

Article

Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 23 January to 5 February 2023

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Table of contents

1. [Survey information](#)
2. [Trading status of your business](#)
3. [Exporting](#)
4. [Importing](#)
5. [UKCA](#)
6. [Supply Chains](#)
7. [Sending goods](#)
8. [Workforce trends](#)
9. [Industrial action](#)
10. [Comments](#)

1 . Survey information

These questions are for Wave 75 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on the 23rd of January 2023.

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 . Exporting

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

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

How did your business's exporting in December 2022 compare with this calendar month last year?

- Exported more
- Exporting stayed the same
- Exported less
- Business was unable to export
- Not sure

How did your business's cost of exporting in December 2022 compare with this calendar month last year?

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

How did the time spent on exporting in December 2022 compare with this calendar month last year?

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

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following exporting challenges in December 2022, compared with the previous calendar month?

- Additional paperwork
- Change in exchange rates
- Change in transportation costs
- 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 (Please describe)
- Did not experience an increase in any exporting challenges

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 (Please describe)
- Not sure

4 . Importing

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

- Imported in the last 12 months
- Imported more than 12 months ago
- Never imported
- Not sure

How did your business's importing in December 2022 compare with this calendar month last year?

- Imported more
- Importing stayed the same
- Imported less
- Business was unable to import
- Not sure

How did your business's cost of importing in December 2022 compare with this calendar month last year?

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

How did the time spent on importing in December 2022 compare with this calendar month last year?

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

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following importing challenges in December 2022, compared with the previous calendar month?

- Additional paperwork
- Change in exchange rates
- Change in transportation costs
- Custom duties or levies
- Disruption at UK borders
- Finding information on how to import
- Lack of hauliers to transport goods or lack of logistics equipment
- Suppliers not customs ready
- Time taken for checks at the border
- Other (Please describe)
- Did not experience an increase in any importing challenges

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 (Please describe)
- Not sure

5 . UKCA

Does your business manufacture, import, or distribute products that require either a CE marking or the new UKCA marking?

- Yes, we manufacture products that need a CE or UKCA marking
- Yes, we import products that need a CE or UKCA marking
- Yes, we distribute products that need a CE or UKCA marking
- Not sure
- No, we do not manufacture, import or distribute products that need a CE or UKCA marking

Is your business aware that most CE marked products need to be UKCA marked from 1 January 2025?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Is your business using, or intending to use, the UKCA marking by 1 January 2025?

- Already using UKCA marking
- Not aware of, or do not know how to meet, requirements for the UKCA
- Not using the UKCA marking, but plan to by 1 January 2025
- Will not use UKCA marking, as not relevant to our products or business
- Not sure

6 . Supply Chains

Was your business able to get the materials, goods or services it needed from within the UK in December 2022?

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

Was your business able to get the materials, goods or services it needed from within the UK in December 2022?

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

Did your business experience any global supply chain disruption in December 2022?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Which of the following, if any, will be the main concern for your business in February 2023?

- Business rates
- Competition with other businesses
- Energy prices
- Exchange rates
- Falling demand of goods and services
- Inflation of goods and services prices
- Interest rates
- Property rental costs
- Supply chain disruption
- Taxation
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- No concerns for the business

What actions, if any, has your business taken to reduce energy costs in the last three months?

- Changed to more energy-efficient building equipment
- Changed to more energy-efficient process equipment
- Reduced or simplified goods or services
- Reduced the number of days the business trades in a week by one day
- Reduced the number of days the business trades in a week by two or more days
- Reduced the number of hours the business trades in a week, but the number of days the business trades in a week remained as usual
- Switched electrical equipment to standby or off more than usual when not in use
- Switched energy suppliers
- Temporarily closed a business site
- Undertaken a desk-based energy audit
- Undertaken an on-site energy audit
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business has not taken action to reduce energy costs in the last three months

What actions, if any, does your business plan to take to reduce your energy costs in the next three months?

- Change to more energy-efficient building equipment
- Change to more energy-efficient process equipment
- Reduce or simplify goods or services
- Reduce the number of days the business trades in a week by one day
- Reduce the number of days the business trades in a week by two or more days
- Reduce the number of hours the business trades in a week, but the number of days the business trades in a week remain as usual
- Switch electrical equipment to standby or off more than usual when not in use
- Switch energy suppliers
- Temporarily close a business site
- Undertake a desk-based energy audit
- Undertake an on-site energy audit
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business does not plan to reduce energy costs in the next three months

Why is your business not planning to reduce energy costs in the next three months?

- Business cannot access finance to invest in energy efficiency
- Business does not have enough information on how to reduce energy costs
- Business does not have the permission to undertake energy efficiency improvements in a rented property
- Business plans to take action later on in the future
- Investing in energy efficiency is a low priority
- No specific barriers to planning on take action
- The return on the investment for energy efficiency measures is too long
- Other (Please describe)
- No specific barriers to planning on take action
- Not sure
- Business's energy efficiency is already optimised

In the last 12 months, has your business sold goods or services to customers in other UK nations?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In the last 12 months, which of the following challenges, if any, has your business experienced when selling goods or services to customers in other UK nations?

- Challenges related to the Northern Ireland Protocol
- Differences in rules or regulations
- Lack of demand
- Supply chain disruption
- Transport capacity
- Transport costs
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business did not experience any challenges

7 . Sending goods

Has your business sent goods from GB to Northern Ireland in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In December 2022, how did the volume of goods your business sent from GB to Northern Ireland compare with the previous calendar month?

- Volume increased
- Volume stayed the same
- Volume decreased
- Stopped sending goods to Northern Ireland
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Please give more details about why the volume of goods sent from GB to Northern Ireland changed in December 2022:

- Comments

Has your business sent goods from Northern Ireland to GB in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In December 2022, how did the volume of goods your business sent from Northern Ireland to GB compare with the previous calendar month?

- Volume increased
- Volume stayed the same
- Volume decreased
- Stopped sending goods to GB
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Please give more details about why the volume of goods sent from Northern Ireland to GB changed in December 2022:

- Comments

8 . 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 (Please describe)
- 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 (Please describe)
- Not sure

Which, if any, of the following skills has your business had 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 (Please describe)
- 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 (Please describe)
- None of the above

On average, how did employees' hourly wages in December 2022 compare with employees' hourly wages in the previous calendar month?

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

9 . Industrial action

Was your business affected by industrial action in December 2022?

- 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 December 2022?

- 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 (Please describe)
- Not sure

10 . Comments

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

- Comments