Director Sentiment Survey 2026

The Institute of Directors' (IoD) *Director Sentiment Survey 2026*, produced in association with ASB, takes the pulse of New Zealand's governance community to identify the issues and challenges facing directors and boards.

Economic performance

48%



of directors expected New Zealand's economic performance to improve over the next 12 months, down from 54.7% in 2025. Fewer expected a decline (12.6%, compared with 18.3% in 2025), keeping net economic confidence (improve minus decline) broadly stable at 35.5%, compared with 36.4% in 2025.

Organisational performance

58%



of directors expected their organisation's performance to improve over the next 12 months, down from 63.1% in 2025. Fewer expected a decline (6.2%, compared with 12.1% in 2025), lifting net organisational confidence (improve minus decline) to 52.0%, compared with 51.0% in 2025.

Board adaptation

46%



of directors expected their board structure, including committees, to need revision as business models evolve, up from 31.2% in 2025. Almost half (48.7%) also anticipated changes to how their boards operate over the next three years in response to external pressures.

External challenge

82%



of directors anticipated at least one form of external challenge over the next two years. Political or policy pressure (40.3%), regulator or funder scrutiny (37.0%) and member or customer challenge (32.2%) were the leading pressures identified.

Preparing for disruption

Technology and AI

80%



of directors said technology and AI would significantly reshape board practices by 2030, up from 79.4% in 2025 and 62.8% in 2024. More than two-thirds (68.4%) said their boards were working with management to determine how technology and AI could enhance productivity and processes.

Testing strategy

36%



of directors said their boards regularly tested strategy against future scenarios or critical assumptions. A further 43.3% did so occasionally, while half (50%) expected major disruptive change in their industry within the next two years.

Board capability

49%



of directors believed their boards had the right skills and experience to manage increasing complexity and risk, little changed from 48.4% in 2025. Almost two-thirds (63.3%) sought external expertise and advice to support strategy and risk management, up from 59.4% in 2025.