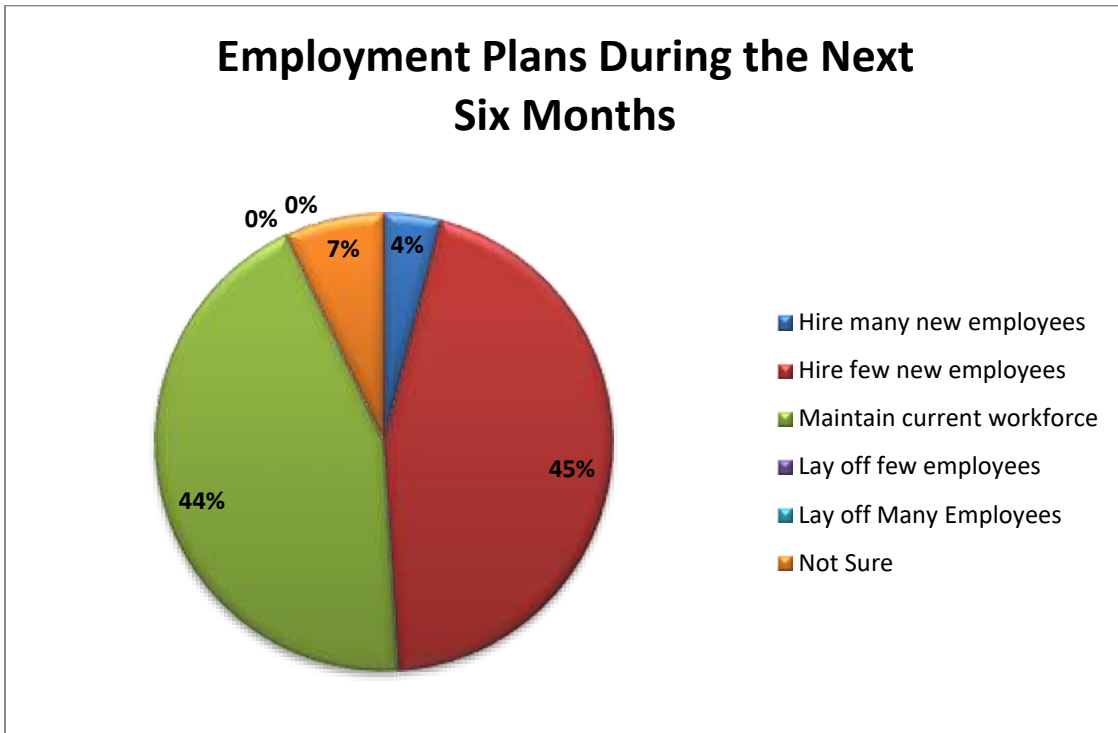
Q9:



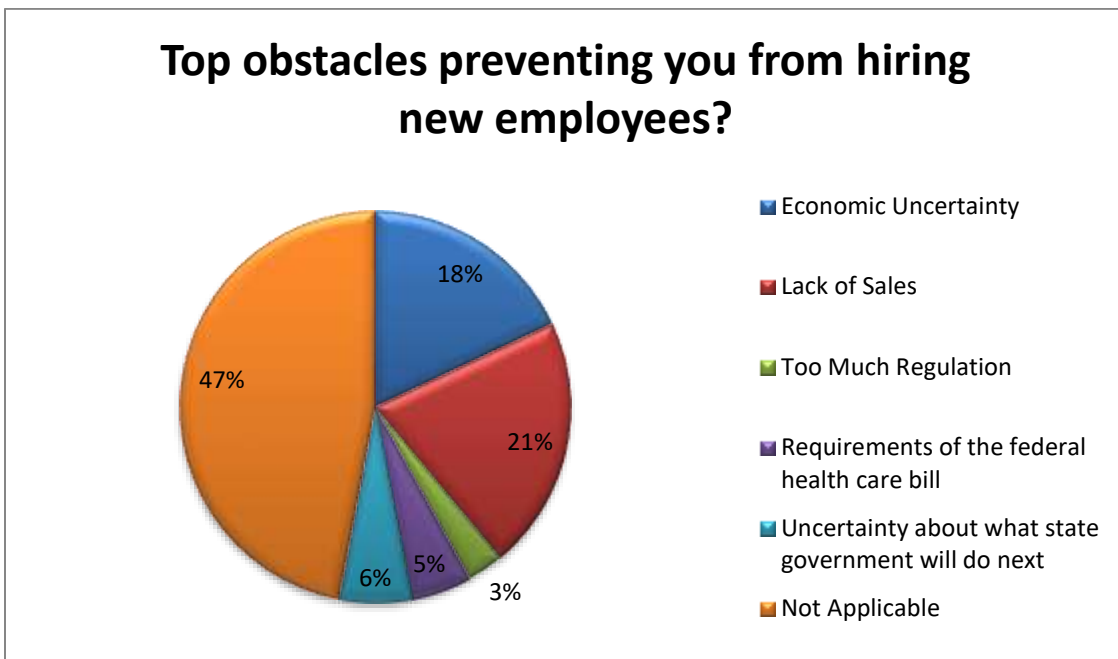
Q10:



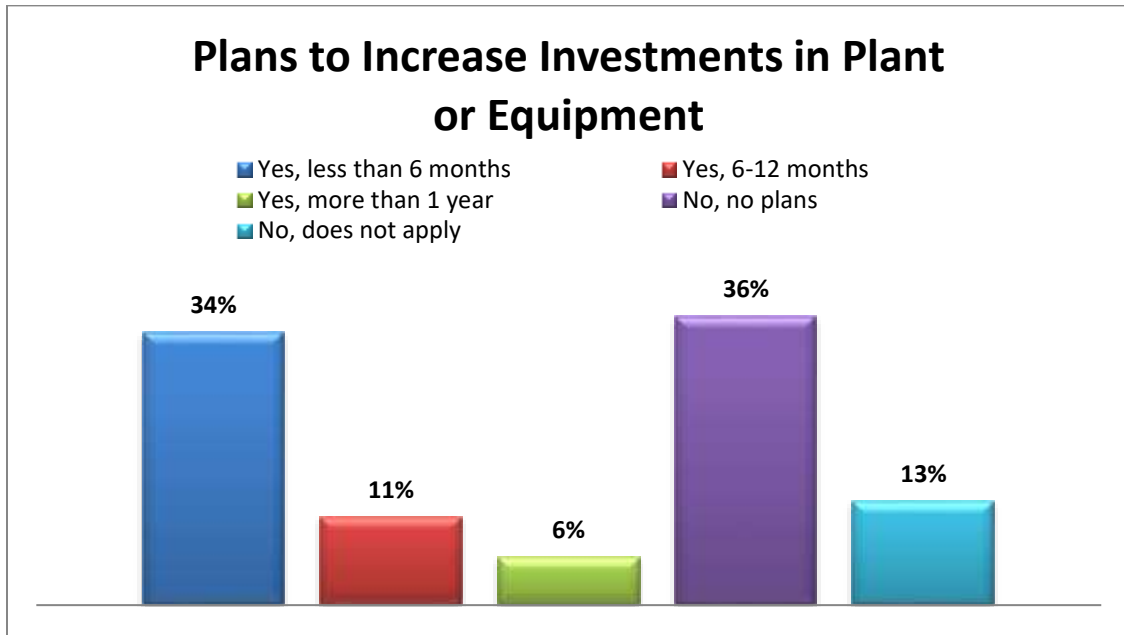
Q12:



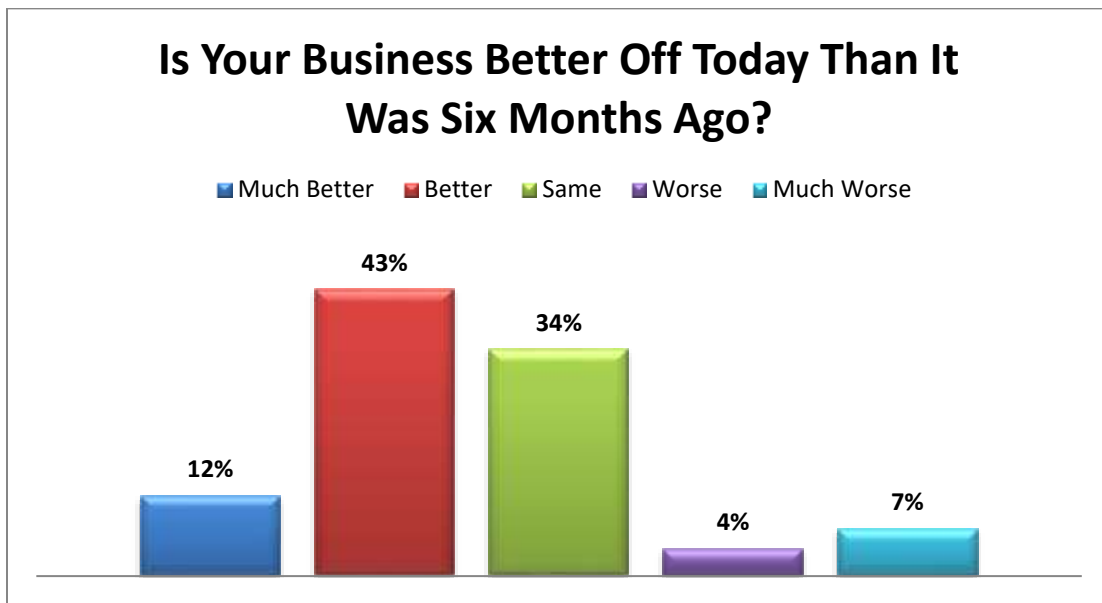
Q13:



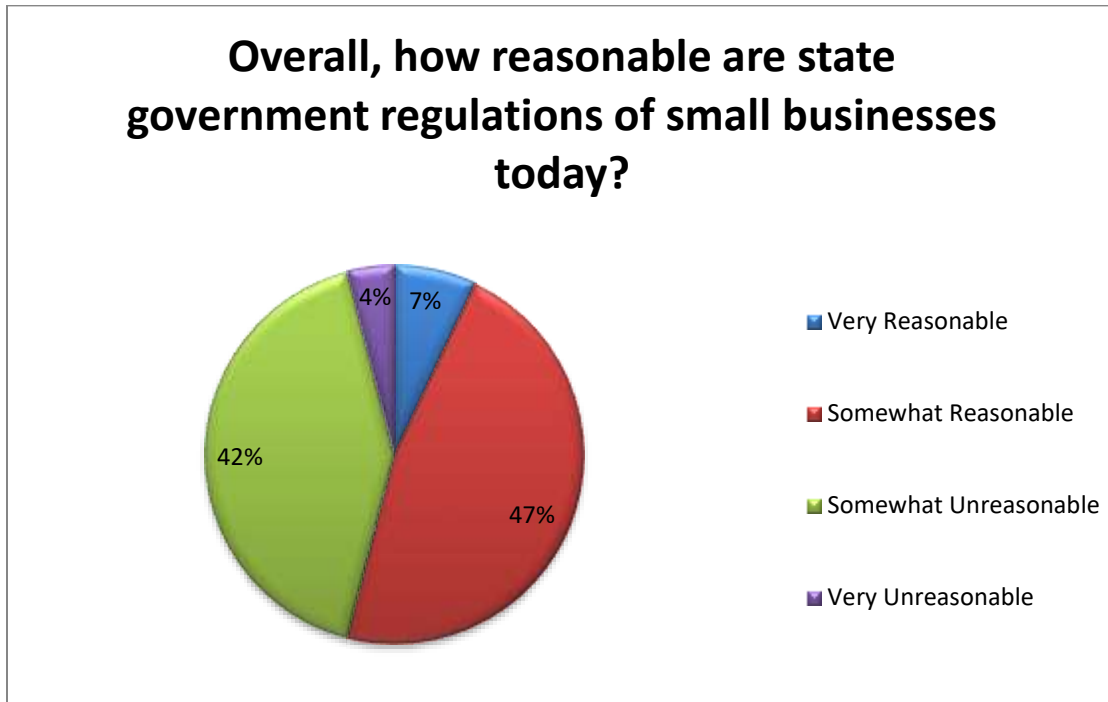
Q14:



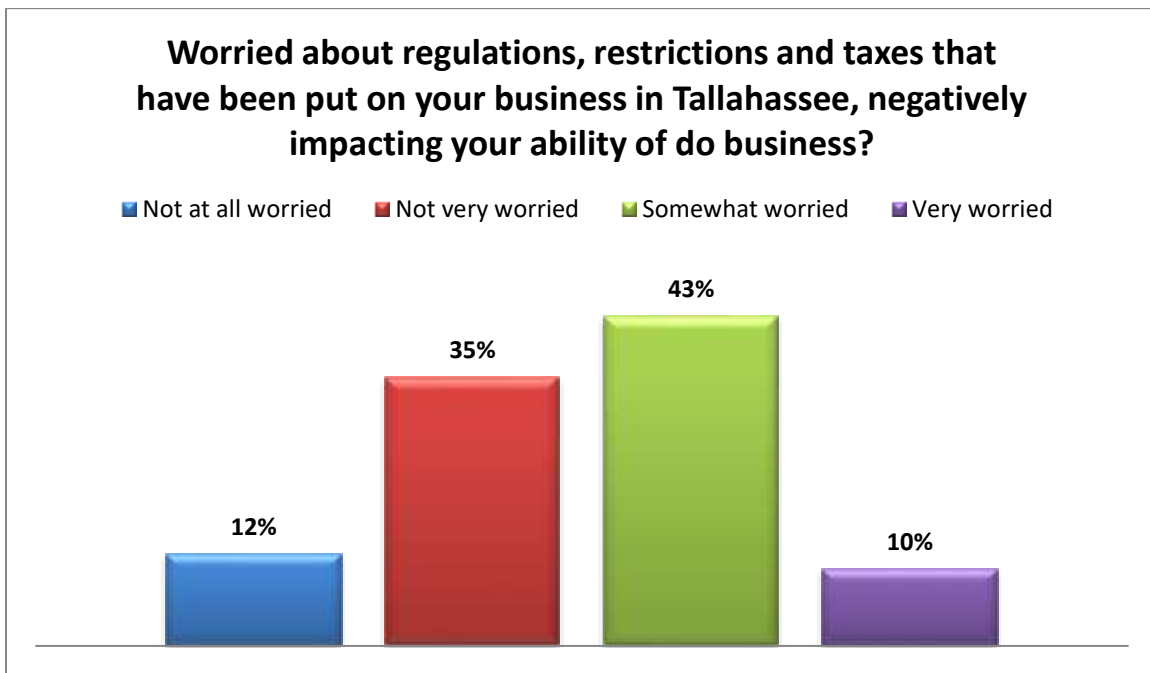
Q15:



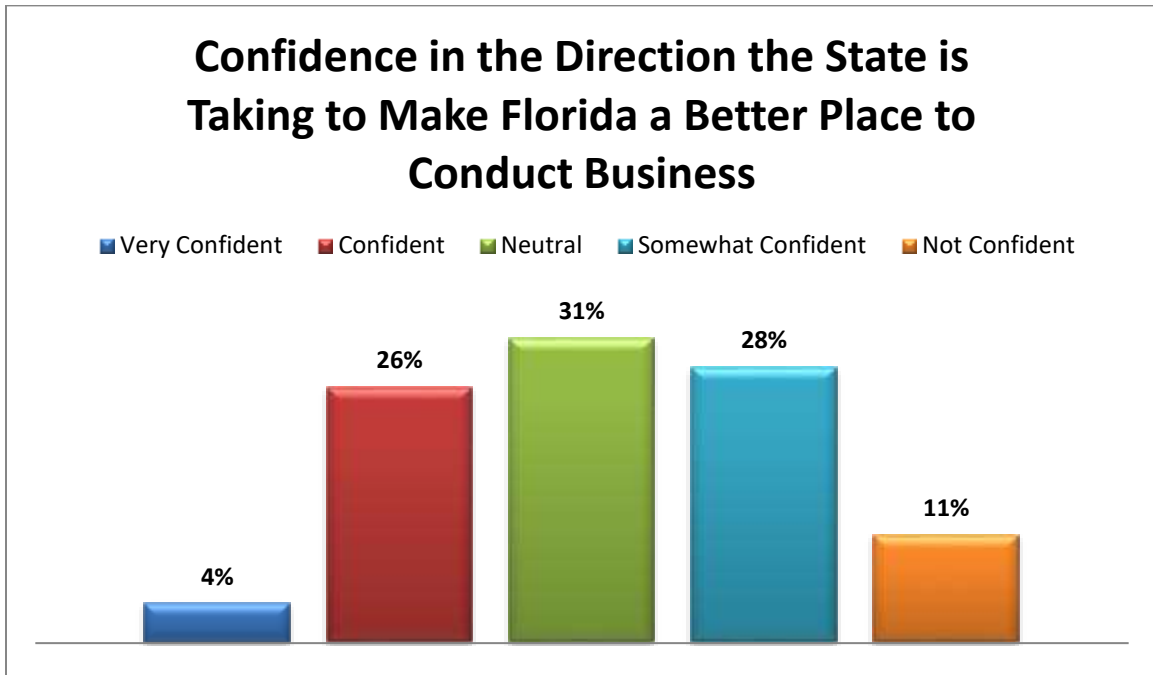
Q16:



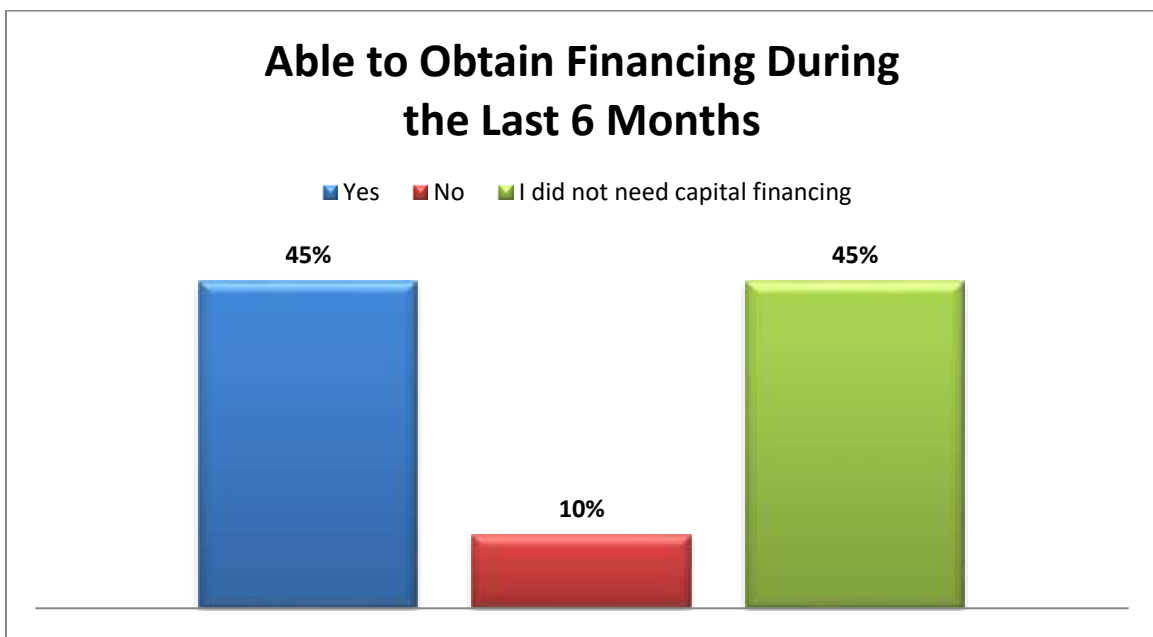
Q17:



Q19:



Q21:



Q22:

