Statistical bulletin

Business insights and impact on the UK economy: 5 November 2026

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience.

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1 . Main points

- In October 2026, 21% of businesses with 10 or more employees reported that they were concerned about cyber attacks impacting supply chains over the next 12 months, while 12% were concerned about artificial intelligence; both proportions are the highest since the question was introduced, in September 2024.
- In October 2026, 31% of businesses with 10 or more employees reported that they were concerned about international conflict impacting supply chains over the next year, while 21% were concerned about the impact of shipping disruption; these proportions were broadly stable with September 2026 but up 20 and 13 percentage points, respectively, from September 2025.
- Of businesses with 10 or more employees that reported on their supply chain concerns in October 2026, 64% expected the cost of sourcing materials to be impacted, up 9 percentage points from September 2026; 60% expected transportation costs to be impacted, up 9 percentage points from September 2026 and 27 percentage points from September 2025.
- Almost 7 in 10 (69%) businesses expressed some degree of concern regarding energy prices in late October 2026, broadly stable from early October 2026, but up 6 percentage points from August 2026; for businesses with 10 or more employees, the proportion was 77%, also broadly stable from early October 2026.
- 7 in 10 (70%) businesses expressed some degree of concern regarding fuel prices in late October 2026, broadly stable with early October, but up 8 percentage points from August 2026; for businesses with 10 or more employees, the proportion was higher, at 76%, again broadly stable compared with early October 2026.
- In late September 2026, 21% of trading businesses with 10 or more employees reported that they had exported goods, services, or both in the last 12 months; of these businesses, 40% reported that their exporting costs increased in September 2026 compared with this time last year, broadly stable with June 2026 but the highest proportion reported since June 2023 (43%).

These are official statistics in development, and we advise caution when using the data. The BICS questions and topics are regularly reviewed, and questions are often added, removed, or amended to reflect changing circumstances and analytical priorities.

2 . Headline figures

The data presented in this bulletin are the final results from wave 167 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), which was live from 19 October to 1 November 2026.

This wave of the survey asked businesses questions about:

- exporting and importing, including rules of origin
- UK Conformity Assessed (UKCA) markings
- supply chains
- domestic trade
- energy and fuel concerns
- US tariffs

Full details of the survey questions used are available in our Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 19 October to 1 November article.

Data reported within BICS bulletins and datasets are estimates that are subject to uncertainty, for example, sampling variability and non-sampling error. Further quality and methodology information (QMI) is available in our BICS QMI, and we regularly update confidence intervals associated with the survey questions.

Single-site weighted regional estimates up to wave 154 are available in our Business insights and impact on the UK subnational single-site economy: May 2026 article.

More about economy, business and jobs

- Explore the latest trends in employment, prices and trade in our economic dashboard.
- View all economic data.

The percentage of businesses that reported they were trading in late October 2026 was 95%, with 86% fully trading, and 9% partially trading (for example, trading with reduced hours or staff numbers). Meanwhile, 3% of businesses reported "temporarily paused trading", and 2% reported "permanently ceased trading" as their business's trading status.

3 . Supply chain concerns

Businesses were asked which of a set of factors, if any, they were concerned about impacting supply chains over the next 12 months.

Figure 1: In October 2026, 21%of businesseswith 10 or more employeesreported theywereconcerned aboutcyber attacks impactingsupply chainsover the nextyear

Supply chain concerns, businesses not permanently stopped trading with 10 or more employees, weighted by count, UK, 16 September 2024 to 1 November 2026

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Notes:

1. For presentational purposes, some response options have been removed.

2. Data are plotted in the middle of the period of each wave.

3. Caution should be taken when interpreting expectations questions, as the employees responding on behalf of businesses may not have full oversight of all of their business's future expectations.

In late October 2026, 21% of businesses with 10 or more employees reported they were concerned about cyber attacks impacting supply chains over the next year. This is a 5 percentage point increase from September 2026, and a 9 percentage point increase from September 2025.

Around 1 in 9 (12%) were concerned about artificial intelligence, a 7 percentage point increase since September 2026 (5%). Both proportions are the highest since the question was introduced, in September 2024.

Other factors these businesses were concerned about included:

- international conflict (31%); broadly stable since June 2026, though this proportion has generally trended downwards since peaking in April 2026 (38%)
- shipping disruption (21%); up 14 percentage points from December 2025 but down from May 2026 (25%)
- increased barriers to trade (15%); down from its peak in May 2026 (19%)
- climate change (12%); broadly stable compared with August and September 2026, though it has trended upwards since March 2026 (4%)

Over a third (36%) of businesses with 10 or more employees reported in October 2026 that they were not concerned about these factors impacting supply chains over the next year. This proportion has generally trended downwards since the question was introduced in September 2024 (57%).

4 . Data on the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Business insights and impact on the UK economy
Dataset | Released 5 November 2026
Weighted estimates from the voluntary fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) about financial performance, workforce, prices, trade, and business resilience. This dataset includes additional information collected as part of the survey not presented in this publication. These are official statistics in development.

Business insights and impact on the UK economy confidence intervals
Dataset | Released 5 November 2026
Confidence intervals for weighted estimates from the voluntary fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) about financial performance, workforce, prices, trade, and business resilience. These are official statistics in development.

Access to microdata

You can access the microdata for waves 1 to 166 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) through the Secure Research Service (SRS). The BICS microdata for each wave are released on a rolling basis in the week following the publication of each wave. The microdata are made confidential and do not disclose information on any specific business.

Only researchers accredited under the Digital Economy Act, as explained on the UK Statistics Authority website are able to access data in the SRS. You can apply for researcher accreditation using the People and Projects Service (PPS). More information is available in our guidance on how to become an accredited researcher.

To conduct analysis with microdata from the SRS, a project application must be submitted to the UK Statistics Authority's Research Accreditation Panel (RAP). Project accreditation applications should be submitted using the Project Accreditation Service for SRS (PASS). More information is available in our guidance on applying for an accredited research project.

To use the SRS, you must access it through the appropriate safe setting. More information on the full range of safe setting options is available in our guidance on accessing data securely.

Making our published spreadsheets accessible

Following the Government Statistical Service's (GSS's) guidance on releasing statistics in spreadsheets, we will be amending our published tables over the next couple of publications to improve the usability, accessibility and machine readability of our published statistics. If you have any questions or comments, please email us at bics@ons.gov.uk.

5 . Glossary

Private sector businesses

The Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) is a survey of private sector businesses, meaning that the public sector is not sampled. Some businesses are also excluded; more information is available in the Coverage section of this bulletin.

Reporting unit

The reporting unit is the business unit to which questionnaires are sent. The response from the reporting unit can cover the enterprise as a whole, or parts of the enterprise identified by lists of local units.

Trading businesses

Trading businesses refers to businesses that responded that their trading status was "currently fully trading" or "currently partially trading" only.

If trading businesses is not specifically specified, the statistics presented refer to businesses that have "not permanently stopped trading". This includes trading businesses and those that said their trading status was "paused trading and intends to restart in the next two weeks" or "paused trading and does not intend to restart within the next two weeks".

6 . Data sources and quality

More quality and methodology information (QMI) on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) QMI, last revised on 10 October 2024.

The BICS is voluntary, and the results are official statistics in development. More information is available in our Guide to official statistics in development.

Table 1: Sample and response rates for wave 165, 166 and 167 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Wave	8 October 2026 Publication Wave 165	22 October 2026 Publication Wave 166	5 November 2026 Publication Wave 167
Sample	38,592	38,554	38,542
Response	9,933	9,862	9,628
Rate	25.7%	25.6%	25.0%

Source: Business Insights and Conditions Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Response rates for all waves can be found in our accompanying dataset.

The results are based on responses from the voluntary fortnightly BICS, which captures businesses' views on financial performance, workforce, prices, trade and business resilience. The wave 167 survey was live for the period 19 October to 1 November 2026. Full details of the survey questions used are available in our Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 19 October to 1 November article.

Coverage

The BICS sampling frame is based on the same industries as our Monthly Business Survey (MBS). The MBS covers the UK for production industries only, and Great Britain for construction, retail and services industries. The MBS is an important input to the output measure of gross domestic product (GDP), which includes monthly GDP.

Detailed information on the industries covered by the MBS and BICS is available in our GDP(o) data sources catalogue. The following are some industries that are excluded from MBS and BICS:

- agriculture
- oil and gas extraction
- energy generation and supply
- public administration and defence
- public provision of education and health
- finance and insurance

More information on the methodology of producing the BICS, such as weighting, is available in our Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) QMI report.

7 . Related links

Economic activity and social change real-time indicators, UK, dashboard
Dashboard | Updated frequently
An overview of the UK economy and society, based on rapid response surveys, novel data sources, and innovative methods.

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators
Bulletin | Released monthly
Data on the UK economy and society. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and innovative methods. These are official statistics in development.

Business insights and impact on the UK subnational single-site economy: May 2026
Article | Released 15 May 2026
Estimates from the voluntary fortnightly business survey (BICS) on prices, financial performance, workforce and business resilience.

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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