

Article

Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 23 August 2021 to 5 September 2021

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1 . Survey information

These questions are for Wave 39 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on the 6th September. 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?

- The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- The 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

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

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

- EU only
- Non-EU only
- Both EU and non-EU
- Not 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

How does the cost of exporting in the last two weeks compare with normal expectations for this time of year?

- Cost has increased
- Cost has stayed the same
- Cost has decreased
- Not exported in the last month
- Not sure

How does the time spent on exporting in the last two weeks 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 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
- 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?

- The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- The 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 benefited 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

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

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

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

How does the cost of importing in the last two weeks 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 in the last two weeks 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 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
- 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?

- The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- The 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?

- 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

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

6 . 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 crossing
- Increasing the diversity in suppliers
- Expanding to different models of freight
- Other
- Not sure

Has your business had any extra cost 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, good 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 the materials, goods or services needed
- Not applicable

Does your business intend to open any new branches or subsidiaries in the EU in the next 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Was your business able to get the materials, good or services it needed from within the UK 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 the suppliers or find alternative solutions
- No, the business has not been able to get the materials, goods or services needed
- Not applicable

7 . 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?

- The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- The 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

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?

- The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- Super-deduction
- Other
- Not sure

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

Over the last month, has your business scrapped any capital assets earlier than intended?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Please explain in more detail what type of assets your business scrapped early and why.

8 . 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
- Tradeshow 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

Is your business using, or intending to use, any of the following schemes or incentives?

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

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
- 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

What is your business's risk of insolvency?

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

How has your business's risk of insolvency changed in the last two weeks?

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

9 . Operational performance

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

- On partial or full furlough leave
- Mainly working at the same place they were working before the pandemic
- Mainly working from home, instead of where they were working before the pandemic
- 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, back fully to where they were working before the pandemic
- Moved from fully homeworking to a hybrid model of working
- Moved from full or partial furlough to a hybrid model of working
- Moved from full or partial furlough to fully working from home
- Moved from full or partial furlough, back fully to where they were working before the pandemic

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

- Move from homeworking, back fully to where they were working before the pandemic
- Move from fully homeworking to a hybrid model of working
- Move from full or partial furlough to a hybrid model of working
- Move from full or partial furlough to fully working from home
- Move from full or partial furlough, back fully to where they were working before the pandemic

Does your business intend to use increased homeworking as a permanent business model going forward?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Why do you intend 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 internationally
- Ability to recruit from a wider geographical pool in the UK
- Improved staff wellbeing
- Increased productivity
- Reduced carbon emissions
- Reduced overheads
- Reduced sickness absence
- Reduced wage bill
- 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
- Workplace 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

What is your business's main consideration when deciding who can return to their normal place of work?

- Business need only
- Employee preference only
- Both business need and employee preference
- Other
- Not sure
- Prefer not to say

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

10 . Comments

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

- Comments