

Article

Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 20 March to 2 April 2023

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Release date:
3 April 2023

Next release:
To be announced

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1 . Survey information

These questions are for Wave 79 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on 20 March 2023. These are the most up-to-date survey questions.

2 . Trading status of your business

Which of the following statements best describes your business's trading status?

- Currently fully trading
- Currently partially trading
- Paused trading but intends to restart in the next two weeks
- Paused trading and does not intend to restart in the next two weeks
- Permanently ceased trading

3 . Exporting

Which of the following statements best describes your business's exporting status?

- Exported in the last 12 months
- Exported more than 12 months ago
- Never exported but have goods or services that could be developed for export
- Never exported and do not have goods or services suitable for export
- Not sure

Has your business exported goods or services in the last 12 months?

- Exported goods only
- Exported services only
- Exported both goods and services
- Not sure

Have you changed where you have exported your goods or services to in the last three months?

- Changed from EU to non-EU
- Changed from non-EU to EU
- Changed in a different way (Please describe)
- Not sure
- No changes made

Where has your business exported goods or services to in the last three months?

- EU only
- Non-EU only
- Both EU and non-EU
- Not exported in the last three months
- Not sure

How did your business's exporting in February 2023 compare with this calendar month last year?

- Exported more
- Exporting stayed the same
- Exported less
- Business was unable to export
- Not sure

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following exporting challenges in February 2023, compared with the previous calendar month?

- Additional paperwork
- Change in exchange rates
- Change in transportation costs
- Customs duties or levies
- Destination countries changing their border restrictions
- Disruption at UK borders
- Finding information on how to export
- Lack of hauliers to transport goods or lack of logistics equipment
- Reduced demand for products and services
- Time taken for checks at the border
- Work permit or visa restrictions, or lack of mutual recognition of professional qualifications
- Other (Please describe)
- Did not experience an increase in any exporting challenges

What was the main cause of these exporting challenges?

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the end of the EU transition period
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

How much disruption to your business have these challenges caused?

- Major disruption
- Moderate disruption
- Minor disruption
- No disruption
- Not sure

Which of the following support options has your business benefitted from, to help with exporting challenges?

- Customs and tariffs
- Export licences
- Financial support
- Finding new markets
- Finding new overseas contacts or customers
- Information on exporting
- Legal support
- Transport and distribution
- Understanding markets and demand issues
- Other (Please describe)
- None of the above

4 . Importing

Which of the following statements best describes your business's importing status?

- Imported in the last 12 months
- Imported more than 12 months ago
- Never imported
- Not sure

Has your business imported goods or services in the last 12 months?

- Imported goods only
- Imported services only
- Imported both goods and services
- Not sure

Have you changed where you have sourced your imports of goods or services from in the last three months?

- Changed from EU to non-EU suppliers
- Changed from non-EU to EU suppliers
- Changed in a different way (Please describe)
- Not sure
- No changes made

Where has your business imported goods or services from in the last three months?

- EU only
- Non-EU only
- Both EU and non-EU
- Not imported in the last three months
- Not sure

How did your business's importing in February 2023 compare with this calendar month last year?

- Imported more
- Importing stayed the same
- Imported less
- Business was unable to import
- Not sure

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following importing challenges in February 2023, compared with the previous calendar month?

- Additional paperwork
- Change in exchange rates
- Change in transportation costs
- Customs duties or levies
- Disruption at UK borders
- Finding information on how to import
- Lack of hauliers to transport goods or lack of logistics equipment
- Suppliers not customs ready
- Time taken for checks at the border
- Other (Please describe)
- Did not experience an increase in any importing challenges

What was the main cause of these importing challenges?

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the end of the EU transition period
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

How much disruption to your business have these challenges caused?

- Major disruption
- Moderate disruption
- Minor disruption
- No disruption
- Not sure

Which of the following support options would your business benefit from, to help with importing challenges?

- Customs and tariffs
- Finding new alternative supply chains
- Finding new overseas contacts or customers
- Import licences
- Information on importing
- Legal support
- Transport and distribution
- Understanding markets and demand issues
- Other (Please describe)
- None of the above

5 . Supply chains

Was your business able to get the materials, goods or services it needed from within the UK in February 2023?

- Yes, the business was able to get the materials, goods or services it needed
- Yes, but the business had to change suppliers or find alternative solutions
- No, the business was not able to get materials, goods or services needed
- Not applicable

Did your business experience any global supply chain disruption in February 2023?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Which of the following, if any, will be the main concern for your business in April 2023?

- Business rates
- Competition with other UK businesses
- Energy prices
- Exchange rates
- Falling demand of goods and services
- Inflation of goods and service prices
- Interest rates
- Property rental costs
- Supply chain disruption
- Taxation
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- No concerns for the business

6 . Sending goods

Has your business sent goods from GB to Northern Ireland in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In February 2023, how did the volume of goods your business sent from GB to Northern Ireland compare with the previous calendar month?

- Volume increased
- Volume stayed the same
- Volume decreased
- Stopped sending goods to Northern Ireland
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Please give more details about why the volume of goods sent from GB to Northern Ireland changed in February 2023:

- Comments

7 . Workforce trends

Is your business using, or intending to use, increased homeworking as a permanent business model going forward?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Why is your business using, or intending to use, increased homeworking as a permanent business model going forward?

- Ability to better match jobs to skills
- Ability to recruit from a wider geographical pool in the UK
- Ability to recruit from a wider geographical pool internationally
- Improved staff wellbeing
- Increased productivity
- Reduced carbon emissions
- Reduced overheads
- Reduced sickness absence
- Reduced wage bill
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

Why is your business not intending to use increased homeworking as a permanent business model going forward?

- Concerns with integrating new starters into the workplace
- Costs of employee equipment
- Difficulties managing staff remotely
- Negative impact on working culture
- Not suitable for our business
- Reduced communication
- Reduced productivity
- Reduced reliability and retention of staff
- Security concerns
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

Does your business expect to make any of your workforce redundant over the next three months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

When do you expect these redundancies?

- Within the next 2 weeks
- Between 2 weeks and 1 month
- Between 1 and 3 months
- Not sure

Why is your business making these redundancies?

- Automation
- Business is closing or insolvent
- Certain job roles are no longer required
- Change in management
- Relocation of the business
- Site closures
- To reduce staff costs
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Prefer not to say

On average, how did employees' hourly wages in February 2023 compare with employees' hourly wages in the previous calendar month?

- Wages increased
- Wages stayed the same
- Wages decreased
- Not sure

Is your business currently experiencing a shortage of workers?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

How has the shortage of workers affected your business?

- Employees working increased hours
- Business had to pause trading entirely
- Had to pause trading of some of the business
- Business had to recruit temporary workers
- Unable to meet demands
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business has not been affected

8 . Industrial action

Was your business affected by industrial action in February 2023?

- Yes, the business was affected
- No, the business was not affected
- Not sure
- Not applicable
- Prefer not to say

How was your business affected by industrial action in February 2023?

- Business was unable to obtain necessary goods
- Business was unable to obtain necessary services
- Business was unable to operate fully
- Part or all of the workforce were directly involved in industrial action
- Workforce had to change their working location
- Workforce were unable to perform their roles
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

9 . Comments

Please tell us anything else about your business's current situation relating to topics covered in this survey:

- Comments