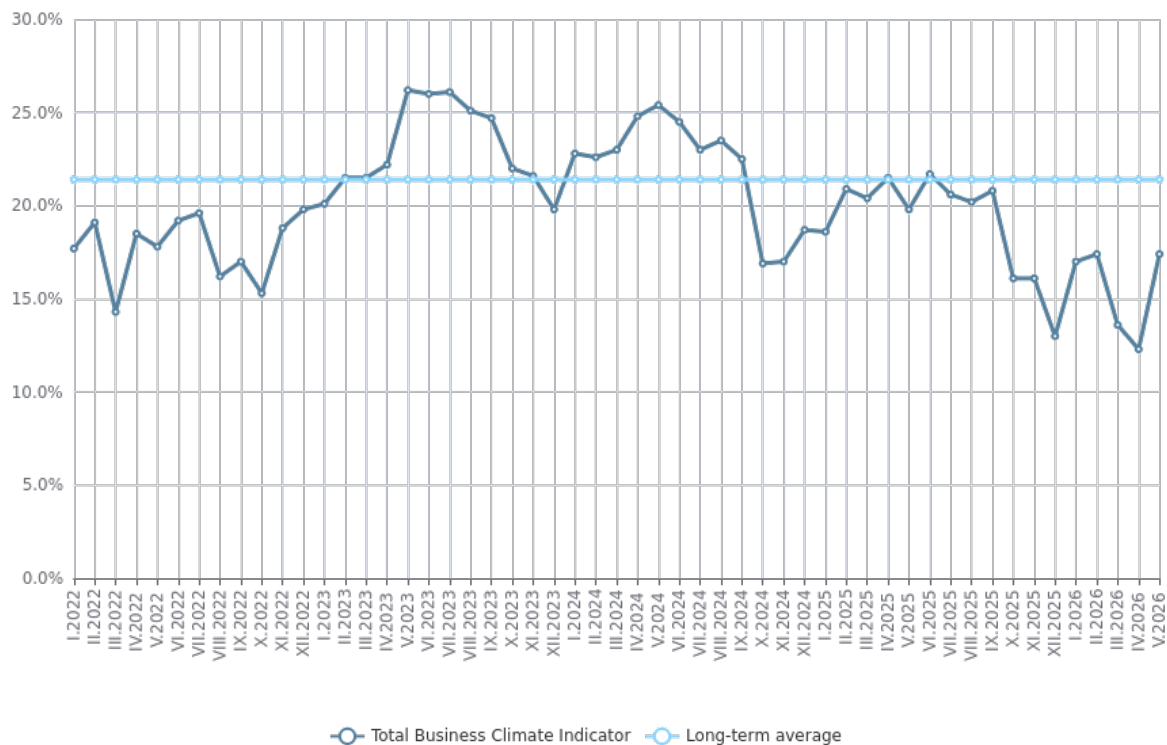




BUSINESS SURVEY IN INDUSTRY, CONSTRUCTION, RETAIL TRADE AND SERVICE SECTOR - MAY 2026

In May 2026, **the total business climate indicator** increases by 5.1 percentage points compared to the previous month (from 12.3% to 17.4%) (Figure 1), as a growth of the indicator is registered in all observed sectors - industry, construction, retail trade and services.

Figure 1. Business climate - total



Industry. The composite indicator 'business climate in industry' increases by 6.0 percentage points (from 12.4% to 18.4%) (Figure 2), which is due to the optimistic industrial entrepreneurs' assessments and expectations about the business situation of the enterprises. According to them, there is certain increase of the production assurance with orders, as their forecasts about the activity over the next 3 months are favourable (Figure 3).

Figure 2. Business climate in industry

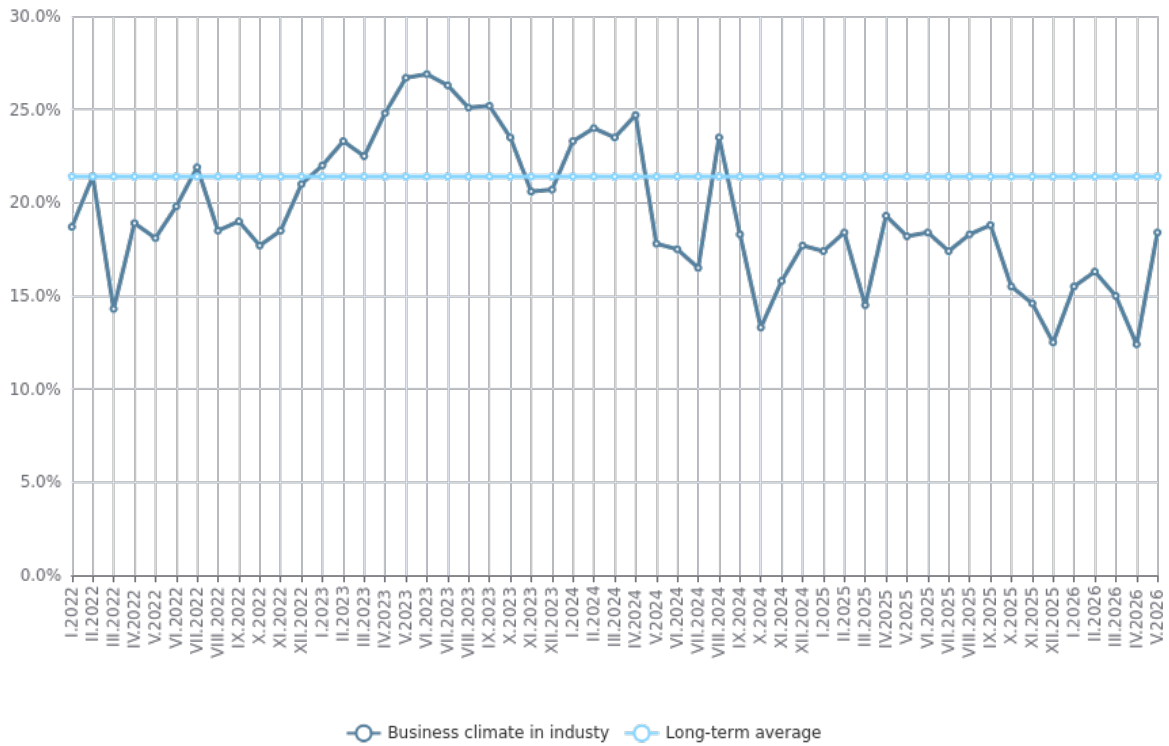
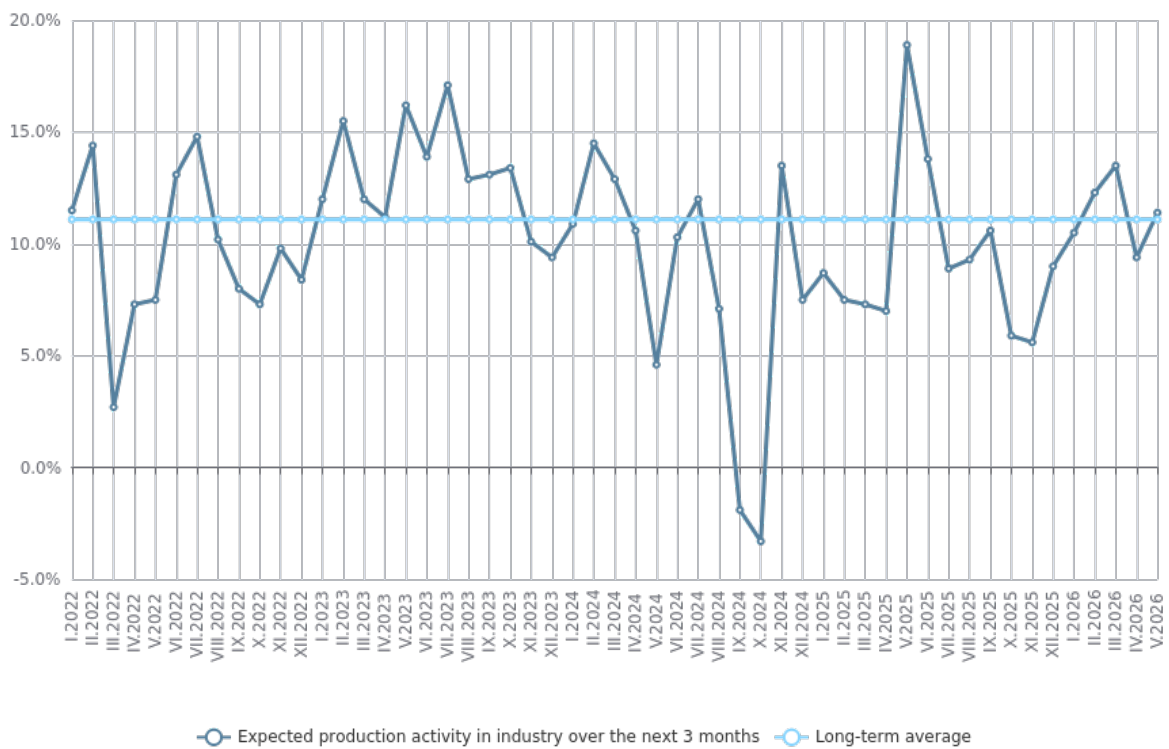


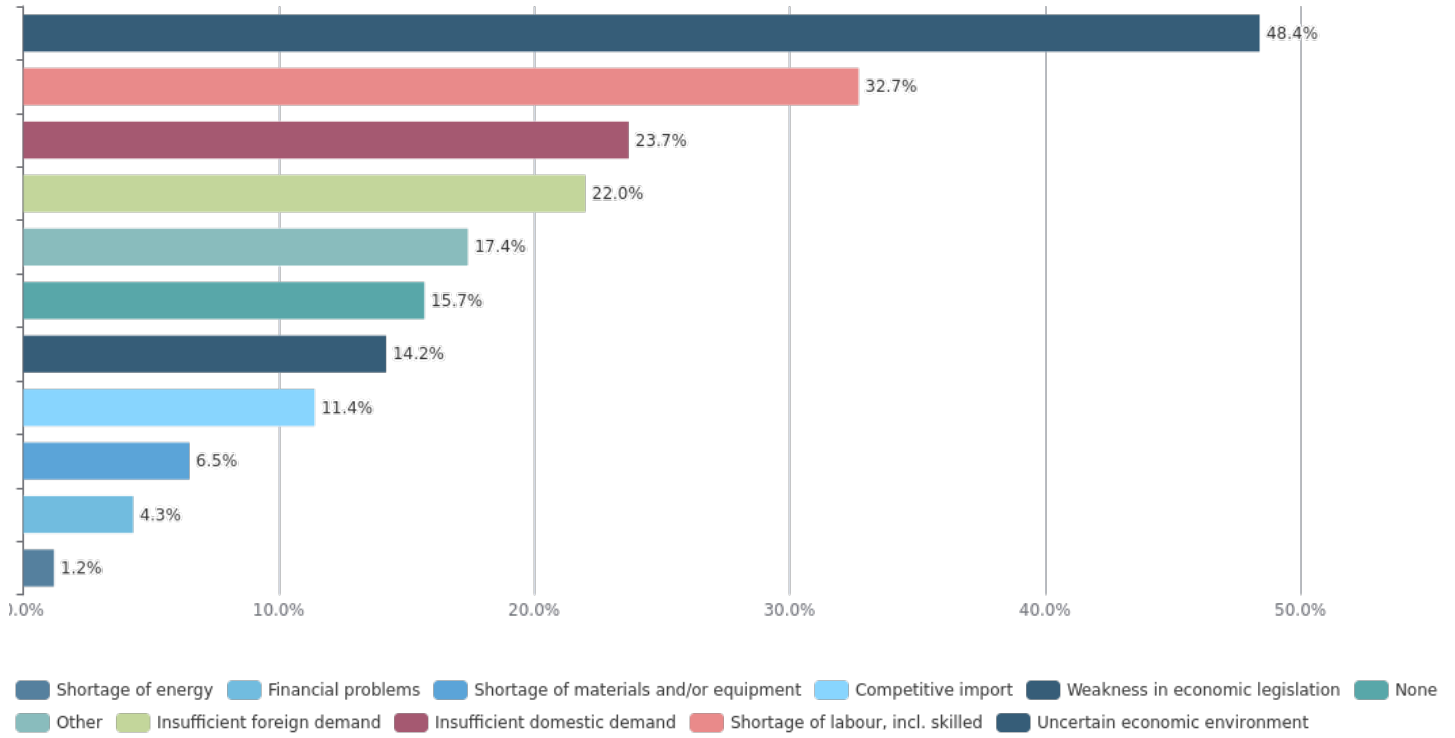
Figure 3. Expected production activity in industry over the next 3 months



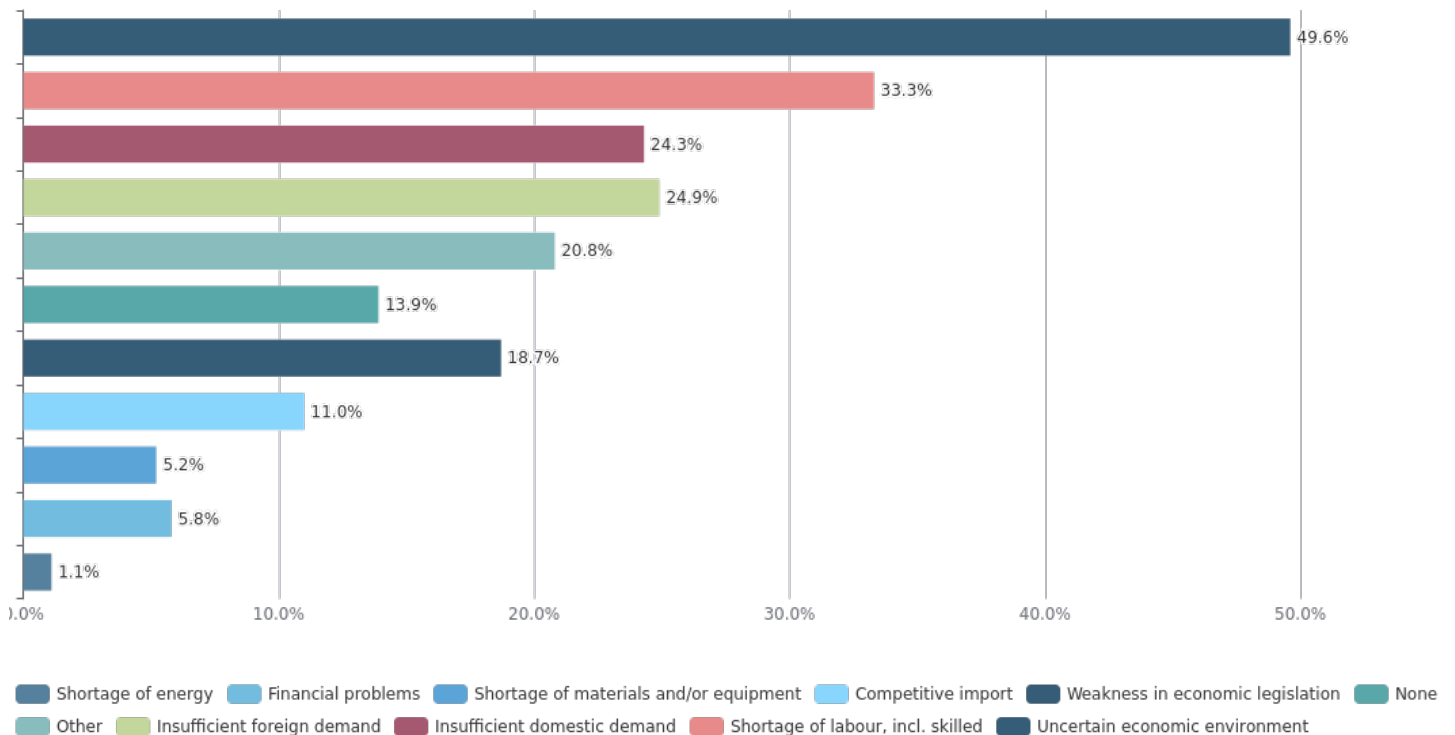
The most serious difficulties for the activity of the enterprises remain connected with the uncertain economic environment and the shortage of labour (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Factors limiting the activity in industry
(Relative share of enterprises)

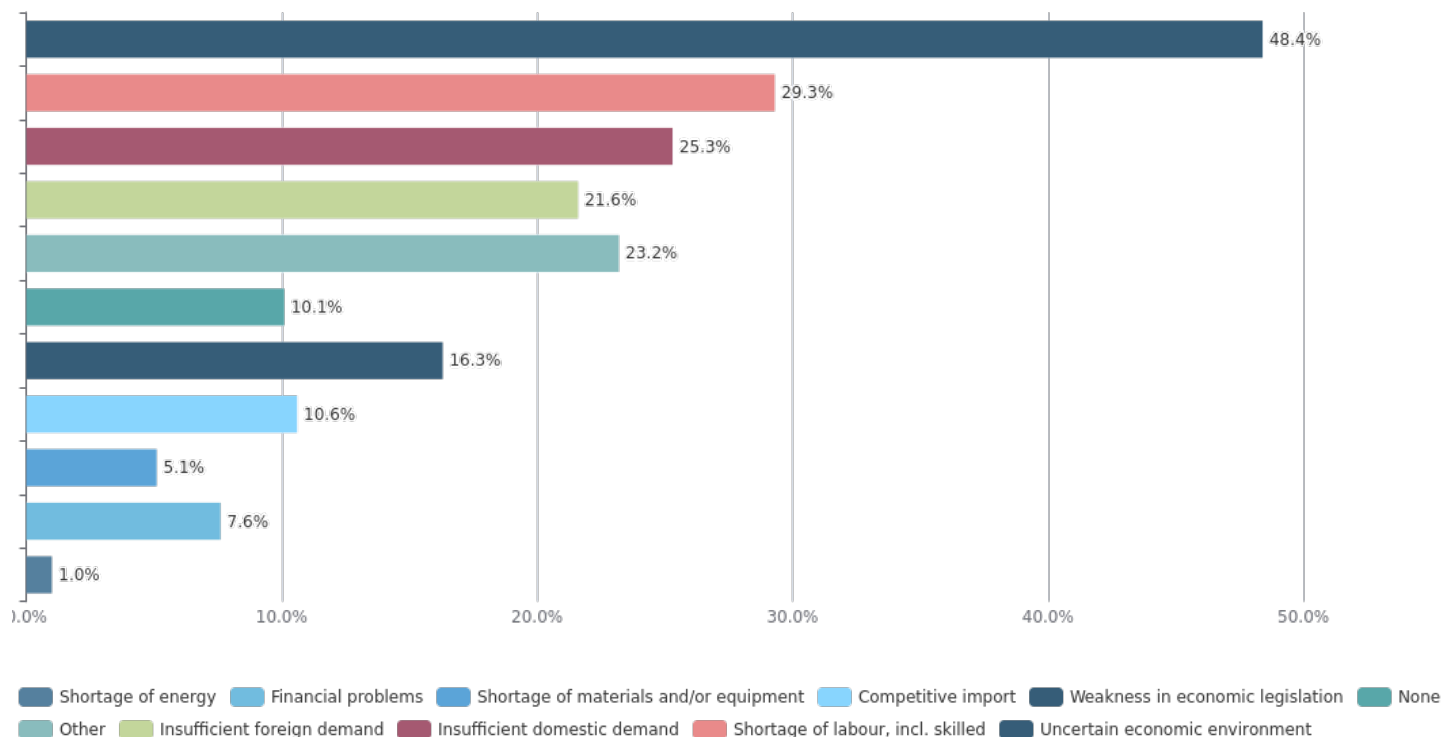
V.2026



IV.2026



Long-term average



Concerning the selling prices in the industry, 76.3% of the managers foresee them to remain unchanged over the next 3 months.

Construction. In May, the composite indicator 'business climate in construction' increases by 4.6 percentage points (from 11.4% to 16.0%) (Figure 5) as a result of the improved construction entrepreneurs' expectations about the business situation of the enterprises over the next 6 months. Their forecasts about the construction activity over the next 3 months are also more optimistic (Figure 6).

Figure 5. Business climate in construction

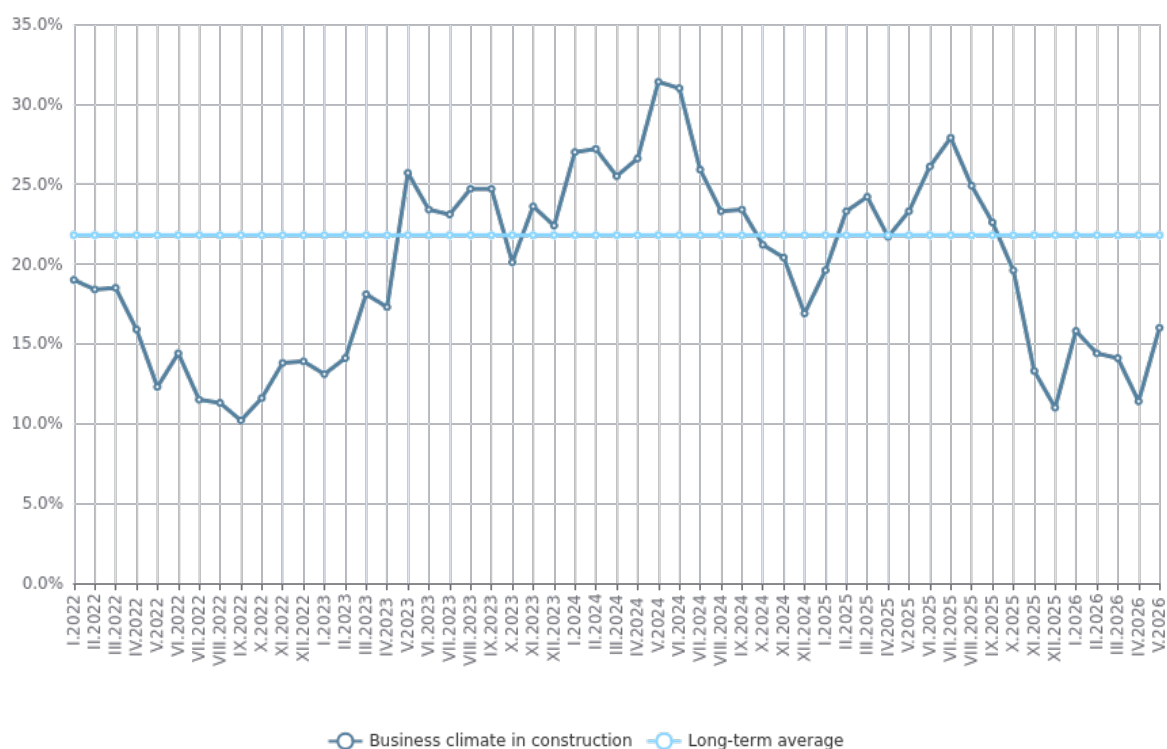
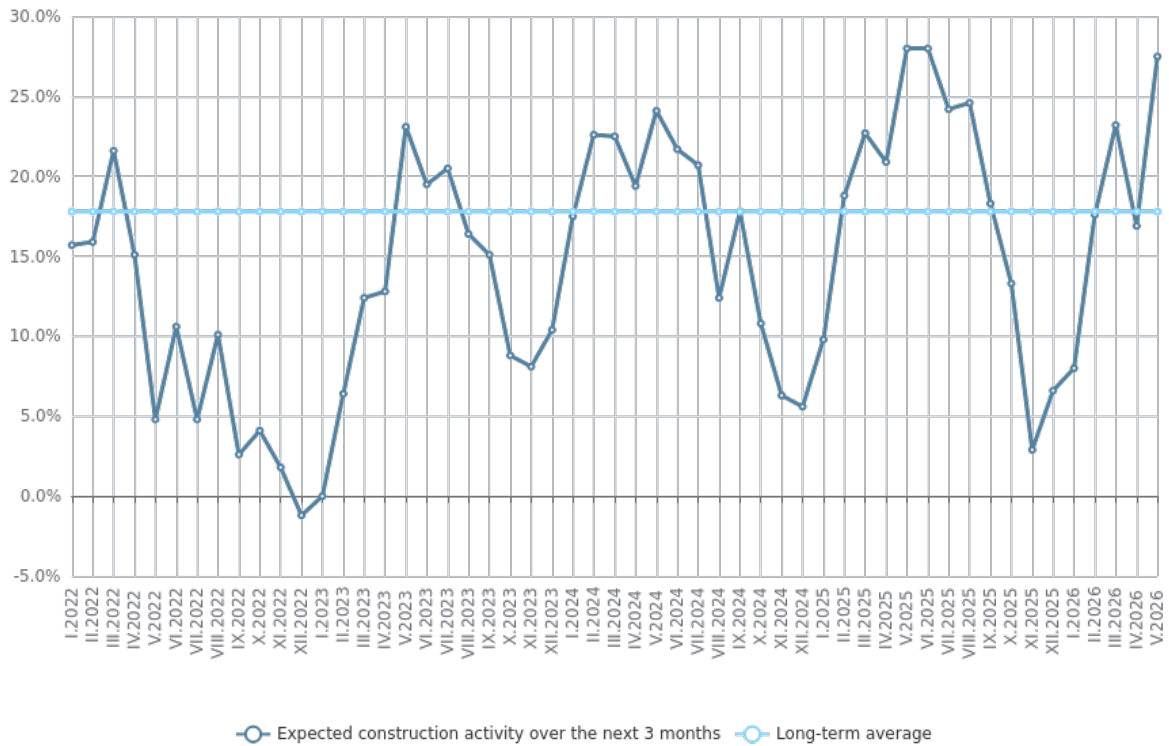


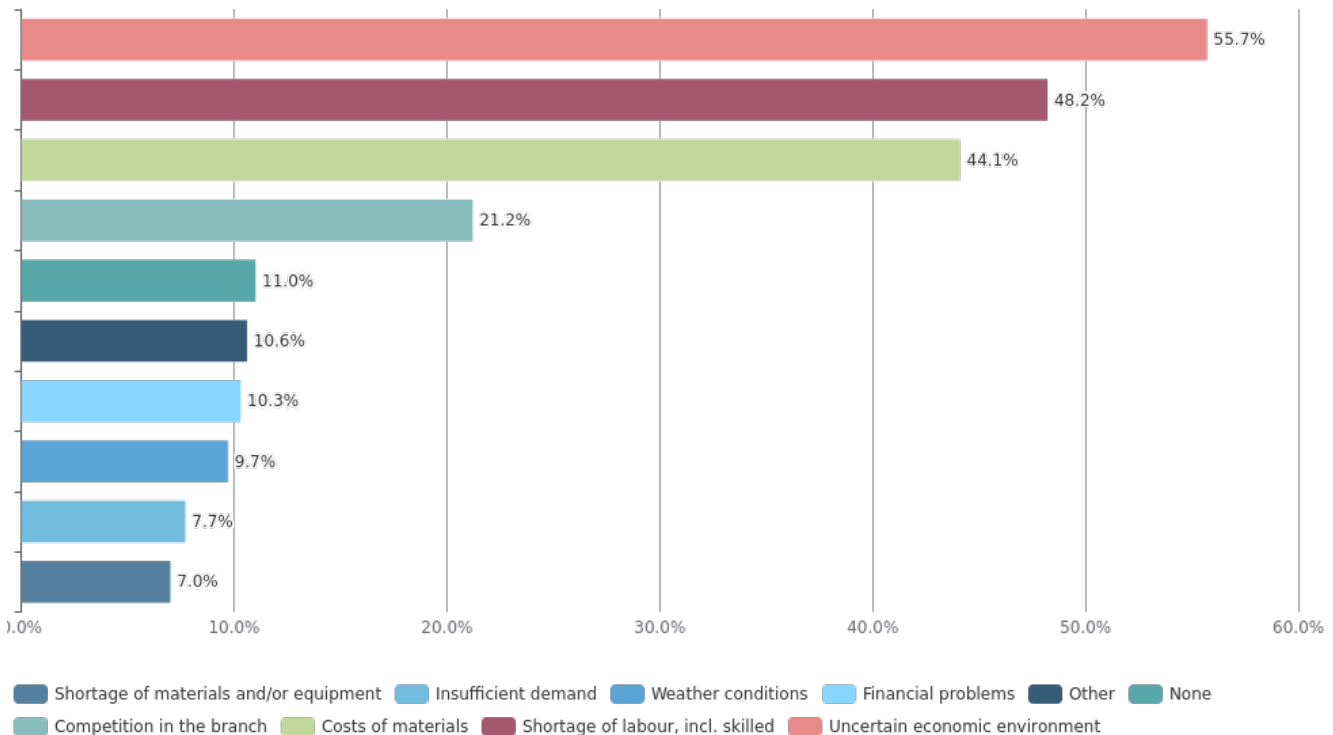
Figure 6. Expected construction activity over the next 3 months



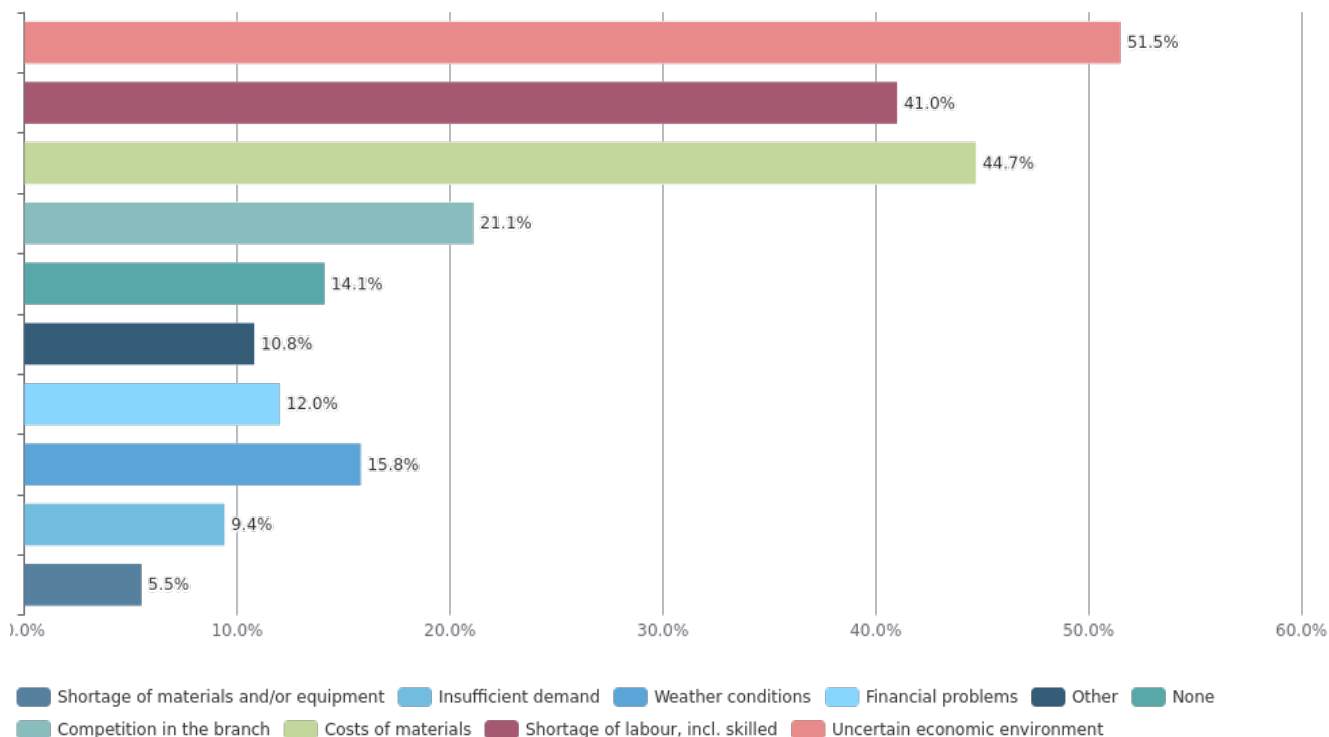
The main obstacles limiting the activity in the sector are the uncertain economic environment and the shortage of labour, followed by the costs of materials (Figure 7).

**Figure 7. Factors limiting the activity in construction
(Relative share of enterprises)**

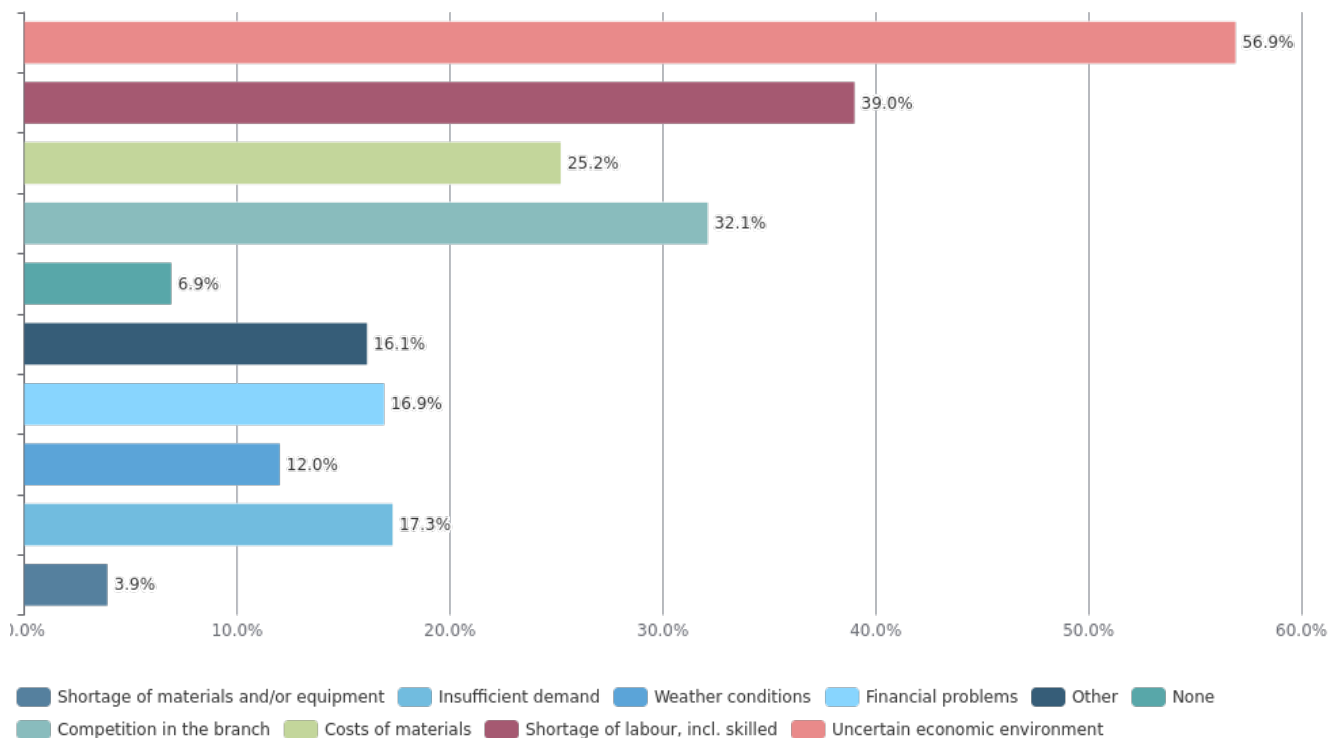
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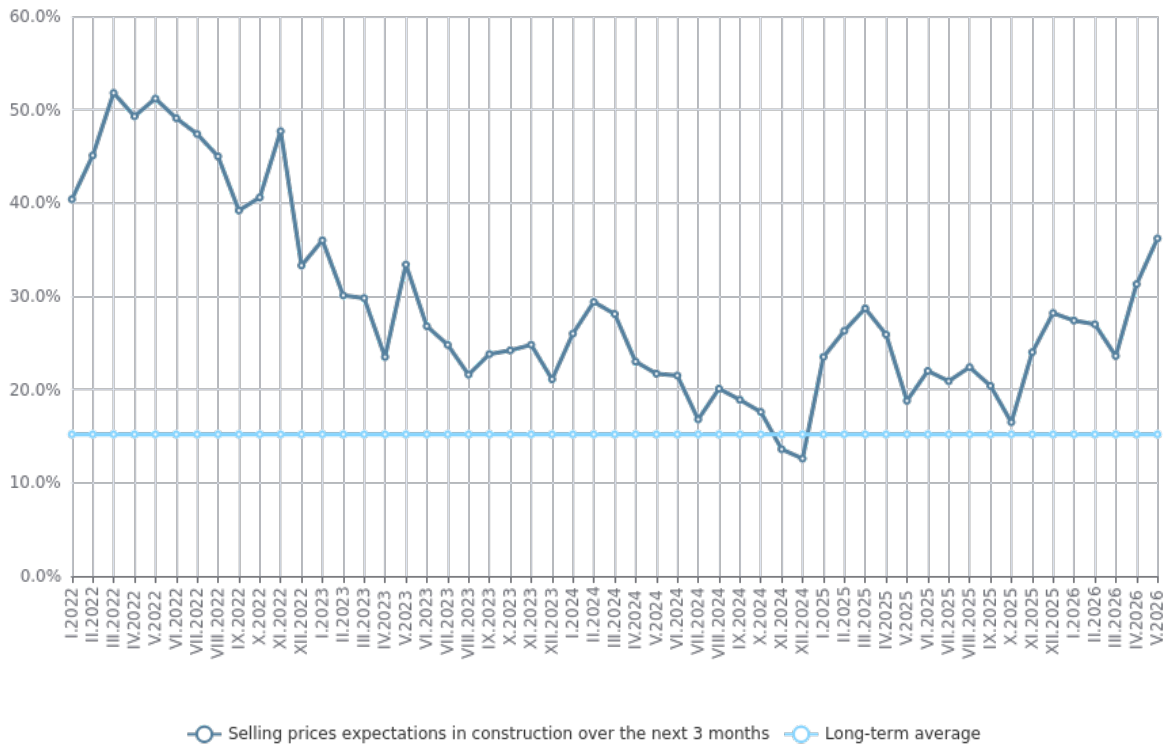


Long-term average



Regarding the selling prices in the construction, the managers continue to expect them to increase over the next 3 months (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Selling prices expectations in construction over the next 3 months



Retail trade. The composite indicator 'business climate in retail trade' increases by 1.1 percentage points (from 24.8% to 25.9%) (Figure 9), which is due to the positive retailers' assessments about the present business situation of the enterprises. However, their expectations about both the volume of sales (Figure 10) and the orders placed with suppliers over the next 3 months are more reserved.

Figure 9. Business climate in retail trade

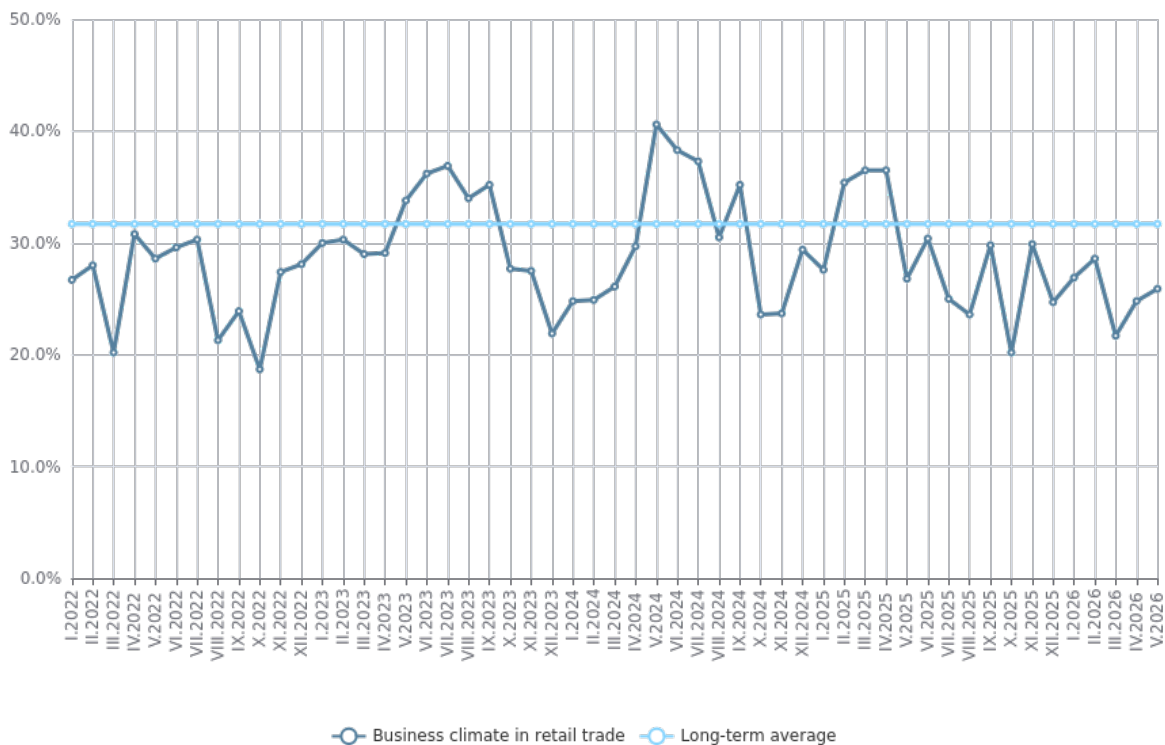
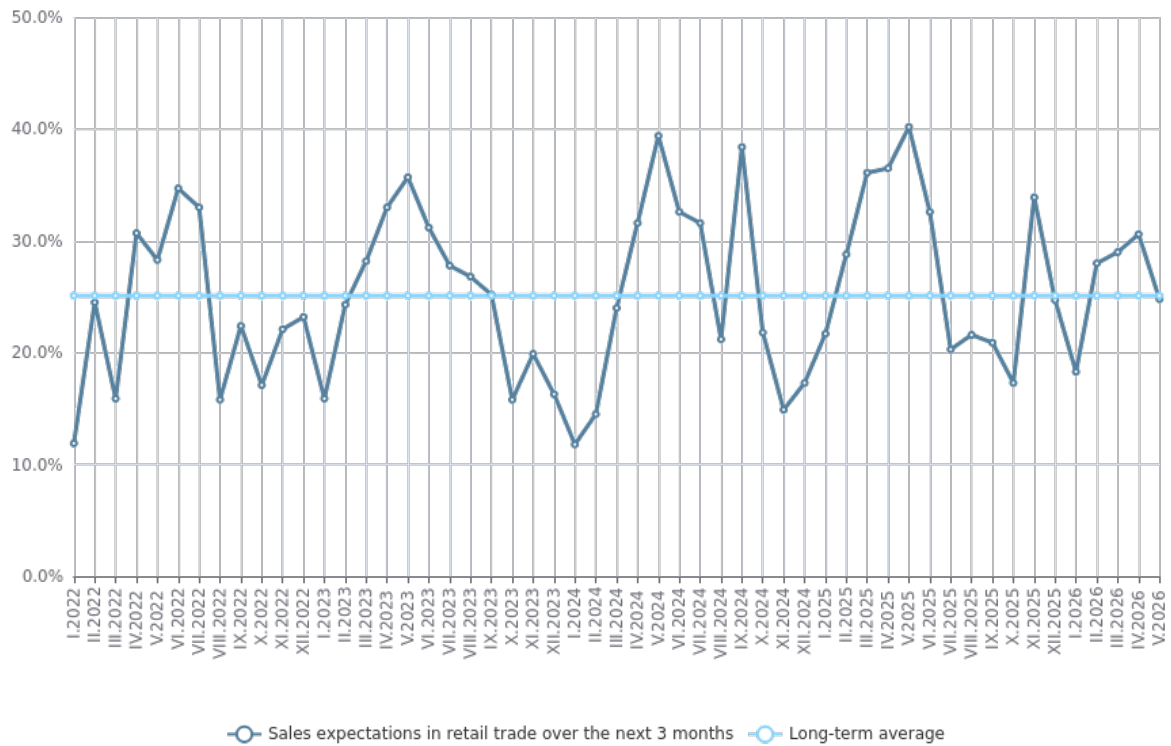


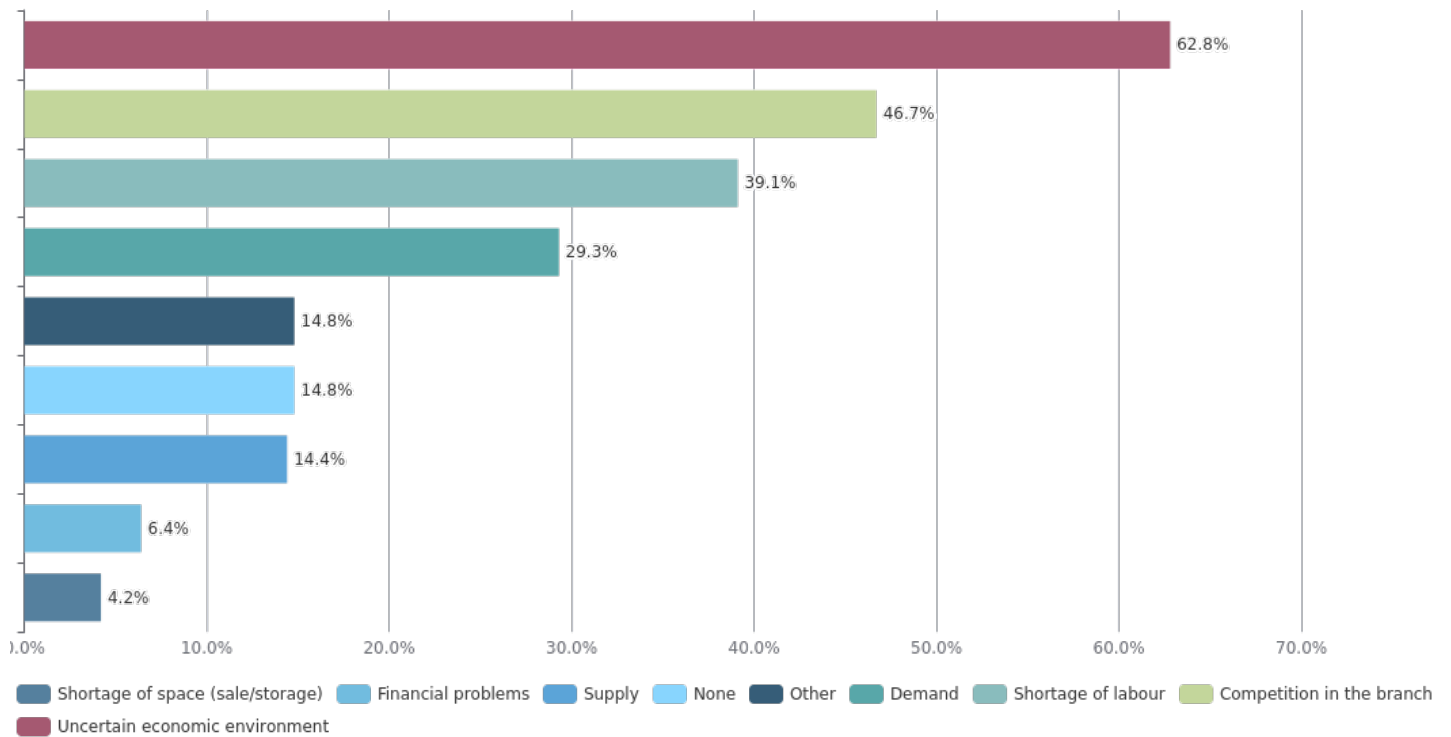
Figure 10. Sales expectations in retail trade over the next 3 months



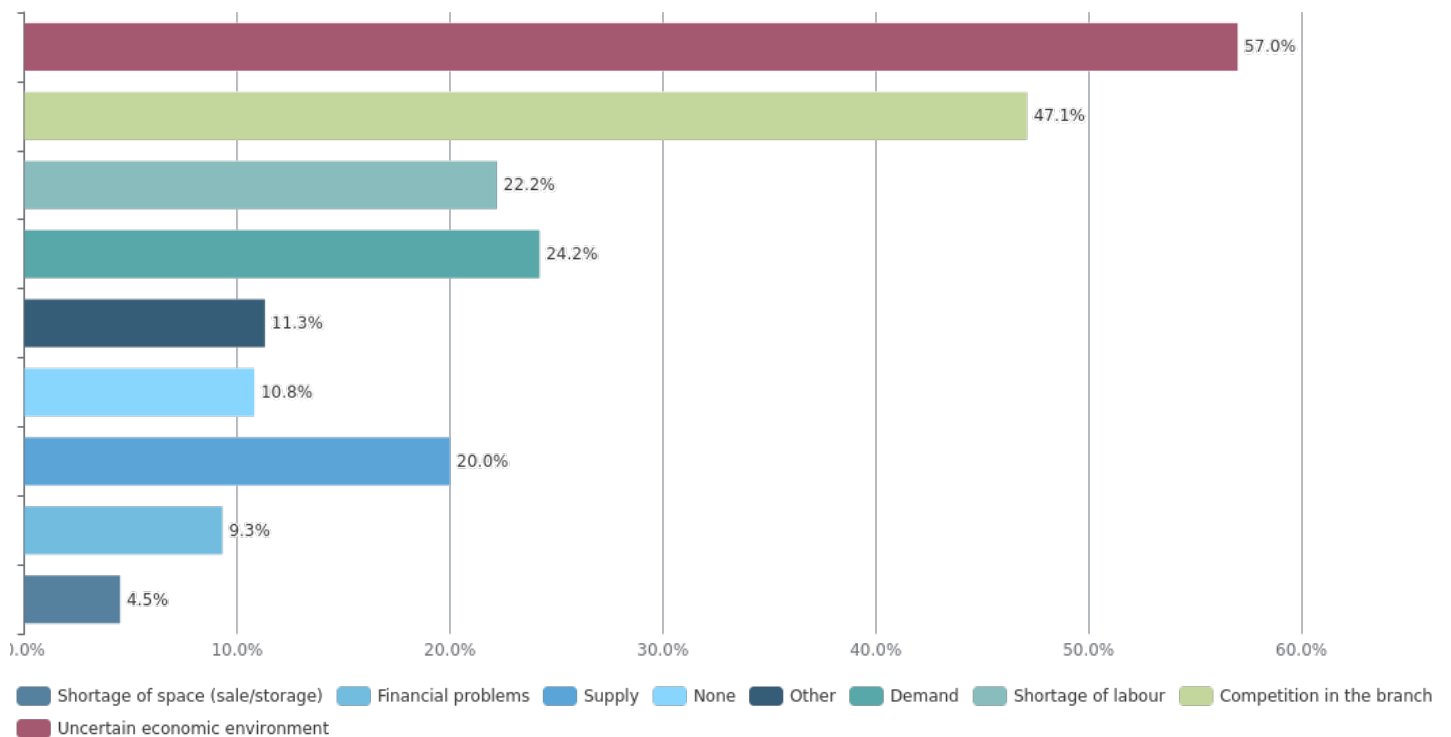
The most serious problems for the activity of the enterprises remain the uncertain economic environment and competition in the branch, as in the last month an increase of the negative influence of the factor 'shortage of labour' is reported (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Factors limiting the activity in retail trade
(Relative share of enterprises)

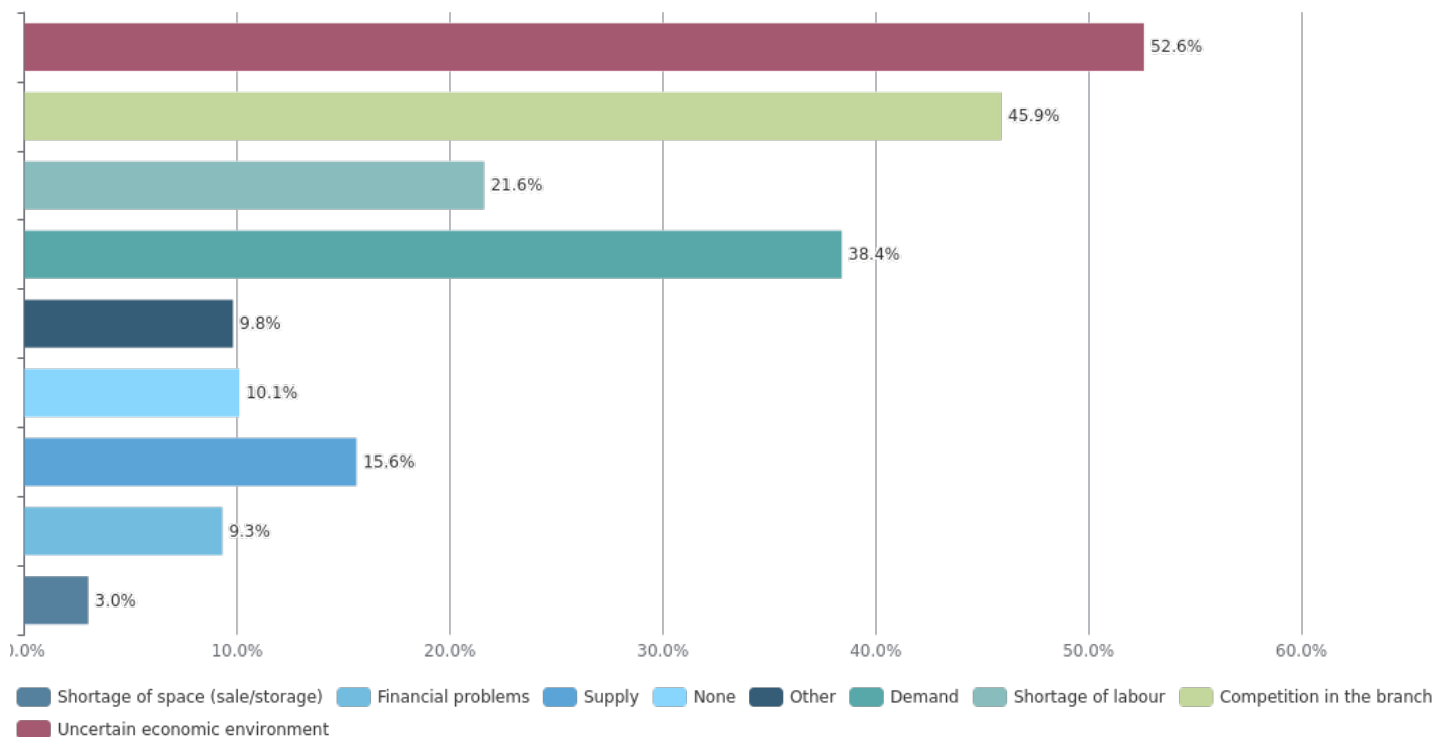
V.2026



IV.2026



Long-term average



The majority of the retailers do not foresee a change in the selling prices over the next 3 months.

Service sector^[1]. In May, the composite indicator 'business climate in service sector' increases by 7.8 percentage points (from 0.4% to 8.2%) (Figure 12) as a result of the optimistic managers' assessments and expectations about the business situation of the enterprises. Their opinions about both the present and expected demand for services are also improved (Figure 13).

[1] Excl. trade.

Figure 12. Business climate in service sector

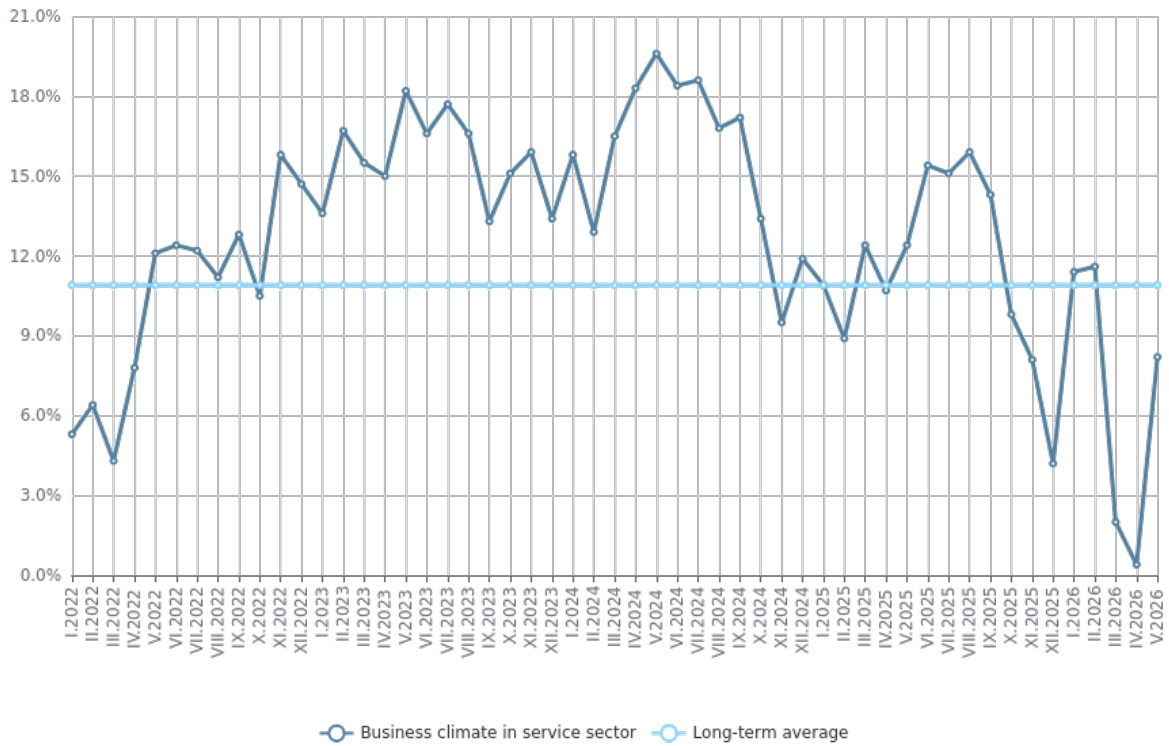
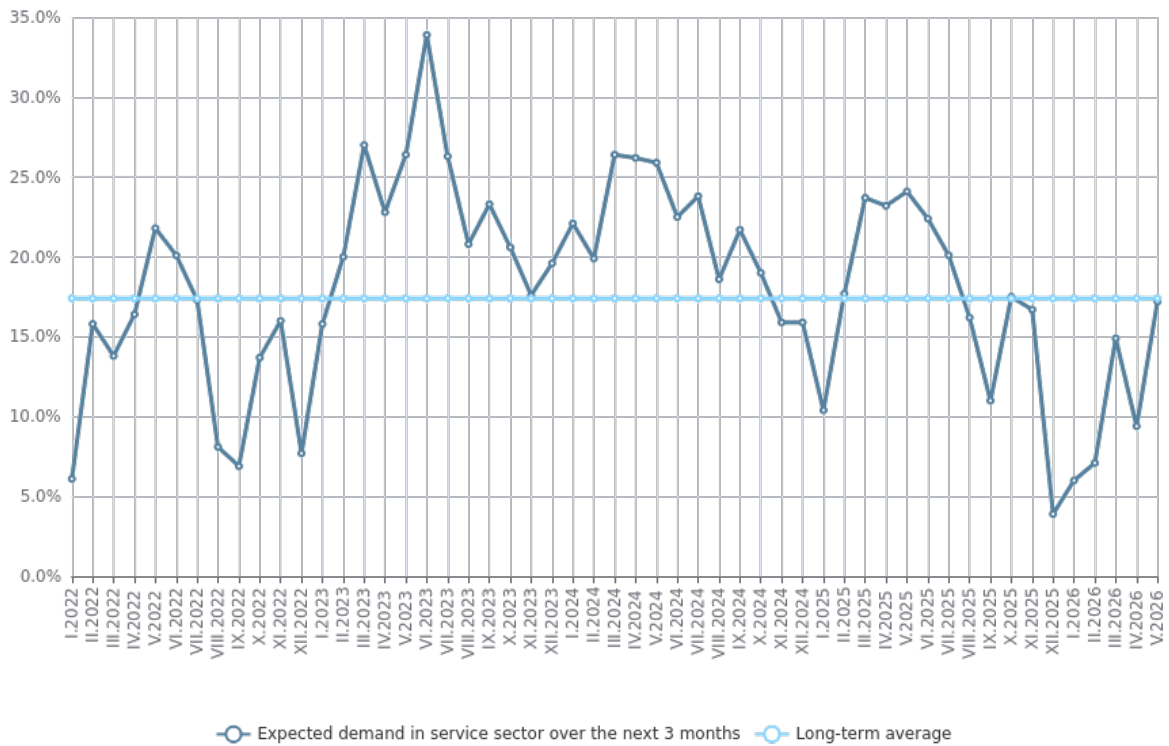


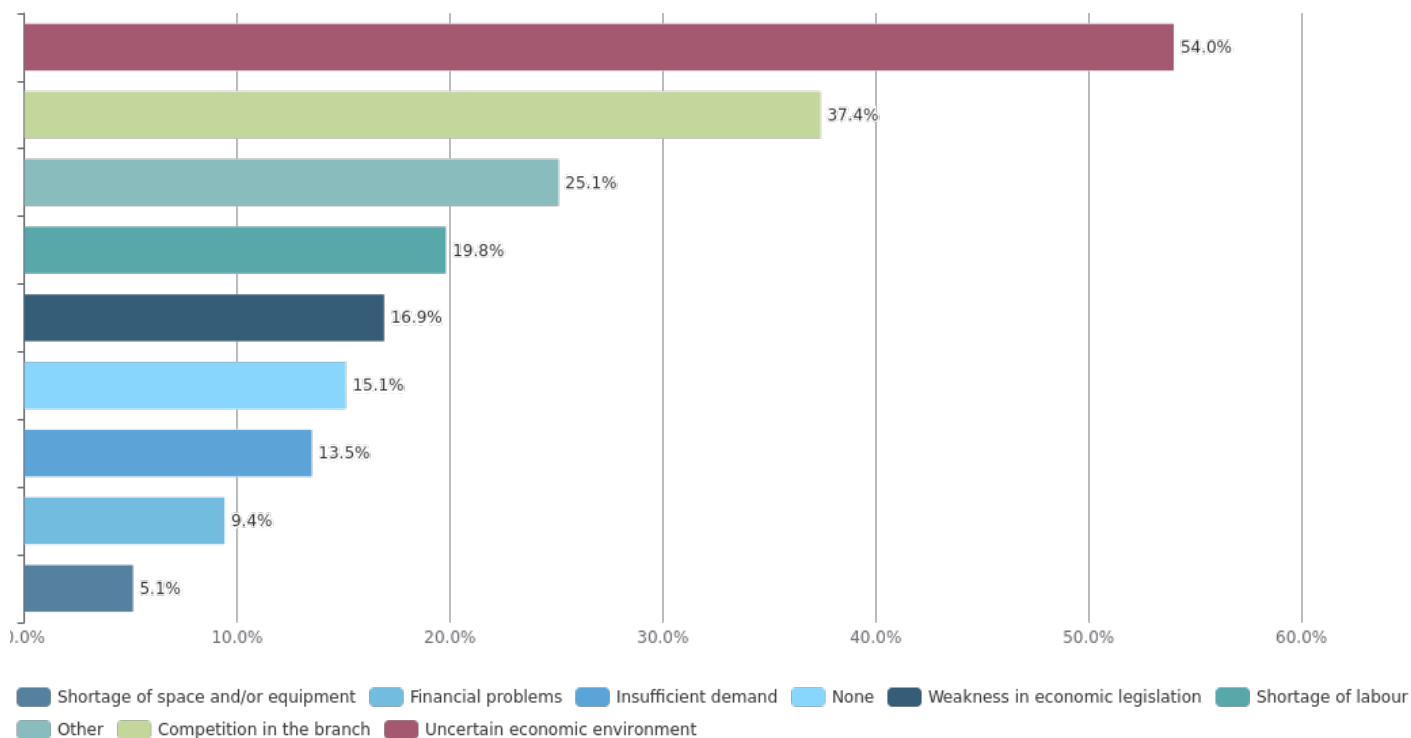
Figure 13. Expected demand in service sector over the next 3 months



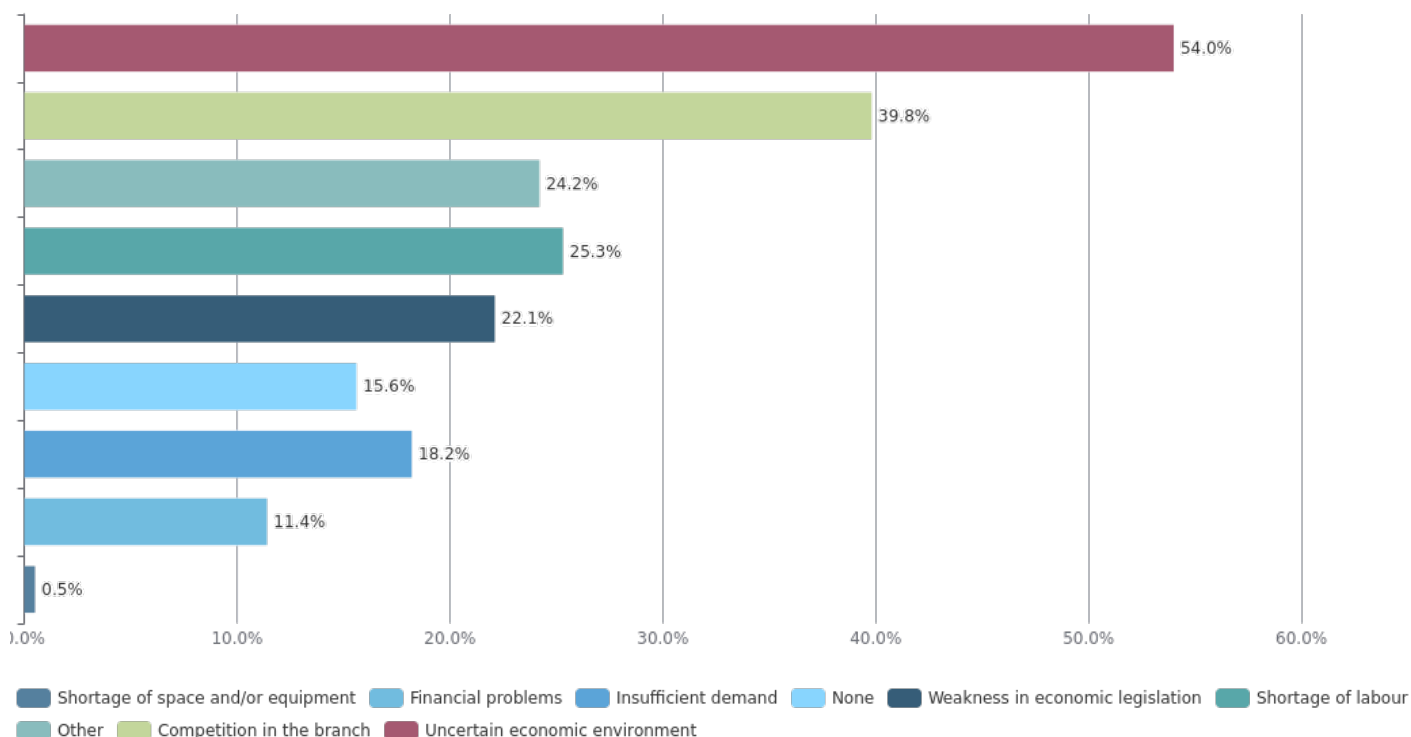
The factors limiting with the most extend the business development continue to be the uncertain economic environment and the competition in the branch, pointed out respectively by 54.0% and 37.4% of the enterprises (Figure 14).

**Figure 14. Factors limiting the activity in service sector
(Relative share of enterprises)**

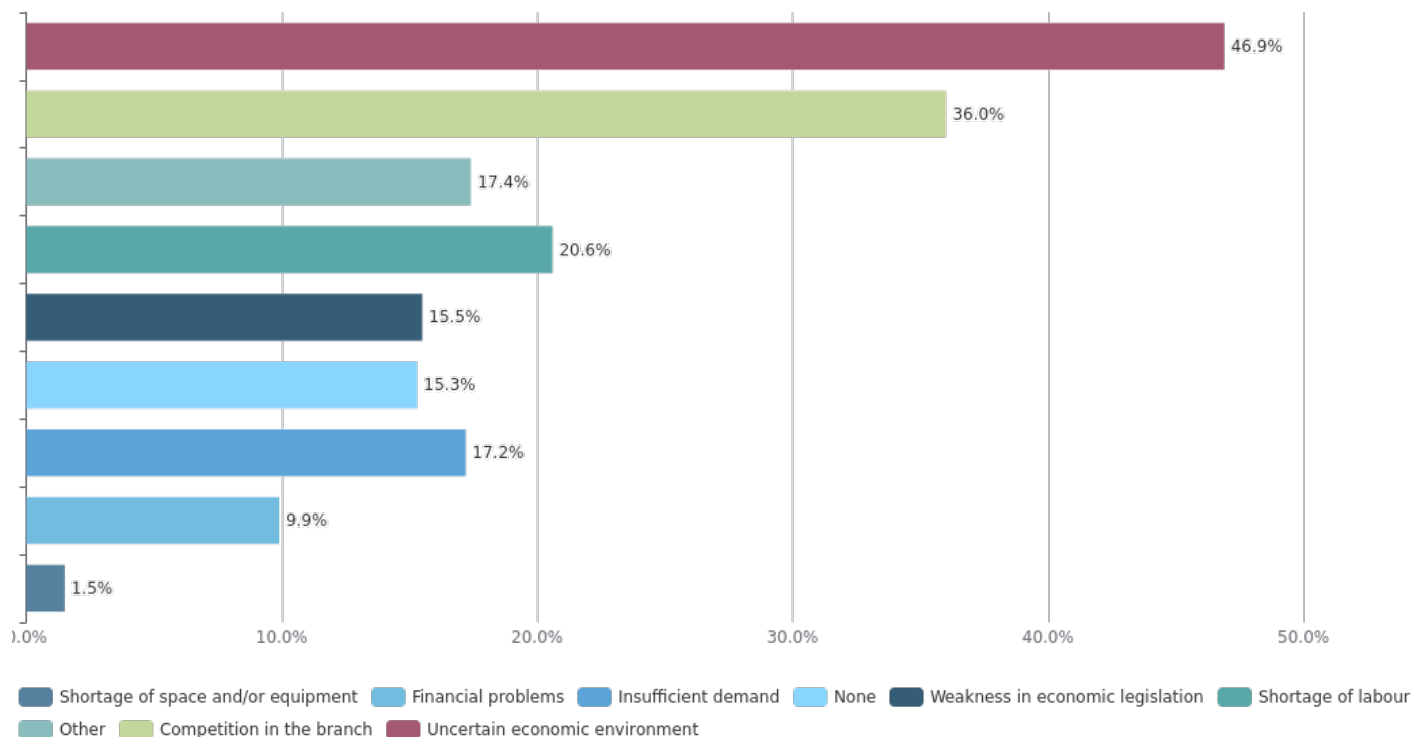
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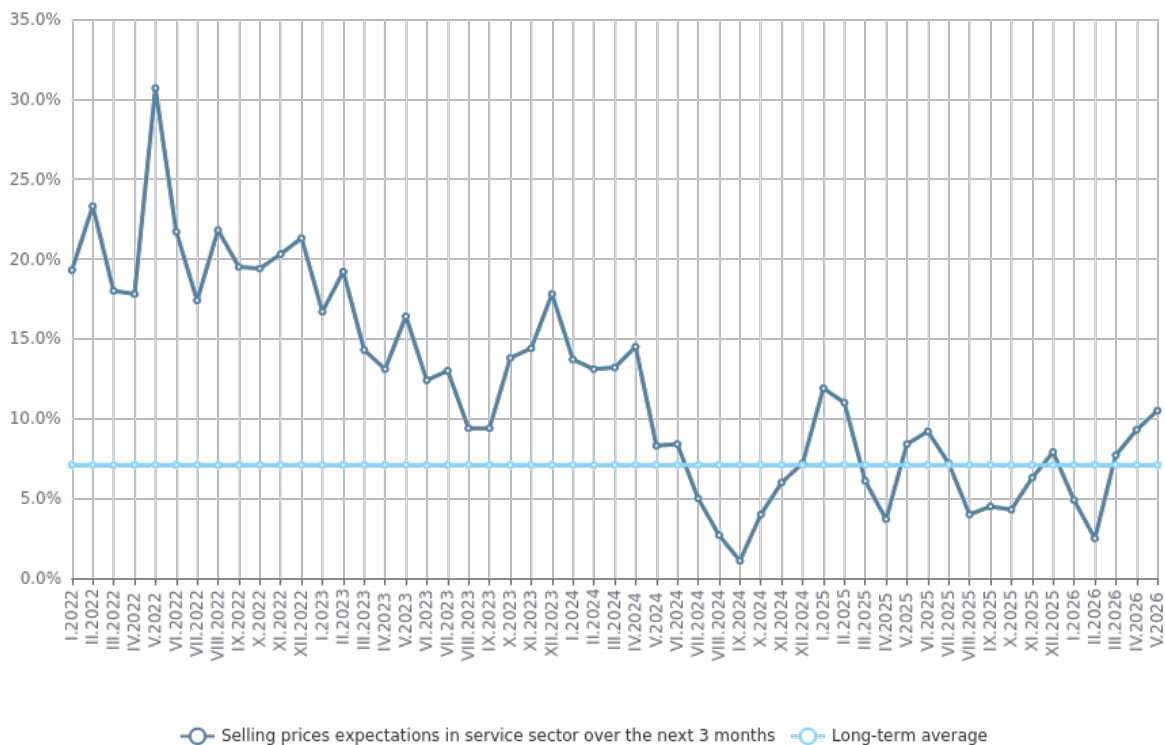


Long-term average




Regarding the selling prices in the service sector, the managers expect an increase, although the prevailing part of them foresee them to preserve their level over the next 3 months (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Selling prices expectations in service sector over the next 3 months



Methodological notes

The business surveys in the industry, construction, retail trade and in the service sector gather information about the entrepreneurs' opinions about the situation and development of their business.

Since May 2002, all business surveys have been co-financed by NSI and the European Commission () according to agreements signed between these two institutions. NSI has undertaken to conduct the surveys according to the Harmonized EU Programme. Any notice or publication of NSI reflects the author's view, and the Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Since July 2010, NSI has started publishing the business surveys data according to the new Classification of Economic Activities (NACE.BG - 2008) (NACE Rev. 2). All of the time series have been recalculated according to the Classification and are comparable throughout time.

The replies to questions from the inquiries are presented in a three-option ordinal scale of the following type: 'up', 'unchanged', 'down' or 'above normal', 'normal', and 'below normal'. The balances of assessments are calculated as a difference of the relative shares of extreme variants of answers. The 'Business climate indicator' is a geometric mean of balances of assessments of the present business situation and the expected business situation of enterprises in the next 6 months.

The total business climate indicator is a weighted average of four branch business climate indicators in: industry, construction, retail trade and in the service sector. The last indicator of the business climate in the service sector has been included in the total time series since May 2002.