

Article

# Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 17 May 2021 to 30 May 2021

Contact:  
Jon Gough  
bics@ons.gov.uk  
+44 (0)1633 456 720

Release date:  
1 June 2021

Next release:  
To be announced

## Table of contents

1. [Survey information](#)
2. [Trading Status of Your Business](#)
3. [Turnover and Profits](#)
4. [Exporting](#)
5. [Importing](#)
6. [International Trade in Services](#)
7. [Supply Chains](#)
8. [Prices of Materials, Goods and Services](#)
9. [Stock and Capital Expenditure](#)
10. [Access to Financial Support](#)
11. [Operational Performance](#)
12. [Comments](#)

# 1 . Survey information

These questions are for wave 31 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on the 17th of May. 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 trading and have been for more than the last two weeks
- Started trading within the last two weeks after a pause in 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

Where in the UK are your business's sites located?

- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales
- East of England
- East Midlands
- Greater London
- North East of England
- North West of England
- South East of England
- South West of England
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and The Humber
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Where in the UK are your sites temporarily or permanently closed?

- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales
- East of England
- East Midlands
- Greater London
- North East of England
- North West of England
- South East of England
- South West of England
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and The Humber
- Not sure
- None of our sites are temporarily or permanently closed

### 3 . Turnover and Profits

How does your business's turnover for the last two weeks, compare to normal expectations for this time of year?

- Turnover has increased by more than 50%
- Turnover has increased between 20% and 50%
- Turnover has increased by up to 20%
- Turnover has not been affected
- Turnover has decreased by up to 20%
- Turnover has decreased between 20% and 50%
- Turnover has decreased by more than 50%
- Not sure

What was the main reason for this change to your business's turnover in the last two weeks?

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

What are your expectations about turnover for the next two weeks?

- Expect turnover to substantially increase
- Expect turnover to increase a little
- Expect turnover to stay the same
- Expect turnover to decrease a little
- Expect turnover to substantially decrease
- Not sure

In the last two weeks, how has your business's profits compared with normal expectations for this time of year?

- Profits have increased by more than 50%
- Profits have increased by between 20% and 50%
- Profits have increased by up to 20%
- Profits have stayed the same
- Profits have decreased by up to 20%
- Profits have decreased by between 20% and 50%
- Profits have decreased by more than 50%
- Not sure
- Not applicable

## 4 . Exporting

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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

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

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

Where has your business exported goods or services to in the last two weeks?

- EU only
- Non-EU only
- Both EU and non-EU
- Never exported in the last two weeks
- Not sure

Have you changed where you have exported your goods or services to in the last two weeks?

- Changed from EU to non-EU
- Changed from non-EU to EU
- Changed in a different way
- No changes made
- Not sure

How does your business's exporting in the last two weeks compare to normal expectations for this time of year?

- Exporting more than normal
- Exporting as normal
- Exporting, but less than normal
- Not been able to export in the last two weeks
- Not sure

Have you experienced any of the following challenges with exporting goods or services in the last two weeks?

- Additional paperwork
- Basing some staff in an EU member state to be allowed to work
- Change in transportation costs
- Closure of infrastructure used to export goods or services
- Customs duties or levies
- Destination countries changing their border restrictions
- Disruption at UK borders
- Lack of hauliers to transport goods or lack of logistics equipment
- Reduced demand for products and services
- Work permit or visa restrictions, or lack of mutual recognition of professional qualifications
- Other
- Did not experience any challenges with exporting

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
- Not sure

How much disruption to your business have these challenges caused?

- Severe disruption
- Moderate disruption
- Low 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
- Legal issues
- Transport and distribution
- Understanding markets and demand issues
- Other
- None of the above

Let us know anything else that will help us understand your business's exporting in the last two weeks

What are your expectations about your business's sales from exports in the next 12 months?

- Export sales will substantially increase
- Export sales will increase a little
- Export sales will stay the same
- Export sales will decrease a little
- Export sales will substantially decrease
- Not sure

## 5 . Importing

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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Did your business import goods or services more than 12 months ago?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Where has your business imported goods or services from in the last two weeks?

- EU only
- Non-EU only
- Both EU and non-EU
- Not imported in the last two weeks
- Not sure

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

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

How does your business's importing in the last two weeks compare to normal expectations for this time of year?

- Importing more than normal
- Importing as normal
- Importing, but less than normal
- Not been able to import in the last two weeks
- Not sure

Have you experienced any of the following challenges with importing over the last two weeks?



- Additional paperwork
- Change in transportation costs
- Closure of infrastructure used to import goods or services
- Customs duties or levies
- Destination countries changing their border restrictions
- Disruption at UK borders
- Lack of hauliers to transport goods or lack of logistics equipment
- Suppliers not continuing to trade
- Suppliers not customs ready
- Other
- Did not experience any challenges with importing

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
- Not sure

How much disruption to your business have these challenges caused?

- Severe disruption
- Moderate disruption
- Low disruption
- No disruption
- Not sure

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

- Understanding markets and demand issues
- Finding new alternative supply chains
- Finding new overseas contacts or customers
- Transport and distribution
- Legal issues
- Customs and tariffs
- Import licences
- Other
- None of the above

Let us know anything else that will help us understand your business's importing in the last two weeks

## 6 . International Trade in Services

Has your business's international trade in services changed in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

How does your business's international trade in services in the last two weeks compare to normal expectations for this time of year?

- Trading more than normal
- Trading as normal
- Trading, but less than normal
- Not been able to trade in services in the last two weeks
- Not sure

What was the main reason for this change to international trade in services?

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

## 7 . Supply Chains

Has your business made changes to supply chains due to the end of the EU transition period?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Were these changes to supply chains made as a result of a new UK trade agreement?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In which of the following ways has your business changed supply chains due to the end of the EU transition period?

- Using more UK suppliers
- Using more EU suppliers
- Using more non-EU suppliers
- Moving the supply chain away from the short straits crossings
- Increasing the diversity in suppliers
- Expanding to different modes of freight
- Other
- Not sure

Has your business had any extra costs due to the end of the EU transition period?

- Additional transportation costs
- Costs associated with changing supply chains
- Costs associated with the storage of goods
- Costs due to increased red tape
- Costs incurred from wasted goods
- Cost of setting up EU subsidiaries
- Extra costs in the prices of goods and services imported
- Extra tariffs or taxes
- Other
- Not sure
- No extra costs

Was your business able to get the materials, goods or services it needed from the EU in the last two weeks?

- Yes, the business has been 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 has not been able to get materials, goods or services needed
- Not applicable

## 8 . Prices of Materials, Goods and Services

How did the prices of materials, goods or services bought by your business change in the last two weeks, compared with normal price fluctuations?

- Prices increased more than normal
- Prices did not change any more than normal
- Prices decreased more than normal
- Some prices increased, some prices decreased
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Please give more details about the prices of materials, goods or services that changed

How did the prices of goods or services sold by your business change in the last two weeks, compared with normal fluctuations?

- Prices increased more than normal
- Prices did not change any more than normal
- Prices decreased more than normal
- Some prices increased, some prices decreased
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Please give more details about how prices changed

Has your business had an increase in demand for goods or services sold in the last two weeks?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Which goods or services have had an increase in demand?

## 9 . Stock and Capital Expenditure

How do your business's stock levels for the last two weeks, compare to normal expectations for this time of year?

- Stock levels are higher than normal
- Stock levels have not changed
- Stock levels are lower than normal
- Not sure
- Not applicable

In the last two weeks, what has had the greatest impact to your business's stock levels?

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

Please explain this difference in stock levels in more detail

Is your business stockpiling any goods or materials?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Where are you sourcing these stockpiled goods or materials from?

- UK suppliers
- EU suppliers
- Non-EU suppliers
- Not sure

Which of the following goods or materials are you stockpiling?

- Agricultural products
- Chemicals
- Food
- Manufacturing parts
- Metals and materials
- Pharmaceuticals
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Other consumer goods
- Other
- Not sure

Where are the stockpiled goods or materials being stored?

- UK
- EU countries
- Non-EU countries
- Not sure

Which storage solutions are you using for stockpiling these goods or materials?

- Building new storage
- Renting new storage
- Using more of our current storage
- Other
- Not sure

Please tell us more information about the goods or materials you are stockpiling

How does your business's capital expenditure for the last two weeks compare to normal expectations for this time of year?

- Capital expenditure is higher than normal
- Capital expenditure has not been affected
- Capital expenditure is lower than normal
- Capital expenditure has stopped
- Not sure
- Not applicable

What was the main reason for this change in your business's capital expenditure?

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

Please explain in more detail how your business's capital expenditure has been affected

## **10 . Access to Financial Support**

Has your business applied for any of the following grants?

- Local Restrictions Support Grant – England
- Local Restrictions Support Scheme – Northern Ireland
- Strategic Framework Business Fund – Scotland
- Lockdown Business Fund – Wales
- Not sure
- Not applied for any of these grants

Has your business received any of the following grants?

- Local Restrictions Support Grant – England
- Local Restrictions Support Scheme – Northern Ireland
- Strategic Framework Business Fund – Scotland
- Lockdown Business Fund – Wales
- Not sure
- Not received any of these grants

Has your business received any of these other grants?

- Small business grant
- Sector-specific grant
- Tradeshaw access grant
- Additional Restriction Grant – England
- Business Contingency Fund Grants – Scotland
- Business Development Grant – Wales
- Business Restart Grant – Scotland
- Not sure
- Not received any of these grants

Which governments in the UK provided the small business grant, or grants?



- Northern Ireland Executive
- Scottish Government
- UK Government — England only
- Welsh Government
- Not sure

Which governments in the UK provided the sector-specific grant, or grants?

- Northern Ireland Executive
- Scottish Government
- UK Government – England only
- Welsh Government
- Not sure

Has your business received any government-backed loans or finance agreements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Are you using, or intending to use, any of the following schemes?

- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)
- Kickstart Job Scheme for young people
- Recovery Loan Scheme
- Not sure
- Not using, or intending to use, any of these schemes

Did the support received from any of the initiatives or schemes help your business to continue trading?

- Yes, it helped us to continue trading
- No, it did not impact our ability to continue trading
- Not sure

Over the last month, how did your business's debt repayments compare with turnover?

- Repayments were more than 100% of turnover
- Repayments were between 50% and 100% of turnover
- Repayments were between 20% and 50% of turnover
- Repayments were up to 20% of turnover
- No repayments
- Not sure

Over the last month, how did your business's debt repayments compare with normal expectations for this time of year?

- Repayments have increased by more than 50%
- Repayments have increased by between 20% and 50%
- Repayments have increased by up to 20%
- Repayments have stayed the same
- Repayments have decreased by up to 20%
- Repayments have decreased by between 20% and 50%
- Repayments have decreased by more than 50%
- Not sure

Over the next month, how do you expect your business's debt repayments to change?

- Expect repayments to substantially increase
- Expect repayments to increase a little
- Expect repayments to stay the same
- Expect repayments to decrease a little
- Expect repayments to substantially decrease
- Not sure
- Not applicable

How much confidence does your business have that it will meet its debt obligations?

- High confidence
- Moderate confidence
- Low confidence
- No confidence
- Not sure

How long do you think your business's cash reserves will last?

- No cash reserves
- Less than 1 month
- 1 to 3 months
- 4 to 6 months
- More than 6 months
- Not sure

How much confidence does your business have that it will survive the next three months?

- High confidence
- Moderate confidence
- Low confidence
- No confidence
- Not sure

What is your business's risk of insolvency?

- Severe risk
- Moderate risk
- Low risk
- No risk
- The business is insolvent
- Not sure

# 11 . Operational Performance

In the last two weeks, approximately what percentage of your business's workforce were:

- On partial or full furlough leave
- Working at their normal place of work
- Working from home instead of at their normal place of work
- On sick leave or not working due to coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, self-isolation or quarantine
- Made permanently redundant
- Other

Of those partially and fully furloughed, what percentage are fully furloughed?

- Approximate percentage of furloughed staff who are 'fully furloughed'
- Not sure

In the last two weeks, approximately what percentage of your workforce have:

- Moved from homeworking to the normal workplace
- Moved from the normal workplace to homeworking
- Returned from furlough to homeworking, either fully or partially
- Returned from furlough to the normal workplace, either fully or partially
- Moved from working to furlough, either fully or partially

In the next two weeks, approximately what percentage of your workforce will:

- Moved from working to furlough, either fully or partially
- Return from furlough to homeworking, either fully or partially
- Return from furlough to the normal workplace, either fully or partially
- Return to the workplace from homeworking

When do you expect your workforce to return to their normal place of work?

- Within the next month
- Between 1 and 3 months
- Between 4 to 6 months
- More than 6 months
- Workforce already returned to their normal place of work
- Not expecting workforce to return to their normal place of work
- Not sure
- Not applicable

What percentage of your workforce do you expect to return to their normal place of work in the time period you selected?

- Above 75% of the workforce
- Between 50-75% of the workforce
- Between 25-49% of the workforce
- Less than 25% of the workforce
- Not sure

Is your business using, or intending to use, any of the following safety measures in the workplace?

- Adjusted working practices
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccinations
- Hygiene measures
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Social distancing
- Temperature checks
- Other
- Not sure
- None of the above

Has your business completed a risk assessment related to coronavirus (COVID-19) in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

When was your business's risk assessment related to coronavirus (COVID-19) last reviewed?

- Less than 1 month ago
- Between 1 and 3 months ago
- More than 3 months ago
- Has not been reviewed since being completed
- Not sure

Which, if any, of the following sources have you used for advice or support to adapt your business for coronavirus (COVID-19)?

- GOV.UK working safely guidance
- GOV.UK NHS test and trace guidance
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on HSE.GOV.UK
- Local authority website
- Tailored business advice
- Trade or sector bodies
- Other
- Not sure
- None of the above

Is your business providing regular coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for its workforce?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

What percentage of your workforce are receiving regular coronavirus (COVID-19) testing?

- Approximate percentage of your workforce receiving regular testing
- Not sure

Would your business be prepared to pay for lateral flow device tests for its employees?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Approximately what percentage of your workforce do you expect to be made redundant over the next three months?

- Approximate percentage of redundancies in the next three months
- Not sure

## 12 . Comments

Please tell us anything else that may help us understand your business's current situation relating to topics covered in this survey

- Comments