

Article

# Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 19 August to 1 September 2024

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## Table of contents

1. [Survey information](#)
2. [Trading Status of Your Business](#)
3. [Workforce trends](#)
4. [Business operations](#)
5. [Comments](#)

# 1 . Survey information

These questions are for Wave 115 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on 19 August 2024.

## 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 . 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
- 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
- Not sure

Which, if any, of the following skills has your business had a high demand for in the last 12 months?

- Advanced digital skills
- Basic digital skills
- Customer service skills
- Management or leadership skills
- Manual skills
- Transferable skills
- Other
- None of the above

Which, if any, of the following skills does your workforce require extra support or training in?

- Advanced digital skills
- Basic digital skills
- Customer service skills
- Management or leadership skills
- Manual skills
- Transferable skills
- Other
- None of the above

On average, how did employees' hourly wages in July 2024 compare with employees' hourly wages in the previous calendar month?

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

How have your business's staffing costs changed over the last three months?

- Costs have increased
- Costs have stayed the same
- Costs have decreased
- Not sure
- Not applicable

How does your business expect staffing costs to change over the next three months?

- Costs will increase
- Costs will stay the same
- Costs will decrease
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Which of the following challenges, if any, has your business experienced due to a shortage of workers?

- Business had to pause trading entirely
- Business had to recruit temporary workers
- Employees worked increased hours
- Had to pause trading of some of the business
- Unable to meet demands
- Other
- Not sure
- Business has not experienced any challenges due to a shortage of workers

Which of the following employees, if any, did your business have difficulties recruiting in July 2024?

- Clerical employees
- Professional or managerial employees
- Semi-skilled or unskilled employees
- Skilled, manual or technical employees
- Other
- Not sure
- Business did not experience any difficulties in recruiting employees

Why did your business experience difficulties recruiting employees in July 2024?

- Business cannot offer an attractive pay package to applicants
- Increased number of vacancies
- Lack of qualified applicants for the roles on offer
- Low number of applications for the roles on offer
- Reduced number of applicants aged 16 to 24 years
- Reduced number of applicants aged over 50 years
- Reduced number of EU applicants
- Other
- 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 to happen?

- 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
- Not sure
- Prefer not to say

## 4 . Business operations

Was your business affected by industrial action in July 2024?

- 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 July 2024?

- 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
- Not sure

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

- High confidence
- Moderate confidence
- Low confidence
- No confidence
- Not sure
- Business does not have any debt obligations

## 5 . Comments

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

- Comments