

Article

Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 1 November to 14 November 2021

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1 . Survey information

These questions are for Wave 43 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on the 1st November. 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

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

- 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
- Do not have any sites
- None of our sites are temporarily or permanently closed

3 . Turnover

How does your business's turnover over the last month, 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 over the last month?

- 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 month?

- 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

4 . Exporting

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

- Exported in the last 12 months
- 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

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

How does your business's exporting over the last month compare with 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 month
- Not sure

How does the cost of exporting over the last month compare with normal expectations for this time of year?

- Cost has increased
- Cost has stayed the same
- Cost has decreased
- Not sure

How does the time spent on exporting over the last month compare with normal expectations for this time of year?

- Time spent has increased
- Time spent has stayed the same
- Time spent has decreased
- Not sure

Have you experienced any of the following challenges with exporting goods or services over the last month?

- 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
- 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
- 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

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
- None of the above

5 . Importing

Which of the following 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

How does your business's importing over the last month compare with 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 month
- Not sure

How does the cost of importing over the last month compare with normal expectations for this time of year?

- Cost has increased
- Cost has stayed the same
- Cost has decreased
- Not sure

How does the time spent on importing over the last month compare with normal expectations for this time of year?

- Time spent has increased
- Time spent has stayed the same
- Time spent has decreased
- Not sure

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

- 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
- Finding information on how to import
- Lack of hauliers to transport goods or lack of logistics equipment
- Suppliers not continuing to trade
- Suppliers not customs ready
- Time taken for checks at the border
- 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

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
- None of the above

6 . Production and suppliers

Is your business experiencing any challenges when trading with customers in other UK nations?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Has the overall choice of suppliers for sourcing your business's materials, goods and services changed since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?

- Choice of suppliers has increased
- Choice of suppliers has not changed
- Choice of suppliers has decreased
- Not sure

Has the number of businesses, selling similar goods or services as your business, changed since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?

- Number has increased
- Number has not changed
- Number has decreased
- Not sure

Has your business been affected by recent increases in wholesale gas prices?

- Yes, production has been affected
- Yes, suppliers have been affected
- Yes, both production and suppliers have been affected
- No, my business has not been affected
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Are your business's gas costs fixed or hedged?

- Yes, expiring by December 2021
- Yes, expiring by March 2022
- Yes, expiring after March 2022
- No, gas prices are variable
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Does your business's fixed price contract or hedging cover all or only part of your gas costs?

- All gas costs fixed or hedged
- More than half of gas costs fixed or hedged
- Less than half of gas costs fixed or hedged
- Not sure

Are your business's electricity costs fixed or hedged?

- Yes, expiring by December 2021
- Yes, expiring by March 2022
- Yes, expiring after March 2022
- No, electricity prices are variable
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Does your business's fixed price contract or hedging cover all or only part of your electricity costs?

- All electricity costs fixed or hedged
- More than half of electricity costs fixed or hedged
- Less than half of electricity costs fixed or hedged
- Not sure

7 . Access to financial support

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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Has your business received payment from any of the following grants or schemes in the last month?

- Additional Restriction Grant
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)
- Kickstart Job Scheme for young people
- Recovery Loan Scheme
- Sector-specific grant
- Small business grant
- Super-deduction
- Other
- Not sure
- Not received any of these grants in the last month

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

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

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
- 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
- Do not have any debt obligations

What is your business's risk of insolvency?

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

8 . Operational performance

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

- Using a hybrid model of working
- Working from home
- Working from a designated workspace
- On sick leave or not working due to coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, self-isolation or quarantine
- Made permanently redundant
- Other

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 of training in?

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

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
- 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

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 and 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

Has the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affected your business's plans to expand?

- Plans are more ambitious
- No change in plans
- Plans are less ambitious
- Plans have been postponed or cancelled
- Not sure
- Not applicable

9 . Comments

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

- Comments