Business Tendency Survey
January 2025

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In January 2025**, the Retail Confidence Index (RCI) stood at 21.6%, representing an increase of 1.0 pp compared to the previous month (RCI December 2024: 20.6%).** The higher retail confidence was explained by a 10.6 pp increase in expectations for the economic situation over the next semester. Meanwhile, the stock level increased by 5.6 pp, and the perception of the current economic situation of the company or business decreased by 2.2 pp. Compared to the same month of the previous year, the RCI increased by 7.1 pp (RCI January 2024: 14.5%).

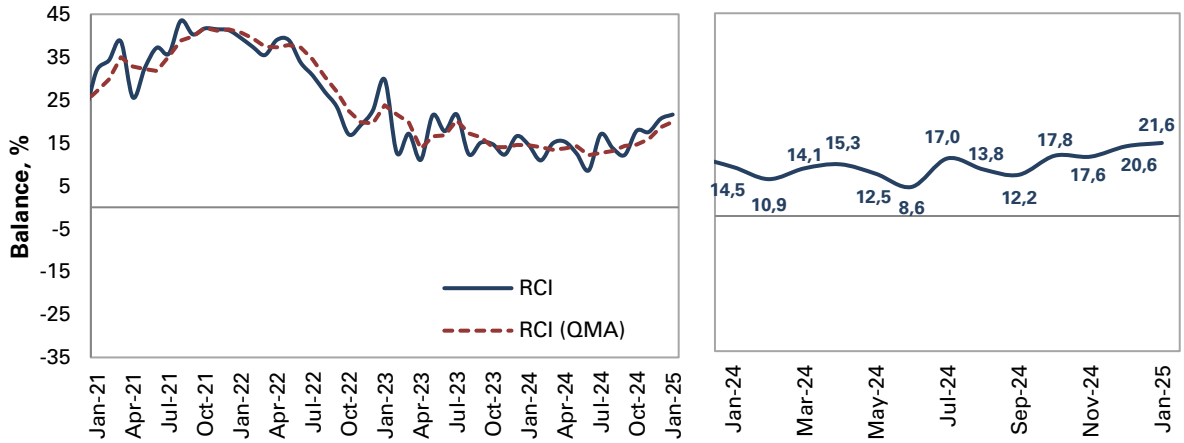
Meanwhile, **the Industrial Confidence Index (ICI) stood at 2.0% in January 2025, showing an increase of 2.2 pp compared to the previous month (ICI December 2024: -0.2%).** The positive monthly variation in industrial confidence in January was explained by a 15.3 pp increase in production expectations for the next quarter, partially offset by a 6.5 pp decline in the current order volume and a 2.4 pp increase in the stock level. Compared to January 2024, the ICI increased by 1.8 pp (ICI January 2024: 0.2%).

Regarding the quarterly module, **the fourth quarter of 2024 saw a positive quarterly variation in expectations for the value of exports in dollars over the next three months (20.2 pp), in the perception of export orders (15.9 pp), in the exported value in dollars (7.7 pp), and in the profitability of export activity (4.9 pp).** Additionally, in the fourth quarter of 2024, the most favorable factor for export activity was the Plan Vallejo system, while domestic transportation in Colombia was identified as the most unfavorable factor.

Retail Confidence Index – RCI

In January 2025, the Retail Confidence Index (RCI) stood at 21.6%, representing an increase of 1.0 pp compared to the previous month (20.6%). Additionally, the RCI recorded an increase of 7.1 pp compared to January 2024 (14.5%). Meanwhile, the three-month moving average stood at 19.9%, reflecting an increase of 1.2 pp compared to the same indicator for December 2024 (18.7%) and a rise of 5.4 pp compared to the same indicator for January 2024 (14.5%).

Graph 1. Retail Confidence Index (RCI)



Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Fedesarrollo.
*QMA: 3 Month moving average.

The RCI comprises three elements: **the perception of the current economic situation of the company or business, the level of stock, and the expectations for the economic situation for the next semester**. The results for January 2024, December 2024, and January 2025 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Evolution of Retail Confidence Index Components

Component (Balance, %)	2024	2025	
	January	December	January
Business current economic situation	24,6	34,7	32,5
Level of stocks	8,7	-2,0	3,6
Expectations about the economic situation for the next semester	27,6	25,3	35,9
Retail Confidence Index - RCI	**14,5**	**20,6**	**21,6**

Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Fedesarrollo.

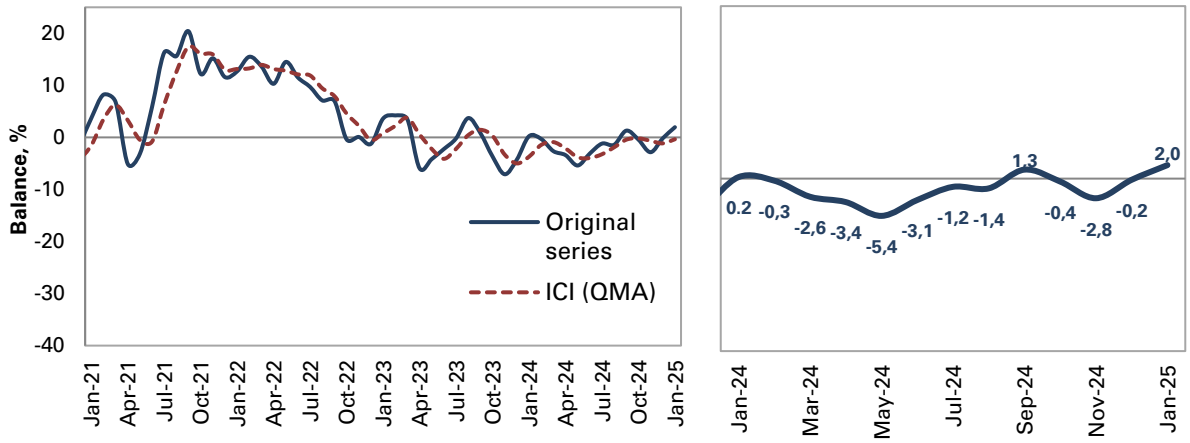
The higher retail confidence in January 2025 compared to the previous month was due to a 10.6 pp increase in expectations for the economic situation over the next semester, partially offset by a 5.6 pp increase in the stock level and a 2.2 pp decline in the

perception of the current economic situation of the company or business. Annually, the increase in retail confidence was explained by an 8.3 pp rise in expectations for the economic situation over the next semester, a 7.9 pp increase in the perception of the current economic situation of the company or business, and a 5.1 pp reduction in the stock level compared to January 2024.

Industrial Confidence Index – ICI

The Industrial Confidence Index (ICI) stood at 2.0% in January 2025. This represents an increase of 2.2 pp compared to the previous month (ICI December 2024: -0.2%) and a rise of 1.8 pp compared to the same month of 2024 (ICI January 2024: 0.2%) (Graph 2). Meanwhile, the three-month moving average stood at -0.4%, reflecting an increase of 0.7 pp compared to the same indicator for December 2024 (-1.1%) and a rise of 3.3 pp compared to the same indicator for January 2024 (-3.7%).

Graph 2. Industrial Confidence Index (ICI)



Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Fedesarrollo.

*QMA: 3 Month moving average.

The ICI is composed of three components: **stock level, current volume of orders, and production expectations for the next quarter**. The results for January 2024, December 2024, and January 2025 are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Evolution of Industrial Confidence Index Components

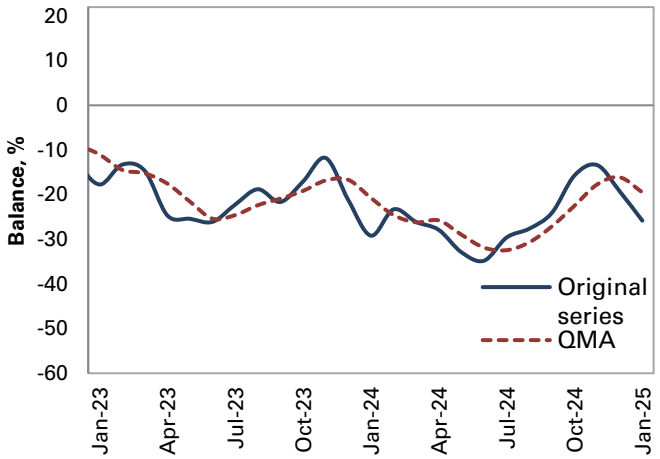
Component (Balance, %)	2024	2025	
	January	December	January
Level of stocks	-0,8	-3,6	-1,2
Current volume of orders	-29,2	-19,3	-25,8
Production expectations for the next quarter	29,1	15,2	30,5
Industrial Confidence Index – ICI	**0,2**	**-0,2**	**2,0**

Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Fedesarrollo.

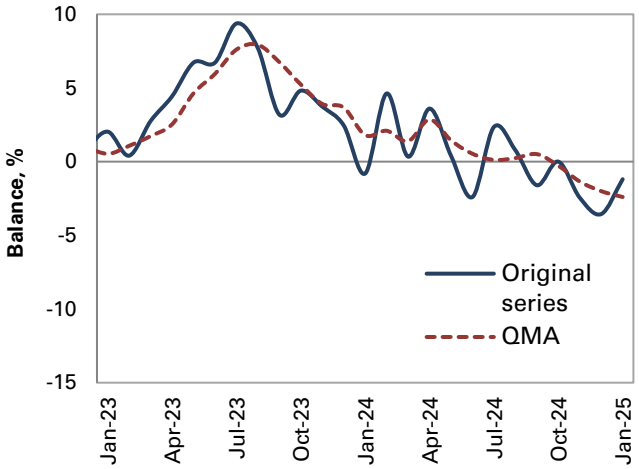
The positive monthly variation in industrial confidence in January was explained by a 15.3 pp increase in production expectations for the next quarter, partially offset by a 6.5 pp decrease in the current order volume and a 2.4 pp increase in the stock level. Annually, the increase in industrial confidence was mainly driven by a 3.4 pp rise in the current order volume, a 1.4 pp increase in production expectations for the next quarter, and a 0.4 pp decrease in the stock level.

Graph 3. Industrial Confidence Index Components

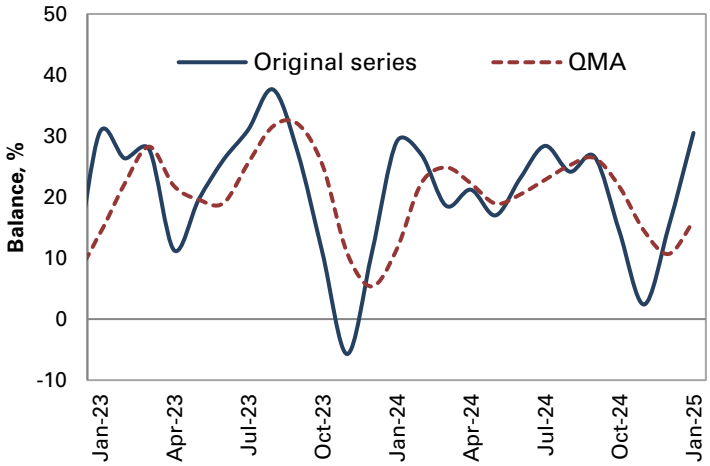
A. Current volume of orders



B. Level of stocks



C. Production expectations for the next trimester



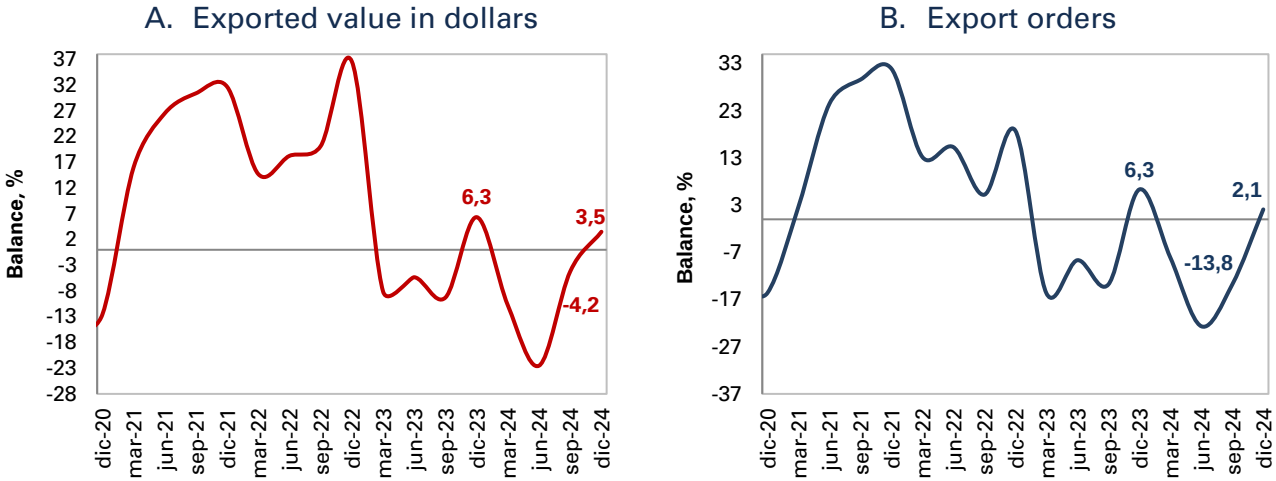
Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Fedesarrollo.
*QMA: 3 Month moving average.

Quarterly Module:

Exports[1]

In the fourth quarter of 2024, the balance of the value of exports in dollars was 3.5%, indicating that the percentage of respondents whose exports increased was higher than those who perceived a decline in their exports (Graph 4). This result represented an increase of 7.7 pp compared to the third quarter of 2024 (-4.2%) and a decrease of 2.8 pp compared to the fourth quarter of 2023 (6.3%). Meanwhile, the balance of export orders stood at 2.1%, representing an increase of 15.9 pp compared to the previous quarter (-13.8%), while compared to the same quarter of 2024, this indicator decreased by 4.2 pp (6.3%).

Graph 4. Value of exports in dollars and export orders

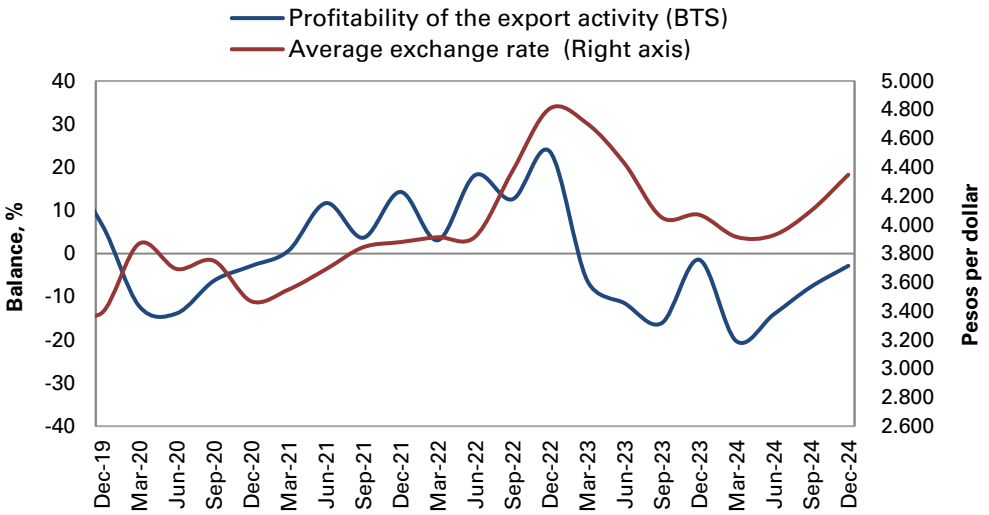


Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Fedesarrollo.

Regarding the question about entrepreneurs' perception of the profitability of export activity, the balance was -2.8%. This means that the percentage of respondents who perceived an increase in profitability was lower than those who considered a decrease. The balance results represented an increase of 4.9 pp compared to the previous quarter (-7.7%) and a decrease of 1.4 pp compared to the fourth quarter of 2023 (-1.4%). Moreover, the balance of the profitability of export activity in the fourth quarter of 2024 was consistent with exchange rate behavior (Graph 5).

[1] Quarterly, the Business Opinion Survey includes a special module for the industrial sector in which inquiries are made about the expectations and perception of industrialists regarding the value of exports in dollars and export orders.

Graph 5. Profitability of the export activity and exchange rate



Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Fedesarrollo and Central Bank of Colombia.

For the fourth quarter of 2024, the most favorable factors for export activity were the Plan Vallejo system (14.0%) and the peso-dollar exchange rate (8.4%). On the other hand, domestic transportation in Colombia (-27.1%) and production costs (-17.4%) were identified as the most unfavorable factors for exports. Compared to the previous quarter, the factor that showed the greatest improvement was the competitive position in destination markets, which increased by 10.8 pp. Conversely, the factor that showed the greatest decline was Colombian information and marketing services, which decreased by 10.1 pp.

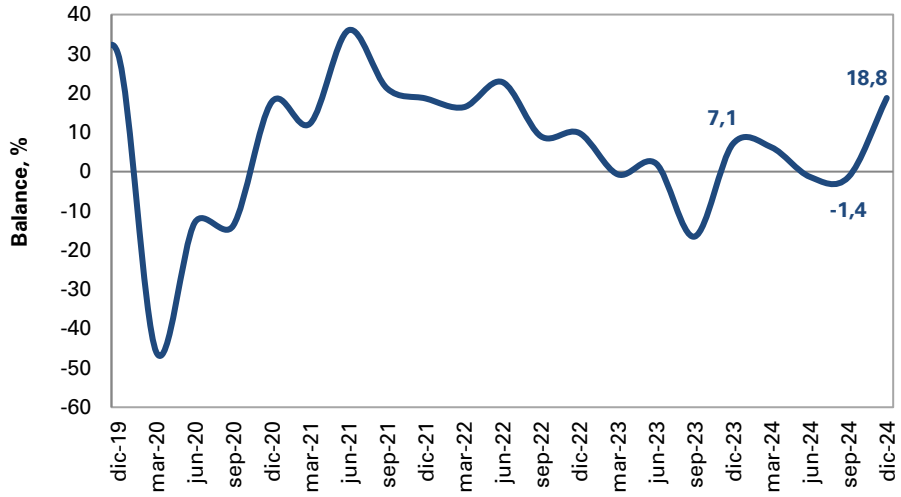
Table 3. Main factors affecting export activity

Factor (Balance, %)	2023-IV	2024-III	2024-IV
Production costs	-12.9	-13.2	-17.4
Availability and cost of credit	-14.7	0.0	0.7
Plan Vallejo System	6.6	12.2	14.0
Export procedures in Colombia	5.8	-2.1	4.2
Internal transportation in Colombia	-12.4	-17.5	-27.1
International transportation	-6.4	-17.4	-14.8
Port services in Colombia	-9.6	-5.8	-7.1
Peso-dollar exchange rate	-27.9	15.5	8.4
Dollar-currency exchange rate of the buyer country	0.0	5.0	0.0
Colombian information and marketing services	-5.2	4.4	-5.7
Trade policies of the purchasing countries	-1.5	-5.7	-2.1
Economic situation of the buyer country	-2.2	-7.0	-6.3
Competitive position in the target markets	-2.2	-16.4	-5.6

Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Exports module (Fedesarrollo).

For the fourth quarter of 2024, the balance of exporters' expectations regarding the performance of their activity over the next three months stood at 18.8%, representing an increase of 20.2 pp compared to the previous quarter (-1.4%) and a rise of 11.7 pp compared to the same quarter of 2023 (7.1%) (Graph 6). In response to this question, 31.9% of respondents stated that their exports would increase in the next three months, while 13.2% believed their exports would decrease, and the remaining 54.9% expected their exports to remain unchanged.

Graph 6. Three-month expectations of export value in dollars



Source: Business Tendency Survey (BTS) – Exports module (Fedesarrollo)

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Contact us if you would like to have access to disaggregated results by region, industrial sector and other survey questions

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