



Confidence in Action: **Tracking the Workforce Perspective**

Waves 4–6
October 2025 through January 2026

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Study Overview

Background

The *Workforce Confidence Index* is a multi-wave quantitative tracking study conducted collaboratively by [RONIN International](#) and [myCLEARopinion Insights Hub](#).

It measures U.S. workforce sentiment toward job security, financial confidence, institutional trust, and economic outlook.

This edition draws on data collected between **October 2025 and January 2026** from more than 2,000 professionals across key sectors including industrial, construction, manufacturing, engineering, food and beverage, technology, energy, healthcare, and professional services.

Methodology

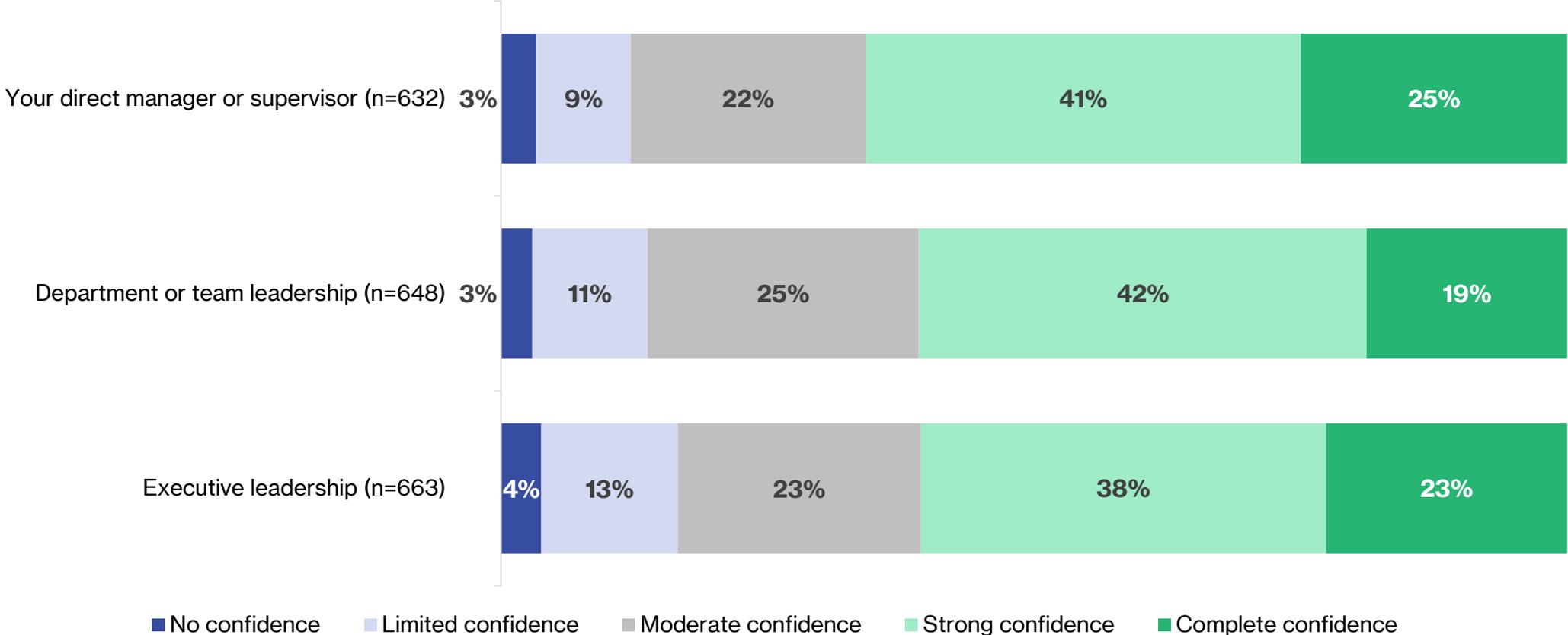
Respondents were screened for U.S. employment across a diverse mix of sectors, including construction, engineering, HVACR and mechanical systems, manufacturing, food and beverage, energy, logistics, technology, healthcare, and professional services.

Wave	Field Dates	Sample (n)
Wave 4	Oct 2025	748
Wave 5	Nov/Dec 2025	643
Wave 6	Jan 2026	677

Confidence in Leadership

Confidence in Leadership | January 2026

➤ Confidence in...

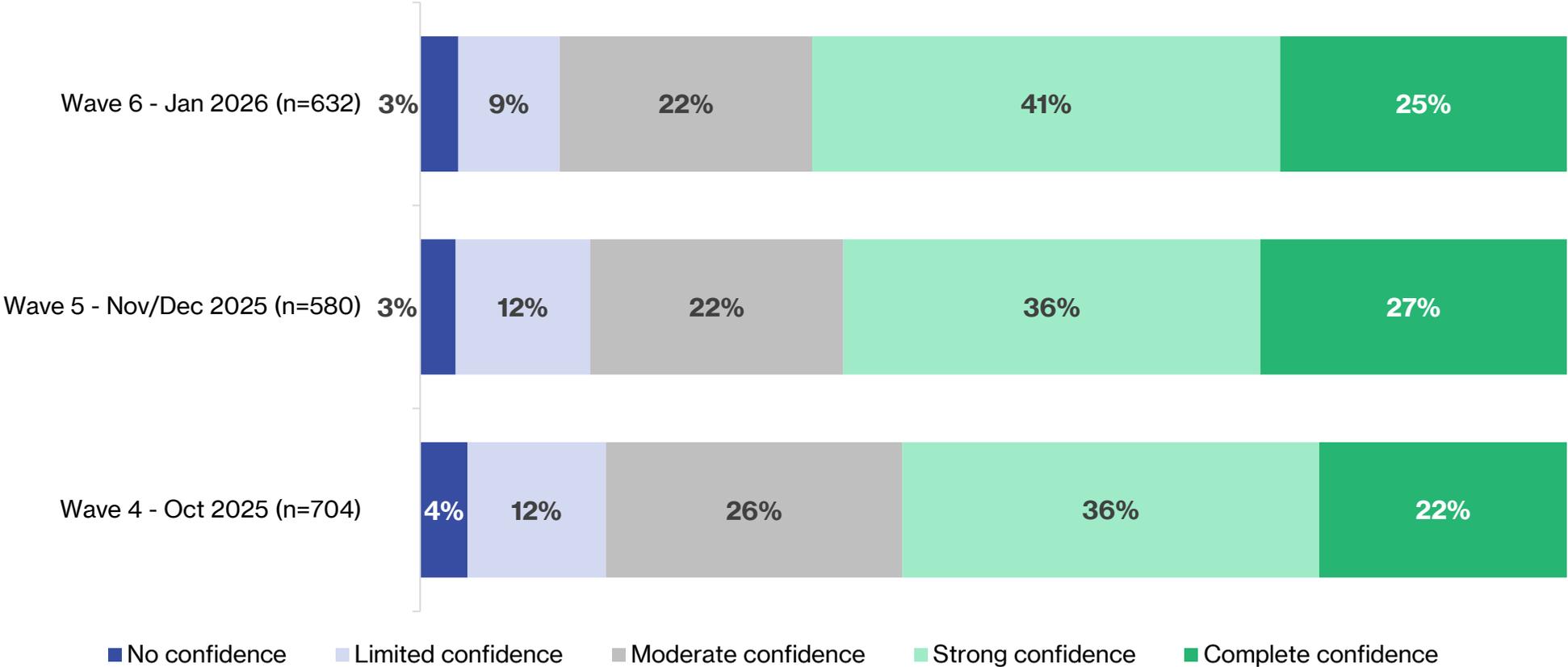


"Not applicable" responses removed for analysis

Q300. How confident are you in the following levels of leadership within your organization to make sound decisions in the current economic climate?

Confidence in Leadership

➤ Confidence in your direct manager or supervisor



"Not applicable" responses removed for analysis

Q300. How confident are you in the following levels of leadership within your organization to make sound decisions in the current economic climate?

Confidence in Leadership

➤ Confidence in department or team leadership (e.g., department head, project lead, regional manager)

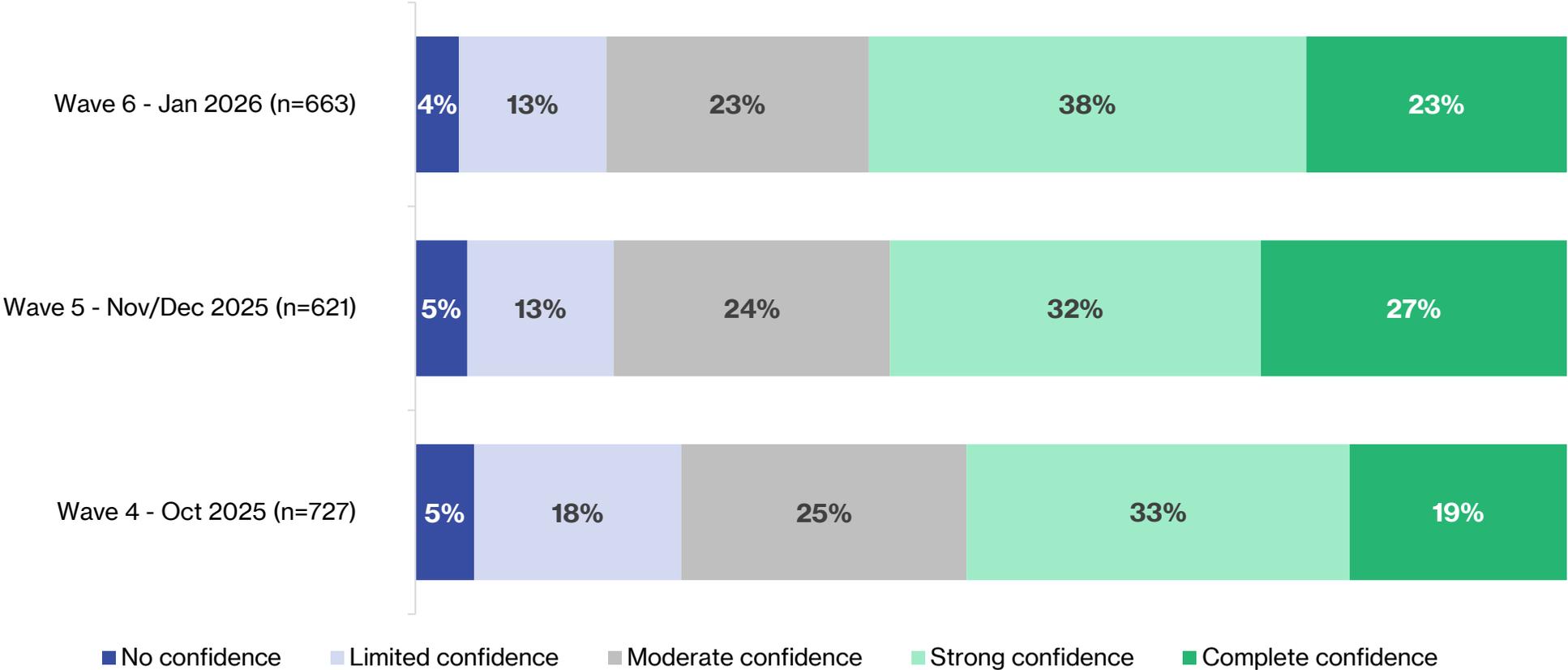


"Not applicable" responses removed for analysis

Q300. How confident are you in the following levels of leadership within your organization to make sound decisions in the current economic climate?

Confidence in Leadership

➤ Confidence in executive leadership (e.g., CEO, company president, or ownership group)



"Not applicable" responses removed for analysis

Q300. How confident are you in the following levels of leadership within your organization to make sound decisions in the current economic climate?

Confidence in Leadership: Summary

Leadership confidence remains strong in January, with continued gains at the executive and direct-manager levels and overall stability at the department level.

Direct managers continue to be the most trusted leaders. Strong or complete confidence rose to **66%**, the highest level observed across these waves, while limited or no confidence declined to 12%. This reinforces the consistent pattern of highest trust in leaders closest to day-to-day work.

Department and team leadership holds steady at elevated levels. Strong/complete confidence remains at **61%**, nearly unchanged from November–December. However, January shows a shift from complete confidence into strong confidence rather than further movement upward.

Executive leadership continues its gradual recovery from October. Strong/complete confidence increased again to **61%**, up from 59% and well above October's 52%. As with department leadership, this gain is driven more by increases in strong confidence than complete confidence.

Overall:

January does not show a new surge in leadership confidence, but rather a consolidation within the highest tiers. Workers remain highly confident in leadership across all levels, particularly those closest to their work, with sentiment settling into strong confidence as they move into 2026.

Demographics

Industry Sector

	Wave 4 – Oct 2025 (n=748)	Wave 5 – Nov/Dec 2025 (n=643)	Wave 6 – Jan 2026 (n=677)
Architecture / Engineering / Construction (AEC)	13%	24%	12%
Technology / Software / IT Services	10%	5%	12%
Healthcare / Pharmaceuticals / Life Sciences	12%	4%	11%
Manufacturing (General Industrial)	7%	13%	9%
Mechanical Systems / HVACR / Plumbing	8%	12%	9%
Professional / Business Services	7%	5%	7%
Education / Training / Research Institutions	8%	2%	7%
Food & Beverage Manufacturing / Processing	4%	7%	5%
Retail / Consumer Goods / eCommerce	6%	4%	5%
Financial Services / Insurance	5%	3%	4%
Roofing, Flooring, or Building Envelope Trades	3%	4%	3%
Government / Public Sector / Military	3%	3%	3%
Transportation / Automotive	1%	2%	2%
Energy / Utilities / Oil & Gas	1%	1%	2%
Safety / Security / Risk Management	1%	3%	1%
Supply Chain / Logistics / Warehousing	1%	1%	1%
Agriculture / Agribusiness	1%	1%	1%
Telecommunications	1%	1%	1%
Environmental Services / Water Infrastructure	<1%	0%	<1%
Other	5%	5%	5%

Q100. Which industry sector best represents your organization?

Company Size

	Wave 4 – Oct 2025 (n=740)	Wave 5 – Nov/Dec 2025 (n=636)	Wave 6 – Jan 2026 (n=670)
Self employed	8%	11%	9%
2–9 employees	11%	17%	12%
10–49 employees	16%	20%	13%
50–99 employees	9%	10%	9%
100–499 employees	15%	14%	15%
500–999 employees	6%	5%	10%
1,000 or more employees	35%	23%	32%

“Not sure” responses removed for analysis

QD2. Including yourself, how many employees are part of your organization?

Job Role

	Wave 4 – Oct 2025 (n=748)	Wave 5 – Nov/Dec 2025 (n=643)	Wave 6 – Jan 2026 (n=677)
Mid-level management or team lead	29%	23%	27%
Senior management	26%	20%	23%
Owner / Partner / Principal	17%	29%	19%
Field staff / Skilled trades / Technical role	16%	15%	19%
Executive leadership	7%	5%	6%
Sales / Business development	2%	3%	3%
Office / Administrative support	3%	2%	1%
Other	1%	1%	3%

QD1. Which of the following best describes your current role in your organization?

Industry Experience

Time in Current Industry	Wave 4 – Oct 2025 (n=747)	Wave 5 – Nov/Dec 2025 (n=643)	Wave 6 – Jan 2026 (n=677)
Less than 1 year	2%	1%	2%
1–3 years	7%	5%	6%
4–7 years	13%	8%	11%
8–15 years	20%	14%	21%
16–25 years	22%	19%	19%
More than 25 years	36%	53%	41%

Time with Current Organization	Wave 4 – Oct 2025 (n=741)	Wave 5 – Nov/Dec 2025 (n=640)	Wave 6 – Jan 2026 (n=672)
Less than 6 months	4%	1%	4%
6 months to 1 year	5%	3%	4%
1–3 years	21%	15%	18%
4–7 years	24%	18%	24%
8 or more years	47%	63%	51%

QD3. How many years have you worked in your current industry?
 QD4. How long have you been with your current organization?

Gender & Age

Gender	Wave 4 – Oct 2025 (n=734)	Wave 5 – Nov/Dec 2025 (n=635)	Wave 6 – Jan 2026 (n=667)
Male	75%	79%	78%
Female	25%	20%	22%
Non-binary	<1%	<1%	<1%

Age	Wave 4 – Oct 2025 (n=748)	Wave 5 – Nov/Dec 2025 (n=643)	Wave 6 – Jan 2026 (n=677)
18–27	1%	1%	2%
28–44	30%	17%	27%
45–60	42%	38%	40%
61–79	27%	43%	32%
80 or older	<1%	1%	<1%
<i>Average age</i>	52	57	53

QD5. To which gender do you most closely identify?
 QD6. In what year were you born?

About the Partners

[RONIN International](#)

RONIN International is an independent global research agency specializing in high-quality data collection, market research consultancy, and strategic intelligence. With deep expertise in hard-to-reach B2B audiences and custom fieldwork solutions, RONIN guarantees transparent, reliable measurement of sentiment and behavior across industries and geographies. Its advanced research operations and rigorous quality controls ensure that insights are trusted, consistent, comparable, and decision-ready.

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Organizations rely on myCLEARopinion for high-quality respondent access as well as end-to-end research support, including survey design, fieldwork, analysis, and reporting – delivering accurate, industry-grounded insights for strategic decision-making.