

Statistical bulletin

# Coronavirus and the economic impacts on the UK: 18 June 2020

The indicators and analysis presented in this bulletin are based on responses from the new voluntary fortnightly business survey, which captures businesses' responses on how their turnover, workforce prices, trade and business resilience have been affected. These data relate to the period 18 May 2020 to 31 May 2020.

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# 1 . Main points

- Of all responding UK businesses to Wave 6 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS), 79% had been trading for more than the last two weeks, 5% had started trading again within the last two weeks after a pause in trading, 5% reported intending to restart within the next two weeks, with the remainder temporarily closed, paused or ceased trading.
- Across all sectors, the wholesale and retail trade (17%) and transportation and storage (10%) sectors reported the largest percentage of businesses indicating their turnover had increased compared with what is normally expected for this time of year.
- Across all sectors, and amongst those who were continuing to trade, 5% of the workforce had returned from furlough leave in the last two weeks, of which the construction and manufacturing sectors reported the largest proportions returning from furlough, at 14% and 10% respectively.
- Of those businesses with a proportion of their workforce furloughed, 42% of businesses reported providing top-ups to furloughed workers' pay on top of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.
- Wales had the highest percentage of businesses reporting they had less than six month's cash reserves at 46%, compared with 42% in England, 41% in Northern Ireland and 39% in Scotland.

## 2 . Current trading status of businesses

These are the final results from Wave 6 of the [Business Impact of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Survey \(BICS\)](#) for the period 18 May to 31 May 2020, which closed on 14 June 2020, though some questions might relate to the time the business completed the questionnaire.

Of the 7,245 UK businesses that responded (out of a sample size of 20,548) to Wave 6 of BICS, 84% of businesses reported continuing to trade as their current trading status; while 16% reported they had temporarily closed or paused trading. This differed little between the size of businesses.

A headline comparison of the same businesses, across Waves 2 to 5 can be found in the recent [Business impact of coronavirus, analysis over time, UK: Waves 2 to 5](#). Of the 3,521 businesses who responded to all waves from 2 to 5, 72% reported continuing to trade between 23 March and 17 May 2020. The remaining 28% reported they had temporarily closed or paused trading at some point in this period. By 17May 2020, 37% of the businesses in the panel had restarted trading.

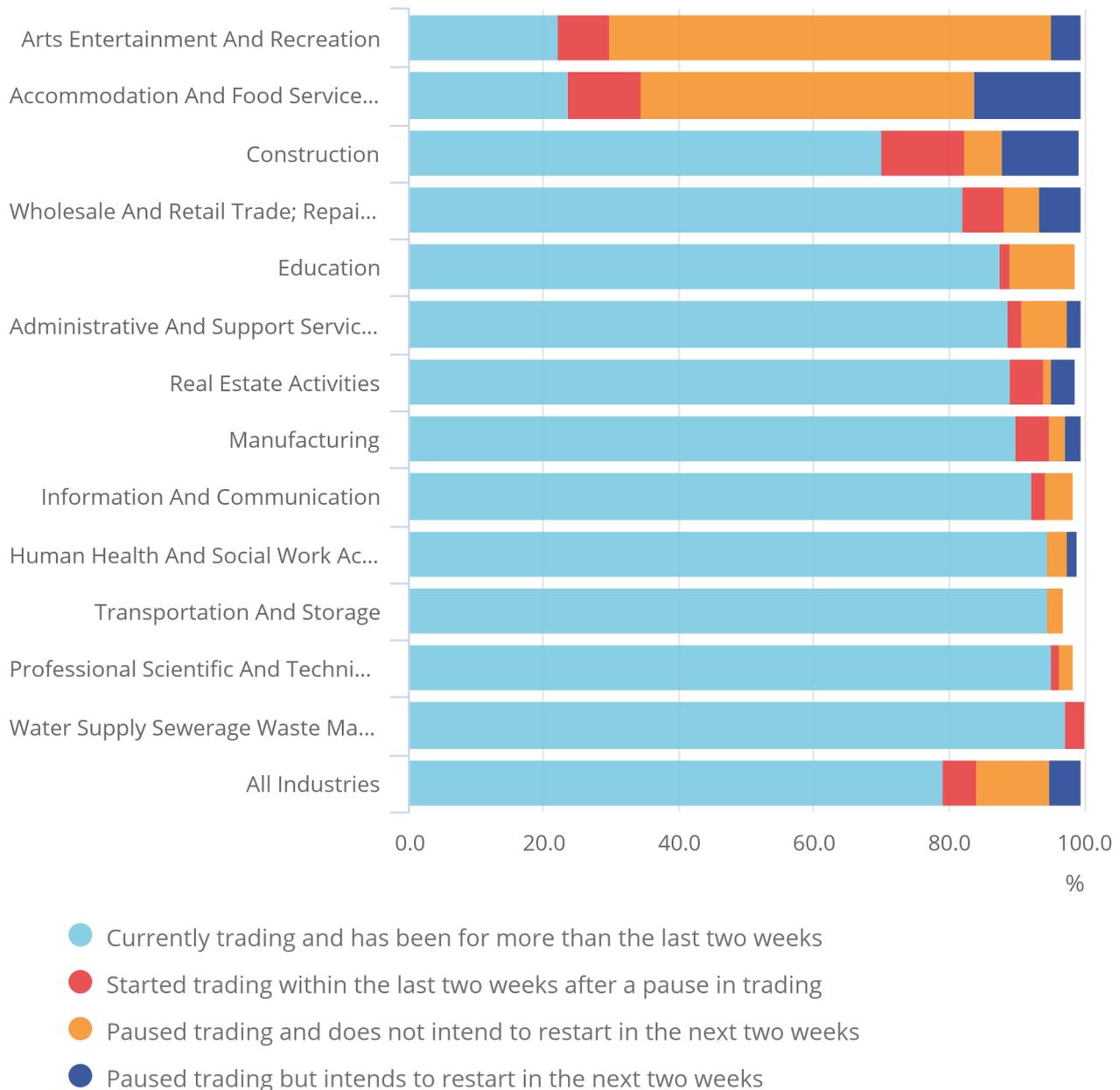
A small number of businesses (less than 1%) also responded that they had permanently ceased trading in the period 18 May to 31 May 2020.

**Figure 1: Of those businesses who responded to the survey, across all industries, 5% responded they had restarted trading in the last two weeks after a pause in trading**

Percentage of businesses in each industry, current trading status, broken down by industry, UK, 1 June to 14 June 2020

Figure 1: Of those businesses who responded to the survey, across all industries, 5% responded they had restarted trading in the last two weeks after a pause in trading

Percentage of businesses in each industry, current trading status, broken down by industry, UK, 1 June to 14 June 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final results, Wave 6 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID19) Survey (BICS) (n = 7,245).
2. Other services and mining and quarrying have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in 'All industries'.
3. Bars will not sum to 100% as those permanently ceased trading have been removed and percentages less than 1% have been removed for disclosure purposes - for further information see detailed dataset in section 9.

The arts, entertainment and recreation sector, and the accommodation and food service activities sector reported, by far, the largest percentages of businesses indicating they had paused trading and were not intending to restart in the next two weeks, at 65% and 50% respectively. This was followed by the education sector at just 9%.

Of all responding businesses, 79% had been trading for more than the last two weeks, while 5% had started trading again within the last two weeks after a pause in trading, 11% had paused trading and do not intend to restart in the next two weeks, while 5% had paused trading but intend to restart trading in the next two weeks.

The construction, and accommodation and food service activities sectors reported the largest percentages of businesses to have restarted trading in the last two weeks, at 13% and 11% respectively. There was little difference between the size of businesses reporting they have restarted trading in the last two weeks or those who intend to restart trading in the next two weeks.

#### **More about coronavirus**

- Find the latest on [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK](#).
- All ONS analysis, summarised in our [coronavirus roundup](#).
- View [all coronavirus data](#).
- Find out how we are [working safely during the pandemic](#).

### **3 . Impact of turnover for businesses' financial performance**

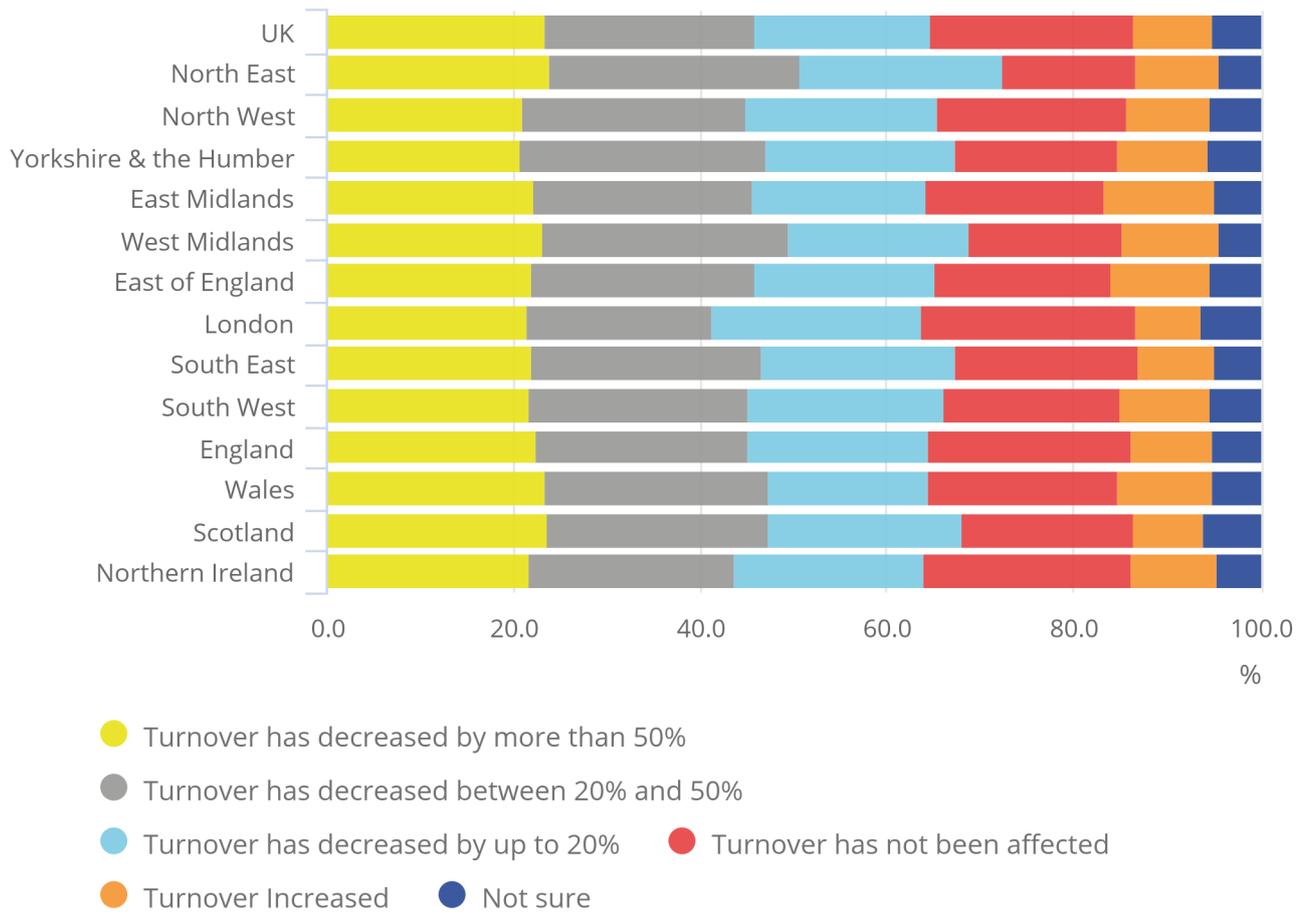
Increased turnover categories have been combined for presentational purposes, but the breakdown is available in the detailed dataset in Section 9.

**Figure 2: 68% of businesses reported a decrease in turnover outside of normal range in Scotland, compared with 65% in England and Wales, and 64% in Northern Ireland**

Effect on turnover, businesses continuing to trade, broken down by country and region, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 2: 68% of businesses reported a decrease in turnover outside of normal range in Scotland, compared with 65% in England and Wales, and 64% in Northern Ireland

Effect on turnover, businesses continuing to trade, broken down by country and region, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final results, Wave 6 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS), businesses continuing to trade (n = 6,092).
2. Response rates vary across regions and between waves.
3. Low response can impact the interpretation of these estimates.
4. Detail of each region's percentage response can be found in the detailed dataset.
5. Wave 6 Response Rate Mean = 35%.
6. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding the last two weeks businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).

At a UK level, of businesses that responded they were continuing to trade (6,092 businesses), 65% reported their turnover had been lower than normal in the last two weeks.

The North East was the region that had the greatest proportion of businesses that saw a decrease in turnover with 72%, and the lowest proportion of businesses with turnover unaffected at 14%. In contrast, London and the East Midlands saw the lowest proportion of businesses that saw a decrease in turnover both with 64%. London also had the highest proportion of businesses with turnover unaffected at 23%.

Of those businesses who were continuing to trade, the main sectors to have reported the highest percentage of businesses indicating that their turnover increased were wholesale and retail trade (17%) and transportation and storage (10%).

The main sectors to have reported that their turnover decreased by more than 50% were the accommodation and food service activities sector (66%), the arts, entertainment and recreation sector (64%), and the construction sector (38%).

The human health and social work activities (non-public sector businesses only), and the information and communication sector reported the largest percentages of businesses who responded that their turnover had been unaffected in the period, at 49% and 43% respectively.

## 4 . Workforce

Surveyed businesses who have not permanently stopped trading will have differing approaches to the management of employees, whether furloughing staff, working as normal or other scenarios. Because of the complexities of this, the data in this section primarily focus on proportions of the workforce within responding businesses as opposed to proportion of businesses as is the case for other sections.

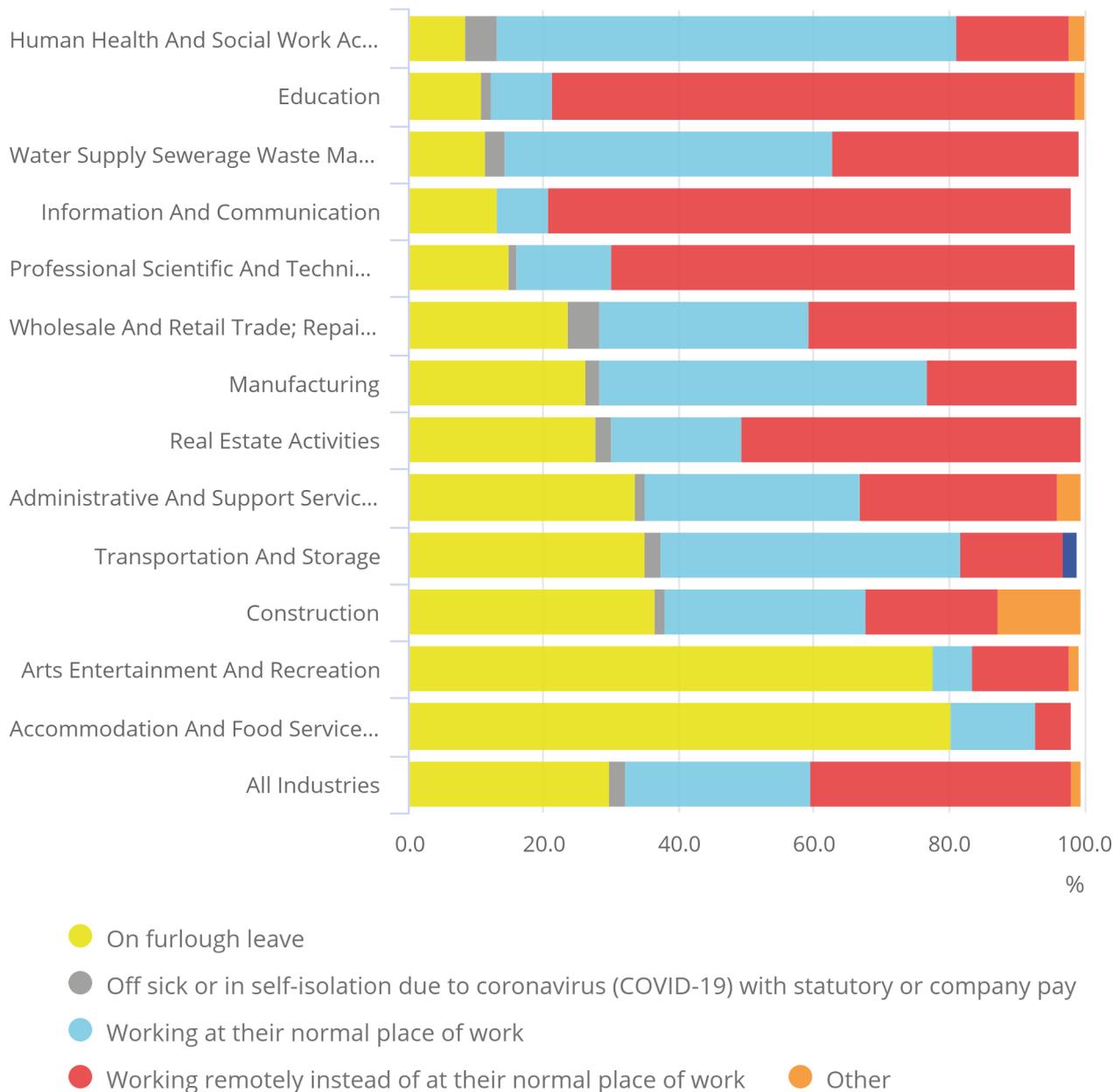
The workforce proportions are based on the responses provided by businesses. These are then apportioned to derive proportions of employees in those businesses, using the employment recorded for each reporting unit on the [Inter-Departmental Business Register \(IDBR\)](#). This apportionment of workforce methodology used for these data does not involve grossing to make a UK-wide estimation, therefore, the findings should not be treated as representative of the UK workforce.

**Figure 3: The accommodation and food service activities sector had the largest proportion of the workforce furloughed, at 80%**

Working arrangements, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, apportioned by workforce size, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 3: The accommodation and food service activities sector had the largest proportion of the workforce furloughed, at 80%

Working arrangements, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, apportioned by workforce size, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final Results, Wave 6 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, apportioned by employment size.
2. The apportionment of workforce methodology used for these data does not involve grossing for UK-wide estimation.
3. These figures represent the proportion of responses to each question from businesses, apportioned using the employment recorded for each Reporting Unit on the Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR).
4. Other services and mining and quarrying have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in 'All industries'.
5. Proportions of the workforce where it is less than 1% have been removed for disclosure purposes.
6. The bars will not sum to 100% because of the proportions being apportioned by employment size.
7. Other includes all other options not specified in the question.
8. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding furlough businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).

Across all industries for those businesses who have responded, who had not permanently stopped trading and apportioned by employment size, 30% of the workforce had been furloughed under the terms of the UK government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). The accommodation and food service activities sector and the arts, entertainment and recreation sector had the highest proportions of furloughed workers, 80% and 78% respectively.

The transportation and storage sector was the only industry with more than 1% of the workforce being made permanently redundant, at 2%. While for all other sectors, across all businesses not permanently stopped trading, less than 1% of the workforce had been made permanently redundant between 18 May and 31 May 2020.

Broken down by trading status, of those continuing to trade, 23% had workers furloughed under the CJRS, rising to 85% of those temporarily closed or paused trading. Of both trading splits, the accommodation and food service activities sector had the highest proportions of workers furloughed, 68% and 90% respectively for each trading split.

Broken down by trading status, of those continuing to trade, the majority of industries reported less than 1% of the workforce had been made permanently redundant apart from in the transportation and storage sector, where 2% of the workforce had been made permanently redundant.

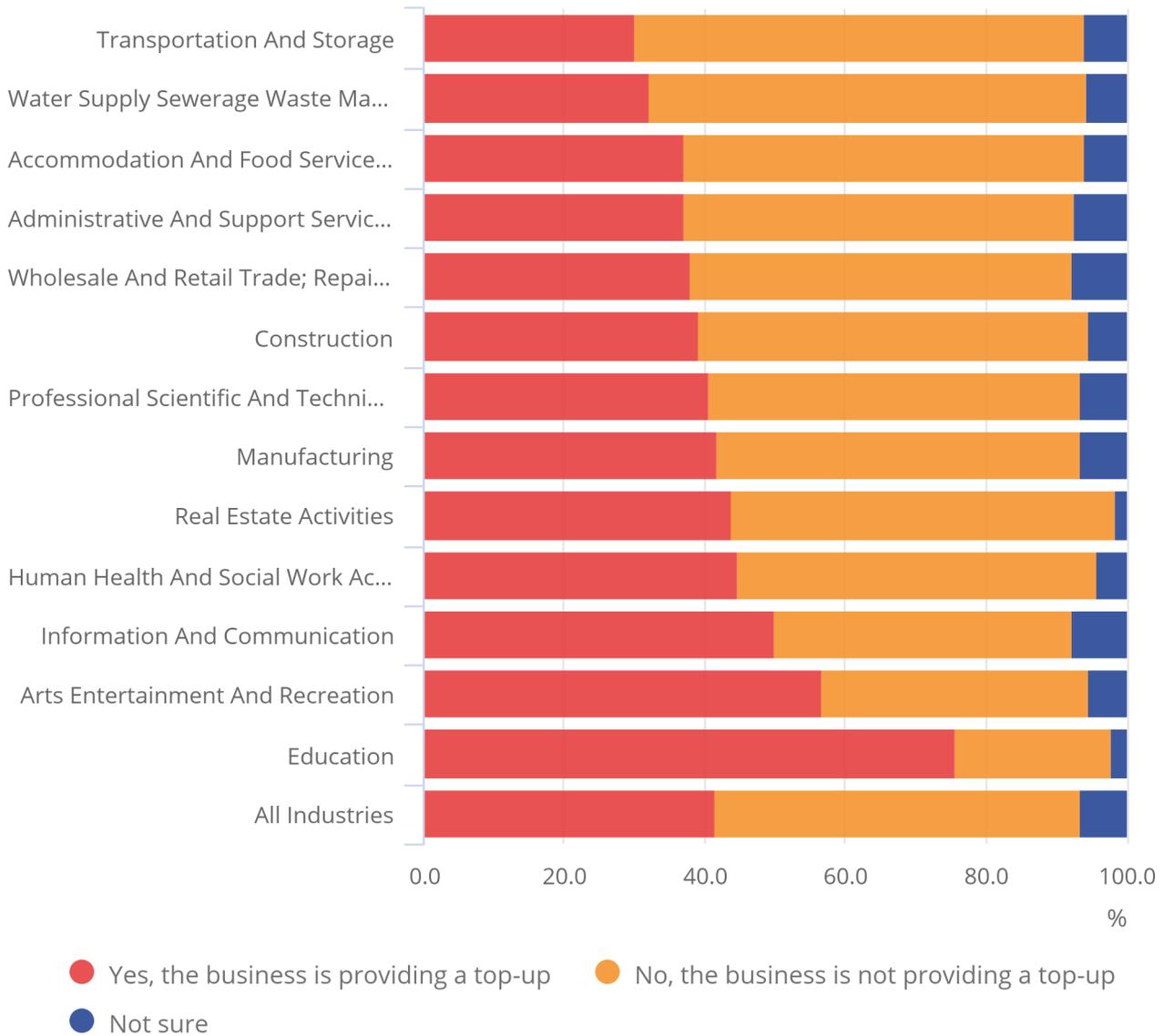
In comparison, of those temporarily closed or paused trading, the majority of industries had less than 1% of the workforce made permanently redundant apart from the information and communication sector, which reported an average proportion of 2% of the workforce having been made permanently redundant.

**Figure 4: 42% of businesses who have a proportion of their workforce furloughed are providing top-ups to furloughed workers on top of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme payments**

Percentage of businesses with a proportion of the workforce furloughed, businesses not permanently stopped trading, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 4: 42% of businesses who have a proportion of their workforce furloughed are providing top-ups to furloughed workers on top of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme payments

Percentage of businesses with a proportion of the workforce furloughed, businesses not permanently stopped trading, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final Results, Wave 6 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading and have a proportion of their workforce furloughed.
2. Other services and mining and quarrying have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in 'All industries'.
3. The estimates presented here are percentages of the number of businesses who responded to the question and are not apportioned by workforce size.
4. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding CJRS top-ups businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).

Of those businesses with a proportion of their workforce furloughed, 42% of businesses reported providing top-ups to furloughed workers' pay on top of the CJRS. The education (private sector businesses only) and the arts, entertainment and recreation sectors reported the largest percentages of businesses providing top-ups to furloughed workers, at 76% and 57% respectively.

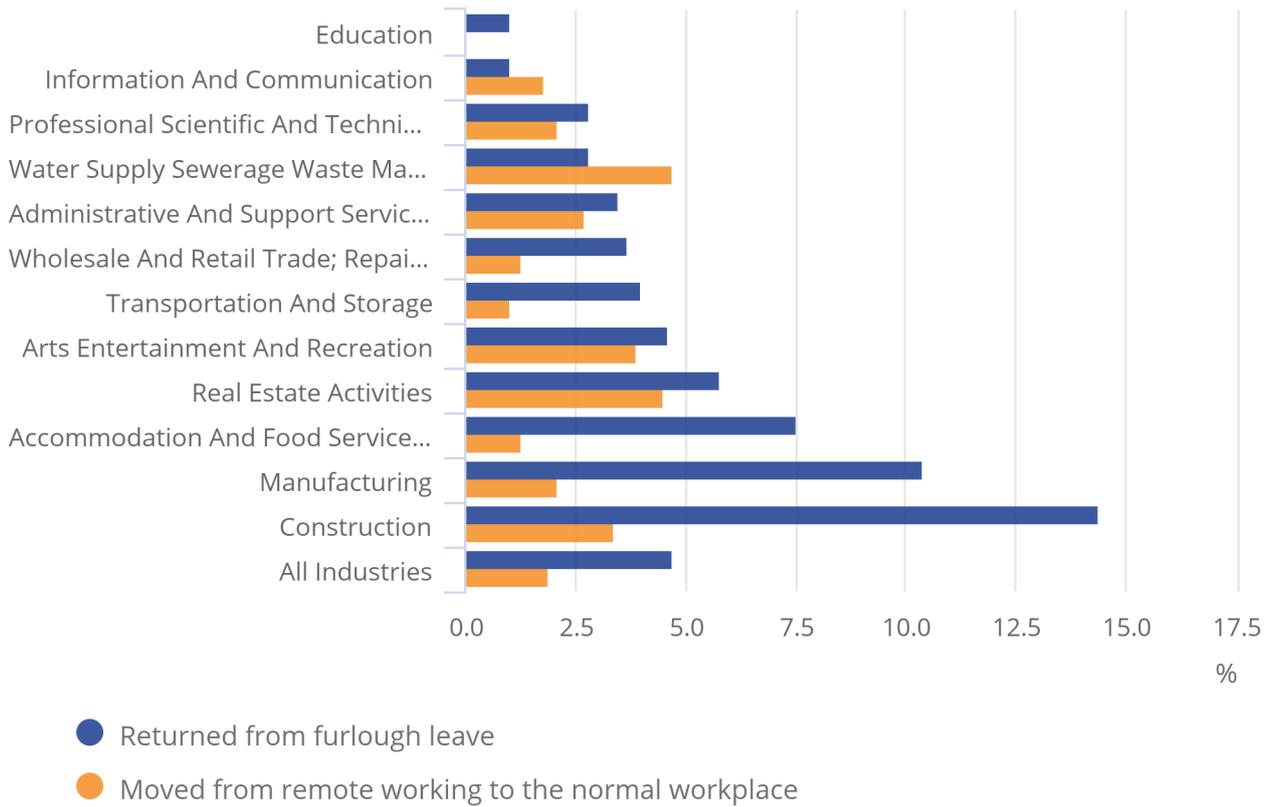
Of businesses topping up their furloughed workers' pay, across all businesses who have not permanently stopped trading (not apportioned by workforce size), an average of 61% of the workforce have their pay topped up. Those businesses within the education, and human health and social work activities sectors reported the largest proportion of the furloughed workforce receiving top-ups, at 84% and 79% respectively.

**Figure 5: The construction sector reported the largest proportion of the workforce returning from furlough, at 14%**

Proportion of the workforce who have returned to work in the last two weeks, businesses continuing to trade, broken down by industry, apportioned by workforce, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 5: The construction sector reported the largest proportion of the workforce returning from furlough, at 14%

Proportion of the workforce who have returned to work in the last two weeks, businesses continuing to trade, broken down by industry, apportioned by workforce, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final Results, Wave 6 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey, businesses continuing to trade (n = 6,092).
2. The bars will not sum to 100% because of the proportions being apportioned by employment size and businesses not having to report workforce proportions to sum to 100% .
3. The apportionment of workforce methodology used for these data does not involve grossing for UK-wide estimation.
4. These figures represent the proportion of responses to each question from businesses, apportioned using the employment recorded for each Reporting Unit on the Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR).
5. Proportions of the workforce where it is less than 1% have been removed for disclosure purposes.
6. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding furlough businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).
7. Other services, mining and quarrying and human health and social work activities have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in 'All industries'.

Of businesses who reported continuing to trade (6,092 businesses), 5% of the workforce had returned from furlough, while 2% had returned from remote working to the normal workplace.

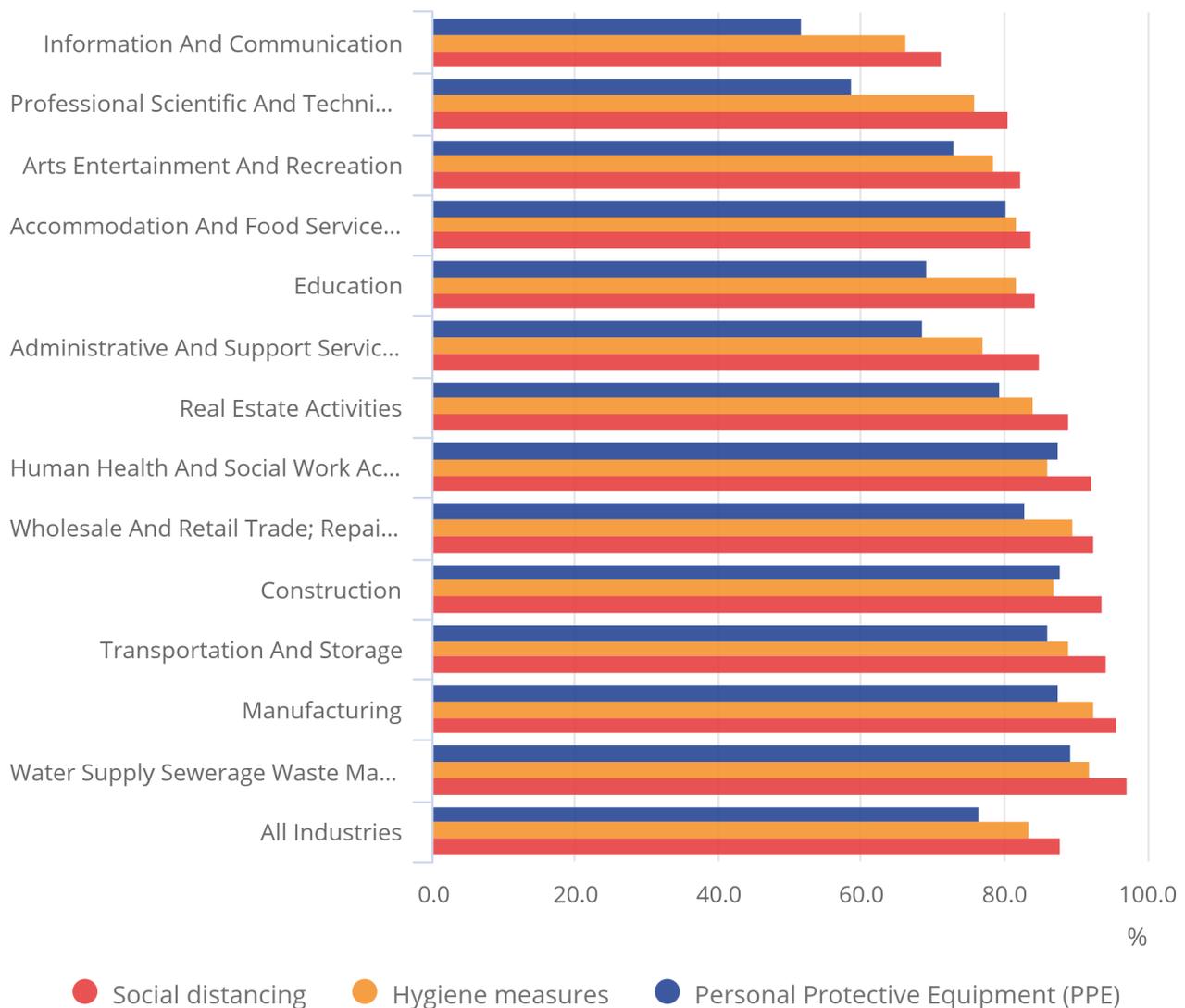
## 5 . Safety measures

**Figure 6: Over 50% of businesses across all industries, had responded they were implementing, or intending to implement, the top three most common safety measures**

Safety measures, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 6: Over 50% of businesses across all industries, had responded they were implementing, or intending to implement, the top three most common safety measures

Safety measures, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final results, Wave 6 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS), businesses who have not permanently stopped trading.
2. Other services and mining and quarrying have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in 'All Industries'.
3. Bars will not sum to 100% as businesses could select multiple options and other safety measures have been removed from the chart for presentational purposes - further detail can be found in the detailed dataset in section 9.
4. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding safety measures implemented, or intending to implement in the next two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).

The three most common measures that businesses indicated they have implemented, or were intending to implement, in the workplace were social distancing, hygiene measures, and personal protective equipment (PPE); at 88%, 84% and 77% respectively.

Across all sectors, of businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, 72% reported having implemented, or intending to implement, all three of the most common safety measures. A breakdown of all safety measures options can be found in the detailed dataset in Section 9.

The industries reporting the largest percentages of businesses implemented, or intending to implement, social distancing in the workplace were water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (97%) and manufacturing (96%). The industries with the lowest percentage of businesses implemented, or intending to implement, social distancing were information and communication (71%) and the professional, scientific and technical activities sector (81%).

There were 6% of businesses indicating they were implementing, or intending to implement, routine COVID-19 testing, mainly driven by businesses within the human health and social work activities sector (34%) and the arts, entertainment and recreation sector (10%).

There were 1% of responding businesses that reported having implemented or intending to implement no safety measures at all. At an industry level, the information and communication (4%) and administrative support activities sectors (3%) reported the highest percentage of businesses implemented, or intending to implement, none of the measures specified.

At least half of businesses within all industries reported having implemented, or intending to implement, personal protective equipment (PPE) in the workplace. The industries with the highest percentage of businesses indicating they were implementing, or intending to implement, PPE were water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (90%) and construction, manufacturing, and human health and social work activities, all at 88%.

## 6 . Government schemes

The following section presents percentages relative to all businesses who have not permanently stopped trading. This includes all those continuing to trade and all those who responded they have temporarily closed or paused trading.

**Figure 7: 19% of businesses continuing to trade had not applied for any government scheme compared to 4% of businesses who had temporarily closed or paused trading**

**Notes:**

1. Final results, Wave 6 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey. (Response rate = 35%).
2. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding government schemes businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June - 14 June 2020).
3. All percentages are a proportion of businesses who have not having permanently stopped trading apart from government schemes received which is a proportion of those who have not permanently stopped trading and applied for the CJRS and/or Government-backed accredited loans or finance agreements.
4. Bars will not sum to 100% as businesses could select multiple schemes.

**Download this chart**

[.XLSX](#)

Of businesses with fewer than 250 employees, and who had not permanently stopped trading, 20% had applied for a business grant compared with 11% of businesses with 250 employees or more. Also, 20% of the former had applied for government-backed accredited loans or finance agreements compared with 12% of the latter.

Of businesses who had not permanently stopped trading, the accommodation and food service activities, and the arts, entertainment and recreation sectors reported the highest percentages of businesses applying for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), at 97% and 94% respectively. Businesses within the accommodation and food service activities and the real estate sectors reported the highest percentages of businesses having received the CJRS, at 98% and 97% respectively. The accommodation and food service activities, and the administrative and support service activities sectors reported the highest percentages of businesses having received government-backed accredited loans or finance agreements, at 18% and 16% respectively.

Of businesses with fewer than 250 employees, 15% had received government-backed accredited loans or finance agreements compared with 6% of businesses with 250 employees or more. There was little difference between the percentages of those having received the CJRS or not having received any of the initiatives between workforce size.

Of those businesses that have applied for business grants, 58% had been offered business grants from UK government (England only), 15% from Scottish Government, 18% from Welsh Government and 4% from Northern Ireland Executive.

Of businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, 84% of businesses in Scotland had applied for the CJRS, compared with 82% in England, 81% in Wales and 76% in Northern Ireland.

Of businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, 14% of those operating in Scotland and Wales had not applied for any of these schemes, compared with 17% in England and 19% in Northern Ireland.

Of businesses continuing to trade, 10% had received other financial assistance from banks or building societies compared with 17% of businesses temporarily closed or paused trading.

Further breakdown by industry of government schemes and initiatives can be found for those in the detailed dataset in Section 9. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has also published estimates on [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) statistics](#), looking at data on the CJRS, the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, and the VAT Payments Deferral Scheme. Any comparisons with HMRC and BICS estimates should be treated with caution.

## 7 . Online sales

Of businesses continuing to trade and who have had online sales of goods or services during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, 33% reported online sales for their business had increased compared with 22% who reported their online sales had decreased in the last two weeks. Other options regarding online sales were available to businesses to choose from and are available in the detailed dataset.

Of responding businesses, 4% had to stop selling goods or services online in the period, of which human health and social work activities, and the arts, entertainment and recreation activities sectors reported the greatest percentages of businesses having to have stopped selling goods or services online, at 30% and 19% respectively.

The wholesale and retail trade, and accommodation and food service activities sectors reported the largest percentages of businesses indicating that online sales had increased, at 44% and 36% respectively. The administrative and support service activities sector reported the largest percentage of businesses indicating that online sales have continued but have decreased, at 43%.

Of businesses continuing to trade, the most common online service used was an increase or new use of video conferencing for internal communications, at 66%, followed by an increase or new use of online services to help communication with customers, at 31%, while 26% reported using none of the specified online services to support business operations.

## 8 . Business resilience

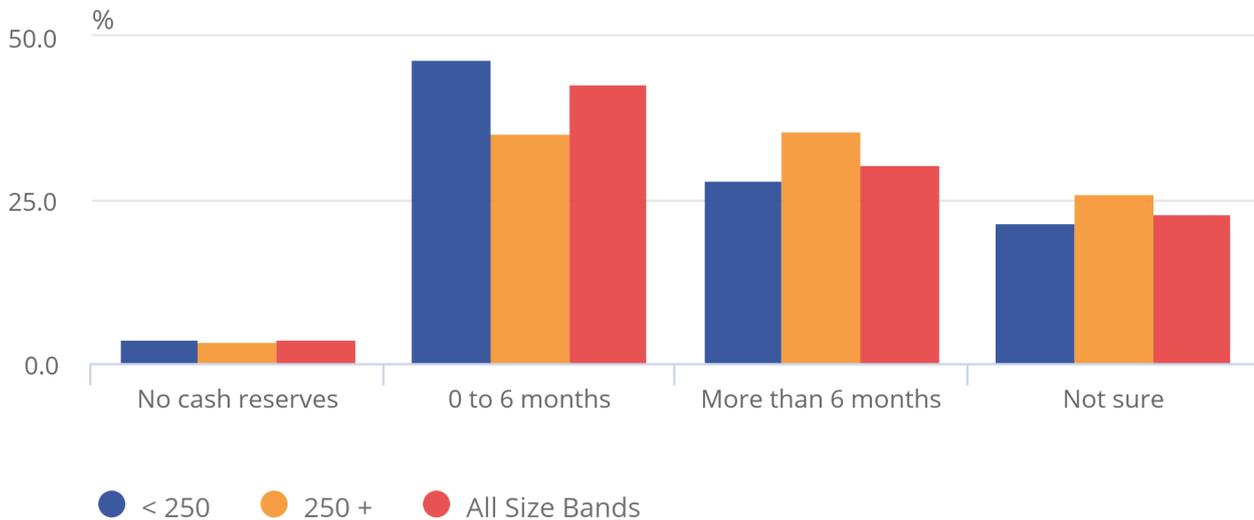
Cash reserve categories, in the figures below, between zero and six months have been combined for presentational purposes, but the breakdown is available in the detailed dataset found in Section 9.

**Figure 8: Of businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, half of businesses with fewer than 250 employees reported they had cash reserves to last under six months**

Cash reserves, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by size band, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 8: Of businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, half of businesses with fewer than 250 employees reported they had cash reserves to last under six months

Cash reserves, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by size band, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final results, Wave 6 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey; businesses who have not permanently stopped trading.
2. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding cash flow businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).

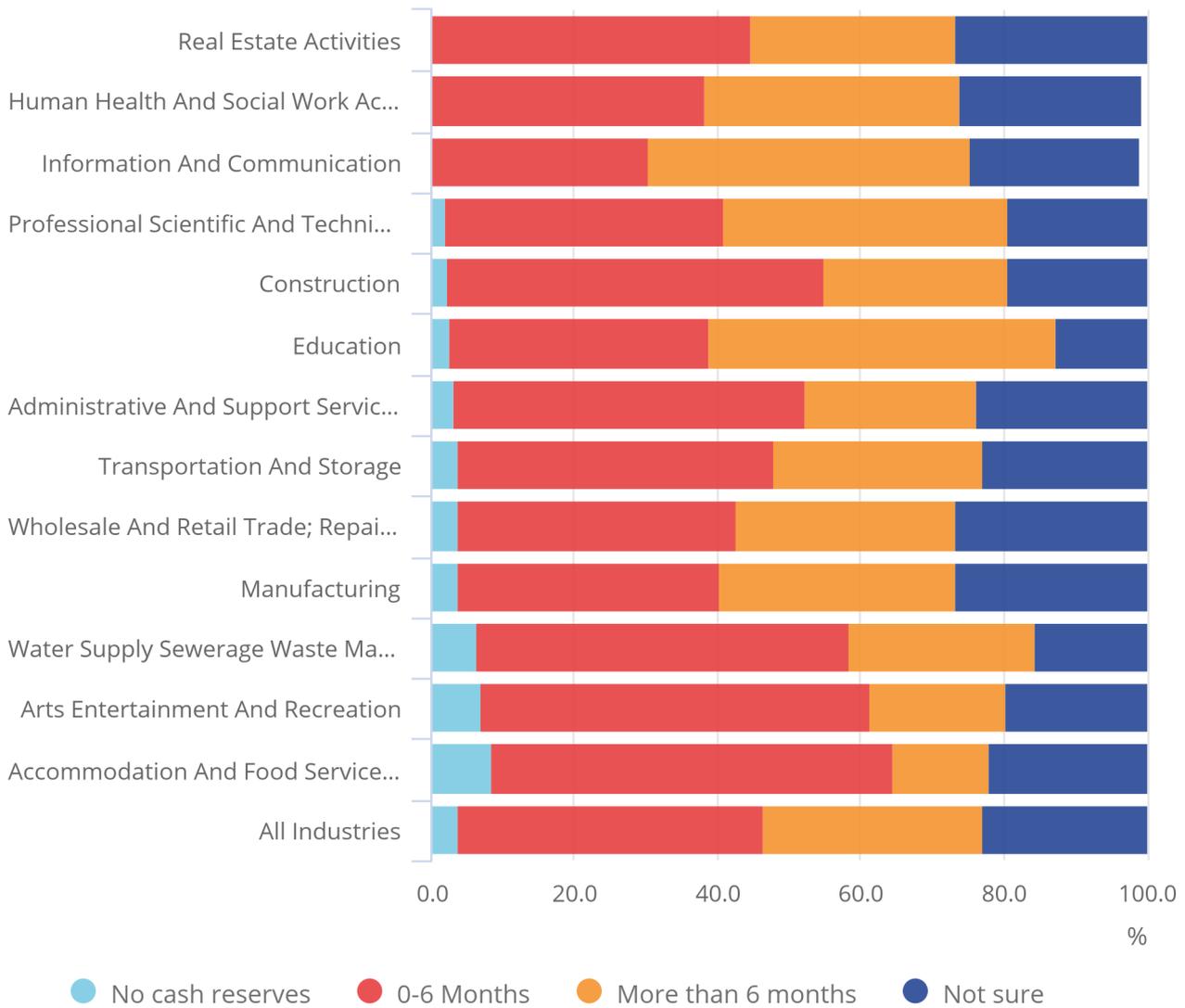
Of those businesses who had not permanently stopped trading and had 250 employees or more, 36% indicated they had cash reserves to last more than six months compared with 28% of businesses with fewer than 250 employees. In comparison, of the former, 39% reported having less than six months' cash reserves, compared with 50% of the latter (including those with no cash reserves).

**Figure 9: The accommodation and food service activities sector had the highest percentage of businesses reporting they had less than six months' cash reserves**

Cash reserves, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 9: The accommodation and food service activities sector had the highest percentage of businesses reporting they had less than six months' cash reserves

Cash reserves, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final results, Wave 6 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey; businesses who have not permanently stopped trading.
2. Bars may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% have been removed for disclosure purposes.
3. Other services and mining and quarrying have been removed for disclosure purposes.
4. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding cash flow businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).

The accommodation and food service activities sector, and the arts, entertainment and recreation sector were the two industries with the highest percentages of businesses indicating they had no cash reserves, at 9% and 7% respectively.

The accommodation and food service activities sector also had the highest percentage of businesses across all industries indicating they only had cash reserves to last between zero and six months, at 56%, followed by the arts, entertainment and recreation sector, at 54%.

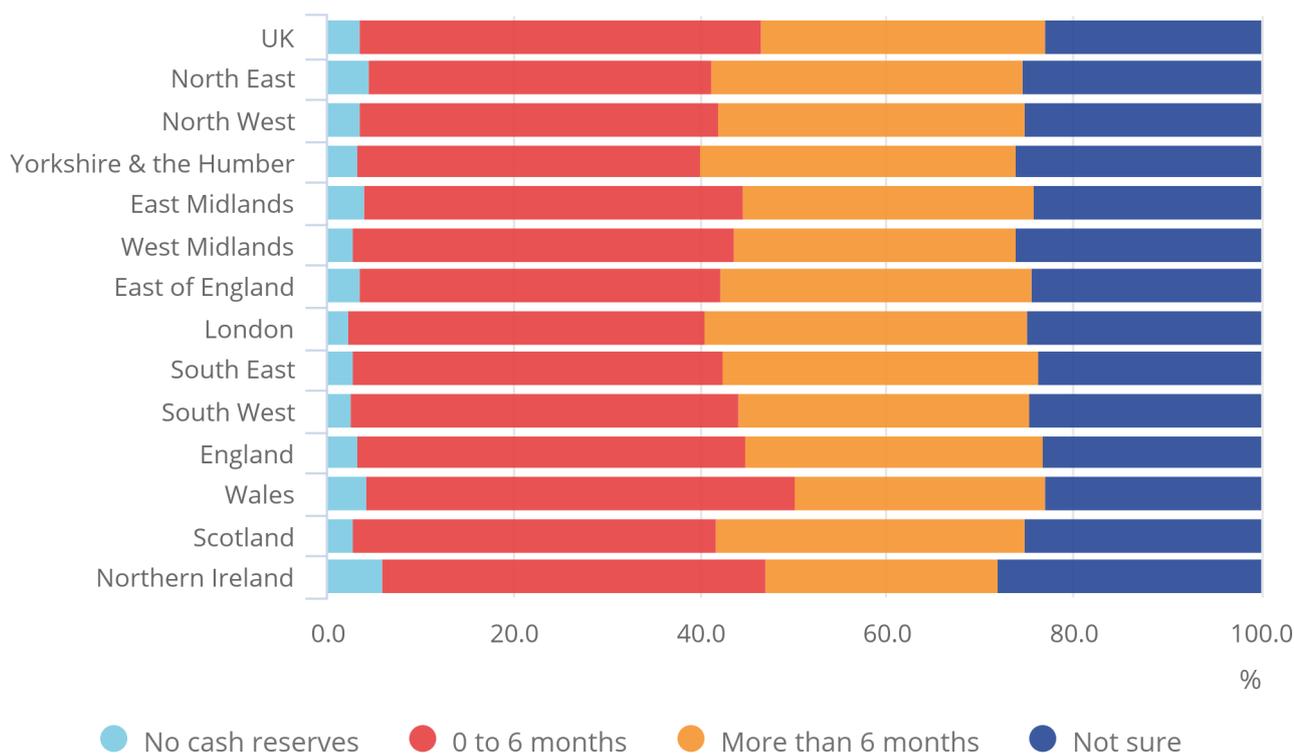
Conversely, the education sector and information and communication sector reported the highest proportions of businesses indicating they had the cash reserves to last more than six months, at 49% and 45% respectively.

**Figure 10: Wales had the highest percentage of businesses reporting they had less than six months' cash reserves at 46%, compared with 42% in England, 41% in Northern Ireland and 39% in Scotland**

Cash reserves, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by region, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020

Figure 10: Wales had the highest percentage of businesses reporting they had less than six months' cash reserves at 46%, compared with 42% in England, 41% in Northern Ireland and 39% in Scotland

Cash reserves, businesses who have not permanently stopped trading, broken down by region, UK, 18 May to 31 May 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

Notes:

1. Final results, Wave 6 of ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey; businesses who have not permanently stopped trading.
2. Response rates vary across regions and between waves.
3. Low response can impact the interpretation of these estimates.
4. Detail of each region's percentage response can be found in the detailed dataset.
5. Wave 6 Response Rate Mean = 35%.
6. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020, but for questions regarding cash flow businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (1 June to 14 June 2020).

Wales had the highest proportion of businesses with less than six months of cash reserves at 46%, higher than any other region. Wales also had one of the lowest proportion of businesses with more than six months of cash reserves at 27%, alongside Northern Ireland at 25%.

London had the highest proportion of businesses with more than six months of cash reserves at 35%.

## 9 . Business Impact into the Coronavirus Survey data

### [Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey \(BICS\)](#)

Dataset | Released 18 June 2020

This qualitative voluntary fortnightly survey covers business turnover, workforce, prices and trade. These data are not [official statistics](#) but have been developed to deliver timely indicators to help understand the impact of COVID-19 in a timely way. These data are for the period 18 May to 31 May 2020.

### Access to BICS related microdata

The BICS microdata for Waves 1 to Wave 5 can now be accessed via the [Secure Research Service \(SRS\)](#). The BICS microdata for each wave will be released on a rolling basis in the following week once the publication of each wave is completed.

The microdata is confidentialised and does not disclose any specific business.

Only researchers accredited under the Digital Economy Act are able to access data in the Secure Research Service (SRS). You can apply for accreditation through the [Research Accreditation Service \(RAS\)](#) and will have to have relevant academic or working experience and must successfully attend and complete the assessed Safe Researcher Training.

To conduct analysis with microdata from the SRS, a project application must be submitted to the [Research Accreditation Panel \(RAP\)](#). The UK Statistics Authority have published an [example project application](#) for guidance.

In order to access the SRS, you must also have to work for an organisation with an Assured Organisational Connectivity agreement in place.

## 10 . Measuring the data

Table 1: Sample and response rates for Waves 4, 5 and 6 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey (BICS)

Wave	21 May 2020 Publication Wave 4	4 June 2020 Publication Wave 6	18 June 2020 Publication Wave 6
Sample	18,506	20,566	20,548
Response	6,196	6,364	7,245
Rate	33.50%	30.90%	35.30%

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

### Notes

1. Response rates for all Waves 1 to Wave 6 can be found in the detailed dataset in Section 9. [Back to table](#)

The business indicators are based on responses from the voluntary, fortnightly Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey, which captures business' views on impact on turnover, workforce prices, trade and business resilience. Wave 6 data relate to the period 18 May to 31 May 2020. The survey questions are available in [Business Impact of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Survey questions: 18 May to 31 May 2020](#).

There were several additional questions in Wave 6 that are new to the BICS from previous waves. These include combined information on trading status, new safety measures, refinement of information of government schemes and refinements to the workforce, furlough and job vacancies questions.

## The different experiences of businesses during COVID-19

In the final results of Wave 6, of 20,548 businesses surveyed, 7,245 businesses (35.3%) responded.

The Wave 6 survey was live for the period 1 June and 14 June 2020 and businesses were asked about their experience for the two-week survey reference period 18 May to 31 May 2020. Dependent on responses to certain questions, businesses are asked different questions.

For questions or response options referring to the "last two weeks" or expectations of the "next two weeks", businesses could respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire based on their current experiences. This means that business responses may cover any two-week time period across the following reference periods respectively: 18 May to 14 June 2020 and 1 June to 28 June 2020. More detail on the type of questions asked are available in the detailed dataset in Section 9.

## Weighting

Estimates from the Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS) are currently unweighted and should be treated with caution when used to evaluate the impact of the coronavirus across the UK economy. Each business was assigned the same weight regardless of turnover, size or industry, and the data in the latest period are preliminary.

## Coverage

The approach for the sample design has been to use three standard ONS surveys: the Monthly Business Survey (MBS), Retail Sales Inquiry (RSI) and Construction as a sampling frame. Each of these survey samples are drawn from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), which covers businesses in all parts of the economy, except those that are not registered for Value Added Tax (VAT) or Pay As You Earn (PAYE), which includes very small businesses, the self-employed, those without employees, and those with low turnover. Some non-profit making organisations are also not registered on the IDBR.

The MBS covers UK for production and only Great Britain for services. Retail sales and Construction are Great Britain focused. Therefore, BICS will be UK for production-based industries but Great Britain for the other elements of the economy covered.

The industries covered are:

- non-financial services (includes professional, scientific, communication, administrative, transport, accommodation and food, private health and education, and entertainment services)
- distribution (includes retail, wholesale and motor trades)
- production (includes manufacturing, oil and gas extraction, energy generation and supply, and water and waste management)
- construction (includes civil engineering, housebuilding, property development and specialised construction trades such as plumbers, electricians and plasterers)

The following sectors are excluded from the survey:

- agriculture
- public administration and defence
- public provision of education and health
- finance and insurance

## Reporting unit

The business unit to which questionnaires are sent is called the reporting unit. The response from the reporting unit can cover the enterprise as a whole, or parts of the enterprise identified by lists of local units. Other than for a minority of larger business or businesses that have a more complex structure, the reporting unit is the same as the enterprise.

Where more than one type of economic activity is carried out by a local unit or enterprise, its principal activity is the activity in which most of the people are employed, and it does not necessarily account for 50% or more of the total employment of the unit. There are detailed rules for determining Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) for multiple-activity economic units.

## Regional estimates

Regional BICS estimates are produced by taking the survey return from each reporting unit then applying this to the reporting unit's local sites. If a business has a site or several sites (also known as local units) within a country, using information from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), then this business is defined to have presence there.

The business is then allocated once within each region (regardless of the number of sites) and the information provided by the reporting unit as a whole copied and used within each country.

## Sample

Only the businesses that have responded to Wave 6 of the Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) are represented in these data, and as such it is not fully representative of the UK as a whole. Currently, we do not apply weighting methods to these data.

The sampling frame used in the BICS was designed to achieve adequate coverage of the listed industries from the monthly business surveys. Coverage and response rate of the medium to largest businesses in terms of total employment is satisfactory to produce estimates on this basis.

The sample is more indicative of a panel of medium to large businesses with only a very small representation of those businesses with an employment of fewer than 100 employees.

To help interpretation of the data, we have presented results based on the number of employees in each business, grouping fewer than 250 employees and those with 250 employees or more.

All businesses with an employment of 250 employees and over, and included within the three monthly surveys (MBS, RSI, Construction) are included in the BICS sample with a random sample of 1% for those with an employment between 0 and 249.

This gives a total of 20,548 businesses in the sample, with a split of 7,327 in employment for 250 and over, and 13,221 for employment between 0 and 249. This breaks down further for 3,828 for employment between 0 and 99; and 9,393 for employment between 100 and 249. Based on the achieved response rates for the different size bands, the data for the smaller sized businesses should be treated with caution.

Response rates for these size bands are available in the detailed Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) dataset.

As the sample is selected fortnightly, the same businesses will be selected for at least two waves depending on how many coronavirus survey selections there are between the selection of these feeder surveys. Because of the randomly selected element, there will be differences in this part of the sample once the feeder surveys have been redrawn. As this is a voluntary survey, businesses may or may not choose to respond to the different waves. Response coverage can be mixed between the different waves.

While we have the ability to align the reporting unit to lower level detail, and also increased detail on the SIC, it is not advisable given the sparseness of response in certain industries and size band.

The sample design for Wave 7 of BICS has been reviewed and refreshed and went live from Monday 15 June for the two-week period. This new sample design will be the basis for future waves and the questionnaire will now go to approximately 24,500 businesses from Wave 7 onwards. This sample redesign improves our coverage for the smaller sized businesses.

Our sample from Wave 7 onwards has a breakdown of approximately 7,400 businesses with employment for 250 and over and approximately 17,100 for employment between 0 and 249. This breaks down further for approximately 5,000 for employment between 0 and 99 and 12,100 for employment between 100 and 249.

## 11 . Strengths and limitations

### Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey

The Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS) is voluntary and responses are qualitative, which should be treated with caution as results reflect the characteristics of those who responded and not necessarily the wider business population.

These data should not be used in place of official statistics. The survey was designed to give an indication of the impact of the coronavirus on businesses and a timelier estimate than other surveys.

The data from Wave 6 of the new fortnightly BICS covers the period 18 May to 31 May 2020, across all business sectors covered by the Monthly Business Survey (including Retail Sales Index and construction).

We do not recommend comparison between the latest data from BICS and previous releases because of changes in the questionnaire and additional questions. Further analysis is currently being undertaken to allow this for future publications.

### Comparison of waves

Comparison of the proportions of businesses trading status between waves should be treated with caution because of the voluntary nature of the survey, the difference in response rates and dependency on those businesses that only responded in particular waves. For example, there were 1,738 businesses that responded they were continuing to trade in Wave 6 that did not respond in Wave 5. Conversely only 1,003 businesses stated they were continuing to trade in Wave 5 but did not respond in Wave 6.

A recent article on [Business impact of coronavirus, analysis over time, UK: Waves 2 to 5 panel](#) captures common business responses on how their turnover, workforce, prices, trade and business resilience have been affected in the two-week reference period. These data relate to the period 23 March 2020 to 17 May 2020 (Wave 2 to Wave 5).

### Publication of coronavirus (COVID-19) related data

This bulletin is published on a fortnightly basis. This is to ensure we are meeting user needs for more timely data.

High-level provisional estimates will be included as part of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') faster indicators release in the alternative weeks.

## 12 . Related links

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Web page | Updated as and when data become available

Latest data and analysis on coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

### [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#)

Bulletin | Weekly

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey to understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

### [Business Impact of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Survey questions: 18 May to 31 May 2020](#)

Article | Released on 11 June 2020

Questions from the Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey for the period 18 May to 31 May 2020 relating to the coronavirus, the UK economy and society, latest indicators weekly bulletin.

### [Rapid Review of Coronavirus, the UK economy and society, faster indicators](#)

Webpage | Released 9 April 2020

Letter from Ed Humpherson, the Director General for Regulation at the UK Statistics Authority, endorsing the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) new experimental faster indicators.

### [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 5 June 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 16 June 2020

Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), by age, sex and region, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

### [The Impact of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) on exporting and importing by UK businesses: 22 May 2020](#)

Article | Released 22 May 2020

Analysis of Wave 4 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey. This complements the analysis of BICS by analysing the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on exporting and importing by responding UK businesses. The data refer to the two-week reference period from 20 April to 3 May 2020.

### [Business impact of coronavirus, analysis over time, UK: Waves 2 to 5 panel](#)

Article | Released 9 June 2020

The indicators and analysis presented in this article are based on selected responses over time from the new voluntary fortnightly business survey, which captures businesses responses on how their turnover, workforce, prices, trade and business resilience have been affected in the two-week reference period. This data relates to the period 23 March 2020 to 17 May 2020 (Wave 2 to Wave 5).