

Statistical bulletin

Business insights and impact on the UK economy: 16 June 2022

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses. Based on responses from the voluntary fortnightly business survey (BICS) to deliver real-time information to help assess issues affecting UK businesses and economy, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience.

Contact:
Emily Hopson
bics@ons.gov.uk
+44 1633 455592

Release date:
16 June 2022

Next release:
30 June 2022

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1 . Main points

- Input price inflation was the main concern reported by businesses when looking ahead to July 2022 at 26%, which is broadly stable with the figure reported for May 2022; the proportion of businesses looking ahead with no concerns for July 2022 increased to 24% from the 21% reported for May 2022.
- In May 2022, 19% of businesses currently trading reported that they were either unable to get the materials, goods or services they needed from within the UK, or had to change suppliers or find alternative solutions to do so; the construction industry reported the largest proportion, at 33%.
- In May 2022, 21% of businesses not permanently stopped trading with 10 or more employees experienced global supply chain disruption; broadly stable with April 2022.
- Of businesses not permanently stopped trading, 15% reported that they were experiencing a shortage of workers in early June 2022, up from 13% reported in early May 2022, with 46% of businesses reporting their employees were working increased hours because of these shortages, this percentage was 62% for businesses with 10 or more employees.
- In early June 2022, 23% of not permanently stopped trading businesses reported that they were using, or intending to use, increased homeworking as a permanent business model; reduced overheads was reported as the main reason for doing so, at 49%.

2 . Headline figures

The data presented in this bulletin are the final results from Wave 58 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), which was live from 30 May to 12 June 2022.

Experimental single-site weighted regional estimates up to Wave 49 (24 January to 6 February 2022), are available in our [Understanding the business impacts of local and national restrictions, UK: February 2022 article](#).

Please note that businesses were asked to exclude seasonal changes when answering questions contained within BICS.

More about economy, business and jobs

- All ONS analysis, summarised in our [economy, business and jobs roundup](#).
- Explore the latest trends in employment, prices and trade in our [economic dashboard](#).
- View [all economic data](#).

Figure 1: Headline figures from the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

1. Trading status, intra UK procurement: for presentational purposes, response options have been combined and/or removed.
2. Intra UK procurement: the data for the equivalent period last year are not available as the question was not asked for this time period.
3. Data are plotted in the middle of each wave.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

In early June 2022, 94% of businesses reported they were trading, with 87% fully trading and 7% partially trading (for example, trading with reduced hours or staff numbers). Meanwhile, 4% of businesses reported “temporarily paused trading” and 3% reported “permanently ceased trading”, as their business’s trading status.

3 . Business concerns

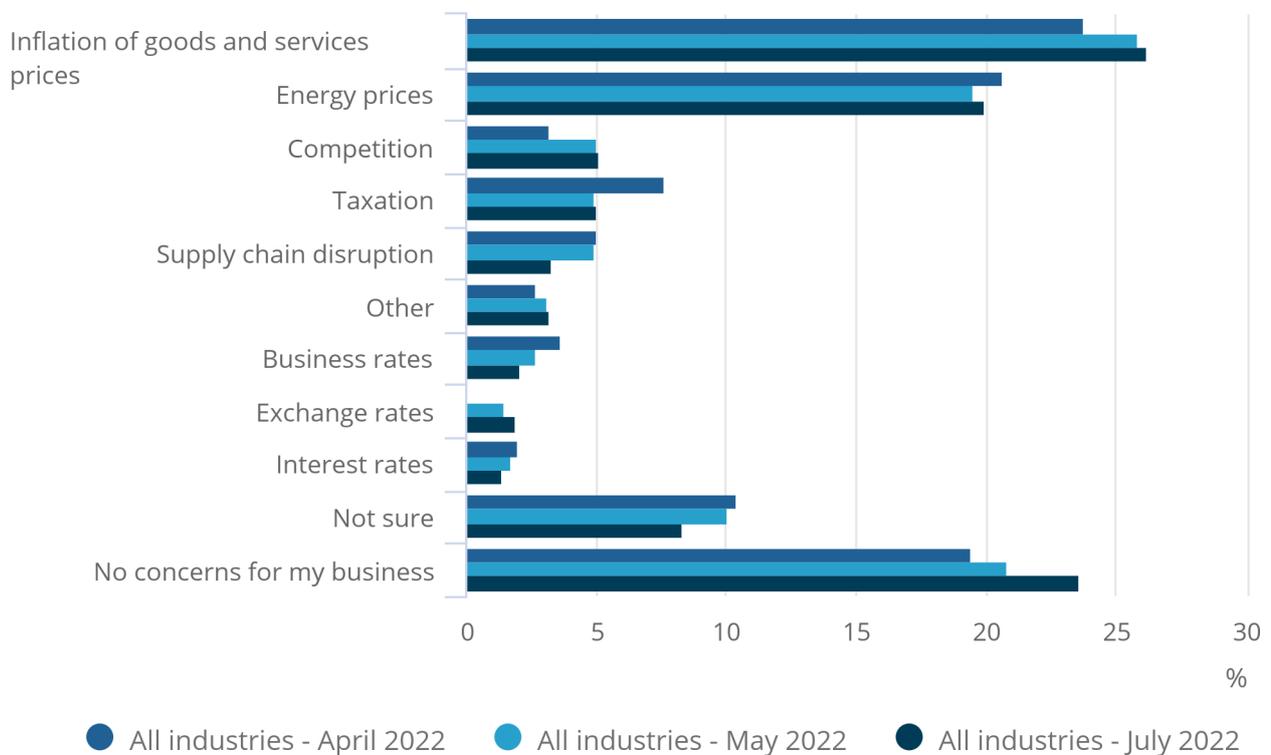
Businesses not permanently stopped trading were asked what main concern they had for their business for July 2022.

Figure 2: More than a quarter of businesses (26%) reported input price inflation as their main concern for July 2022

Business concerns, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 1 July to 31 July 2022

Figure 2: More than a quarter of businesses (26%) reported input price inflation as their main concern for July 2022

Business concerns, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 1 July to 31 July 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

1. Bars may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.
2. In Wave 58, the question was changed to ask about July 2022 to remain timely. Therefore, businesses were not asked for their concerns for June 2022.

More than three-quarters (76%) of businesses reported they have some form of concern for their business for July 2022. Input price inflation (inflation of goods and services prices) continued to be reported as businesses' main concern for July 2022, at 26%, broadly stable with May 2022. Overall, the percentage for this concern continues to show a steady increase, up from 21% for late February 2022.

Businesses reporting no concerns also increased from 21% for May 2022, to 24% for July 2022; this is the highest percentage reported since late February 2022 (28%). At 47%, the human health and social work activities industry reported the largest proportion of businesses with no concerns for their business in July 2022.

The industries reporting the highest percentages for the top three main concerns were:

- the construction industry, who reported the largest percentage for input price inflation, at 48%; this was up from the 38% reported for May 2022
- the accommodation and food service activities industry, who reported the largest percentage for energy prices, at 47%; this was up from the 29% reported for May 2022
- the real estate industry, which reported the largest percentage for competition, at 18%; this was up from the 13% reported for May 2022

Table 1 suggests smaller businesses have fewer concerns for their business for July 2022 than larger businesses, with approximately one in four businesses with 0 to 9 employees reporting no concerns for their business, at 25%, compared with 1 in 10 businesses with 10 or more employees, at 10%.

Table 1: 25% of businesses with fewer than 10 employees reported having no concerns for their business for July 2022

| Size bands | Inflation of goods and services prices | Energy prices | Competition | No concerns for my business |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 0-9 | 25.5% | 19.3% | 5.2% | 25.2% |
| 10-49 | 32.3% | 25.5% | 3.9% | 10.5% |
| 50-99 | 34.0% | 20.2% | 6.3% | 10.3% |
| 100-249 | 31.3% | 20.2% | 6.6% | 9.6% |
| 250+ | 32.5% | 19.9% | 5.6% | 10.0% |
| All size bands excluding 0-9 | 32.4% | 24.7% | 4.3% | 10.4% |
| All businesses | 26.2% | 19.9% | 5.1% | 23.6% |

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes

1. Table will not sum to 100% because businesses could select multiple options, and only the top three concerns are presented for presentational purposes.

Further details including the full list of concerns broken down by industry and size band are available in [our accompanying dataset](#).

4 . Exporting and importing

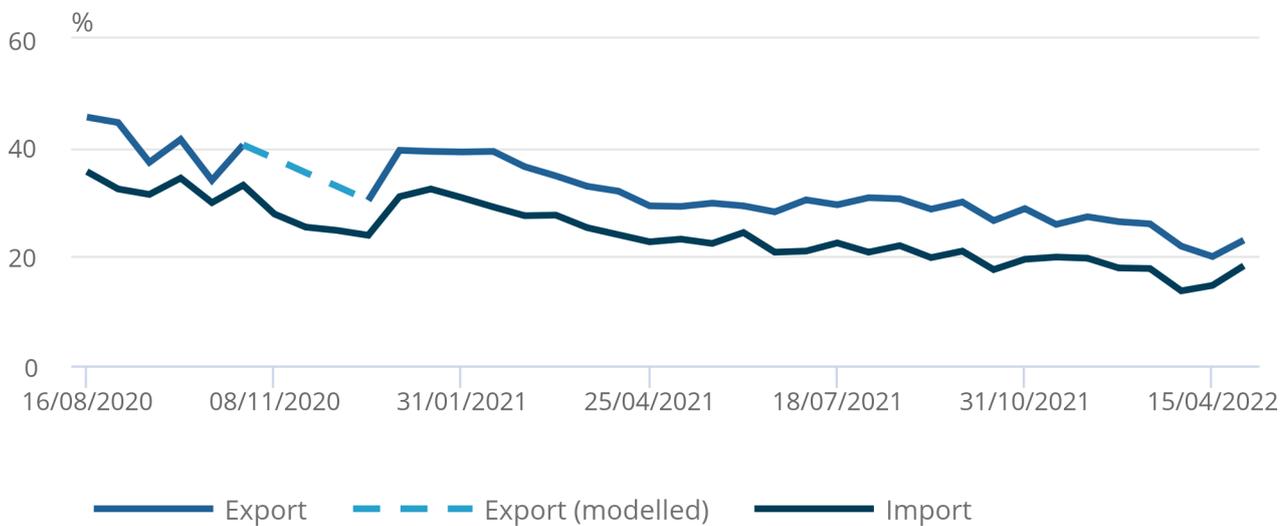
Of currently trading businesses with 10 employees or more, 17% had exported and 22% had imported in the last 12 months and reported how their exporting or importing in May 2022 compared with May 2021.

Figure 3: Not been able to export/import or exporting/importing less than normal

Exporting and importing status, businesses currently trading with 10 or more employees, weighted by count, UK, 10 August 2020 to 31 May 2022

Figure 3: Not been able to export/import or exporting/importing less than normal

Exporting and importing status, businesses currently trading with 10 or more employees, weighted by count, UK, 10 August 2020 to 31 May 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

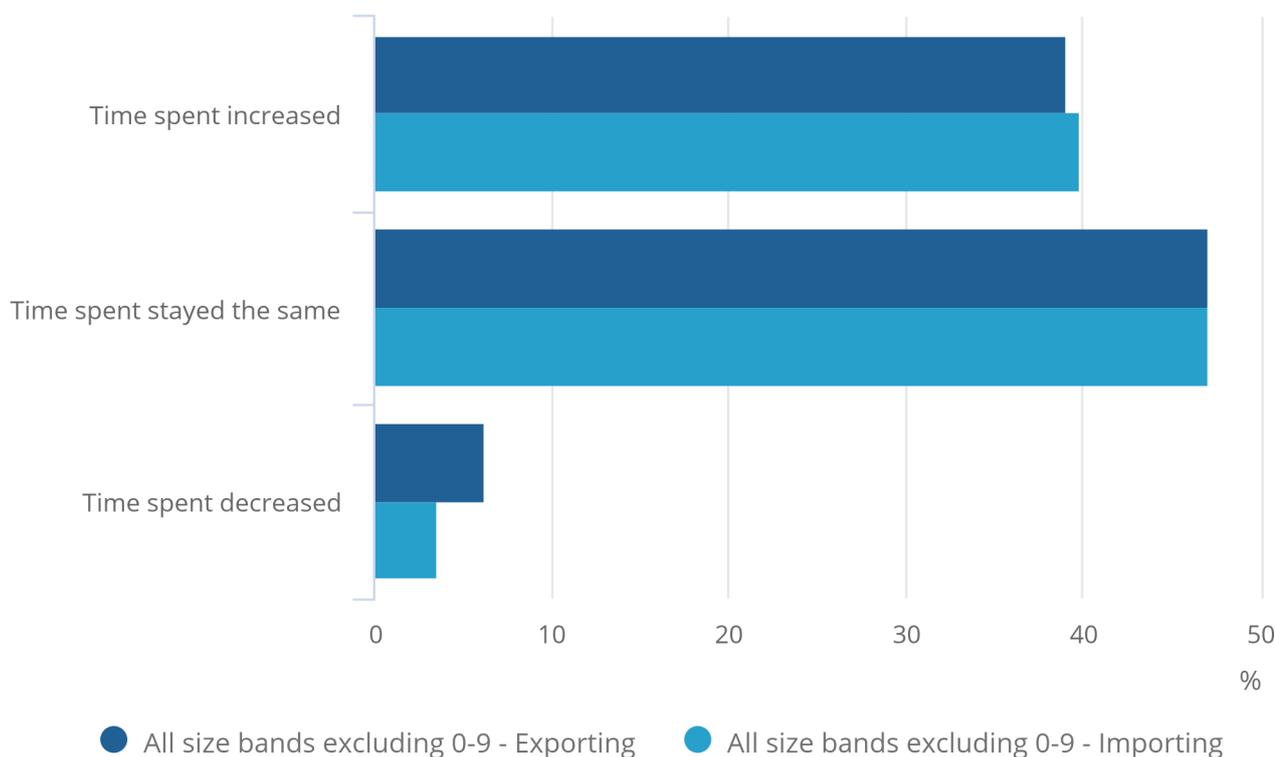
1. Exporting or importing compared with the same month last year: Percentage of businesses currently trading with 10 or more employees that had reported they had exported or imported in the last year. For presentational purposes, response options have been combined.
2. Caution should be taken when interpreting these results because the specific routing of this question means that only a small number of businesses responded.
3. Data are plotted in the middle of the period of each wave.
4. Owing to an overlap in reference periods, Wave 53 has been removed.

Figure 4: Time taken to import or export in May 2022 compared with May 2021

Time spent importing or exporting, businesses currently trading with 10 or more employees, who imported/exported in the last 12 months and reported on how their importing/exporting compared with this time last year, weighted by count, UK, 1 May to 31 May

Figure 4: Time taken to import or export in May 2022 compared with May 2021

Time spent importing or exporting, businesses currently trading with 10 or more employees, who imported/exported in the last 12 months and reported on how their importing/exporting compared with this time last year, weighted by count, UK, 1 May to 31 May



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

1. Caution should be taken when interpreting these results because the specific routing of this question means that only a small number of businesses responded.
2. For presentational purposes, response options have been removed.
3. Bars may not sum to 100% due to rounding and response options being removed.

The percentage of businesses reporting that they experienced an increase in the time spent importing or exporting compared with the same calendar month last year was lower in May 2022 compared with March 2022, down from 49% to 40% for importing, and down from 48% to 39%, for exporting. Businesses also reported that the cost of importing and exporting had increased to 58% and 68%, respectively in May 2022 compared with May 2021.

Further industry and size band breakdowns are available in [our accompanying dataset](#). This includes an unweighted data time series produced by linking samples from the Annual Business Survey (2018) and the Annual Survey of International Trade in Services (2019) to the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) microdata.

5 . Supply Chains

Global Supply Chain Disruption

Businesses not permanently stopped trading were asked whether their business experienced any global supply chain disruption in May 2022.

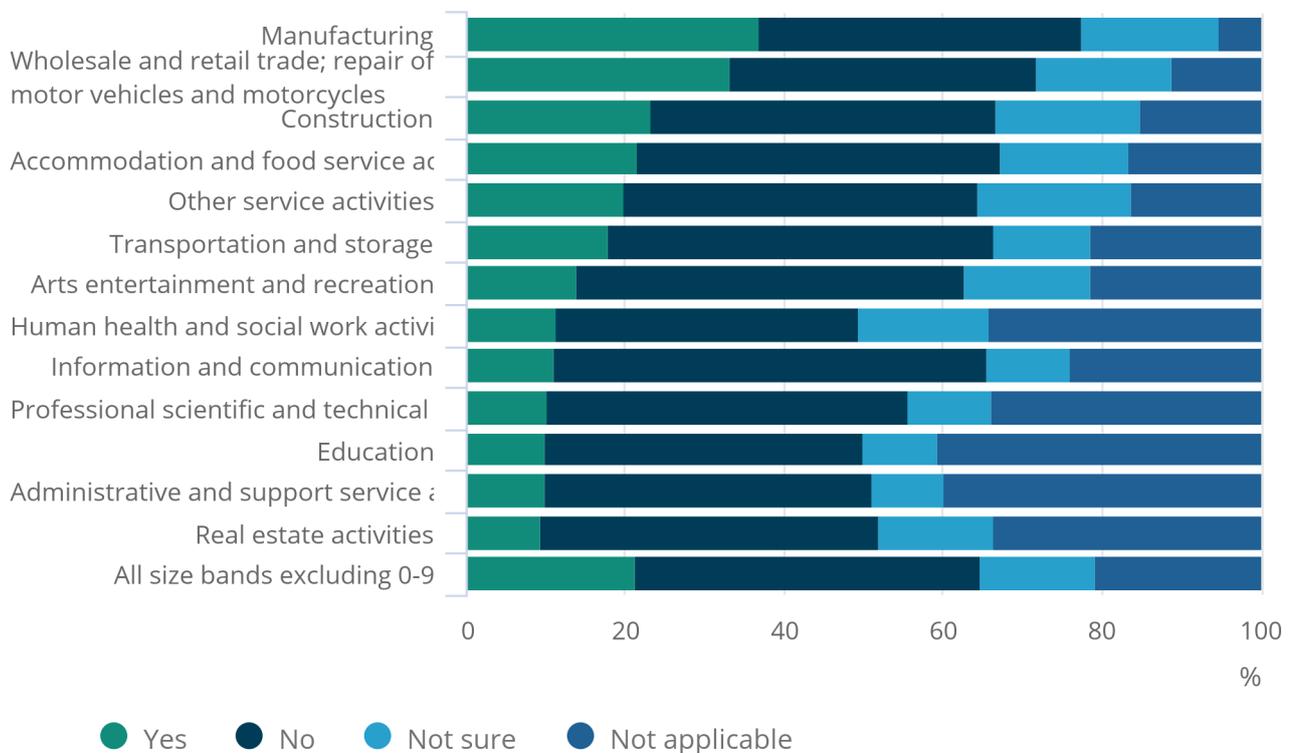
Of businesses with 10 or more employees, 21% reported that they had experienced global supply chain disruption in May 2022, broadly stable with April 2022.

Figure 5: The manufacturing industry reported the highest percentage of businesses with 10 or more employees experiencing global supply chain disruption, at 37%

Impact on global supply chains, businesses not permanently stopped trading with 10 or more employees, weighted by count, UK, 1 May to 31 May 2022

Figure 5: The manufacturing industry reported the highest percentage of businesses with 10 or more employees experiencing global supply chain disruption, at 37%

Impact on global supply chains, businesses not permanently stopped trading with 10 or more employees, weighted by count, UK, 1 May to 31 May 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

1. “Mining and quarrying” and “Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities” have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in “All size bands excluding 0-9”.

Among the top three industries reported in Figure 5, for businesses with 10 or more employees, the manufacturing industry continued to report the largest proportion of businesses experiencing global supply chain issues in May 2022 at 37%, however, this was down from 42% reported in April 2022.

Moreover, the wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles industry reported a decrease from 35% to 33%, and the construction industry remained broadly stable over the same period.

Further details of global supply chain issues broken down by industry and size band are available in [our accompanying dataset](#).

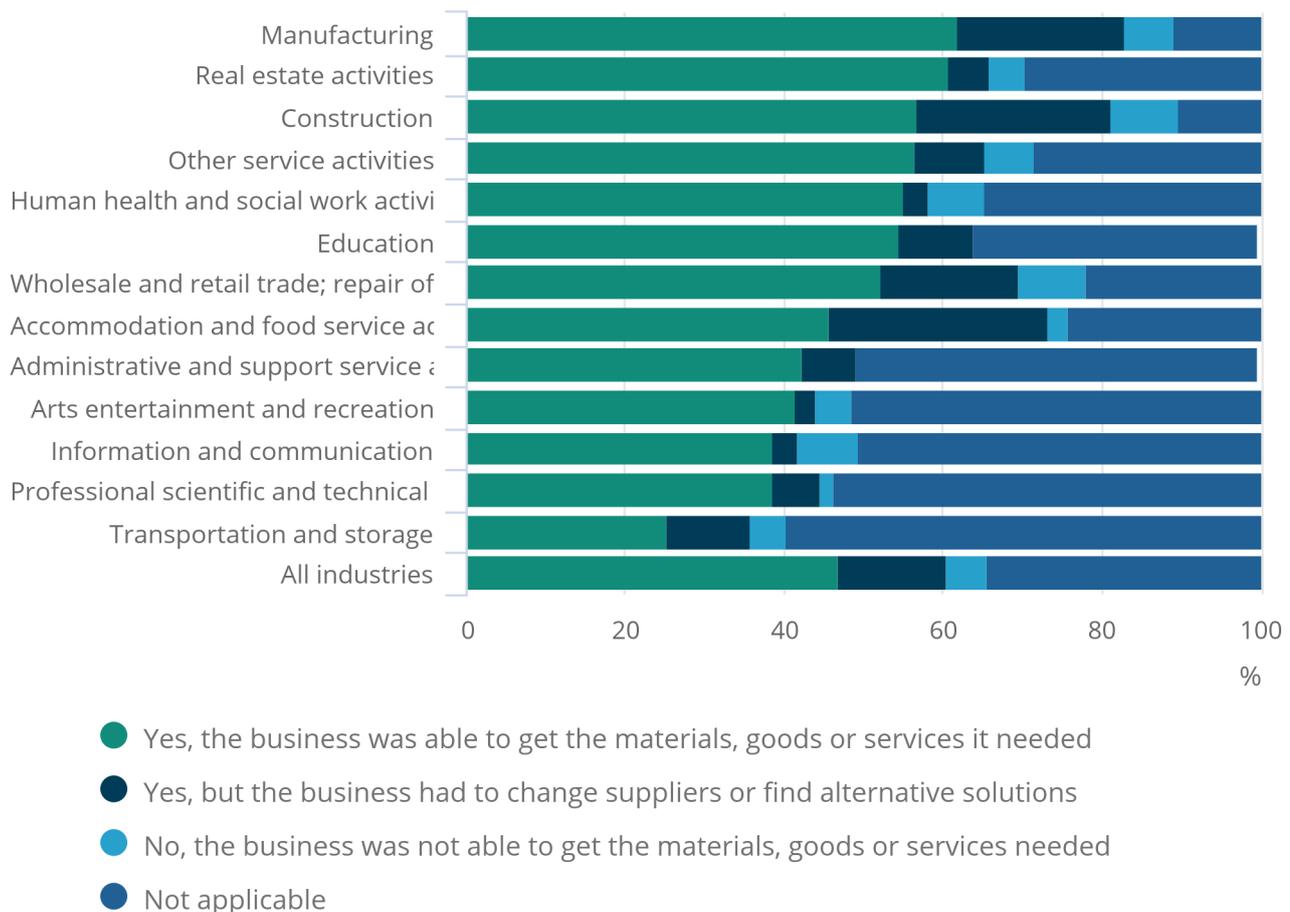
6 . Procurement within the UK

Figure 6: The manufacturing industry reported the highest percentage of businesses who were able to procure the materials, goods or services they needed from within the UK in May 2022

Intra-UK procurement, businesses currently trading, broken down by industry, weighted by count, UK, 1 May to 31 May 2022

Figure 6: The manufacturing industry reported the highest percentage of businesses who were able to procure the materials, goods or services they needed from within the UK in May 2022

Intra-UK procurement, businesses currently trading, broken down by industry, weighted by count, UK, 1 May to 31 May 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

1. Industries may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.
2. “Mining and quarrying” and “Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities” have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in “All industries”.

Nearly half (47%) of currently trading businesses were able to get the materials, goods or services they needed from within the UK in May 2022, without having to change suppliers or find alternative solutions to do so.

Across all industries, 19% of currently trading businesses reported that they either had to change suppliers or find alternative solutions or were unable to procure materials, goods or services from within the UK; broadly stable with April 2022.

Businesses within the construction industry reported the highest percentage of businesses facing challenges while procuring, at 33%, up from 27% reported in April 2022.

7 . Workforce trends

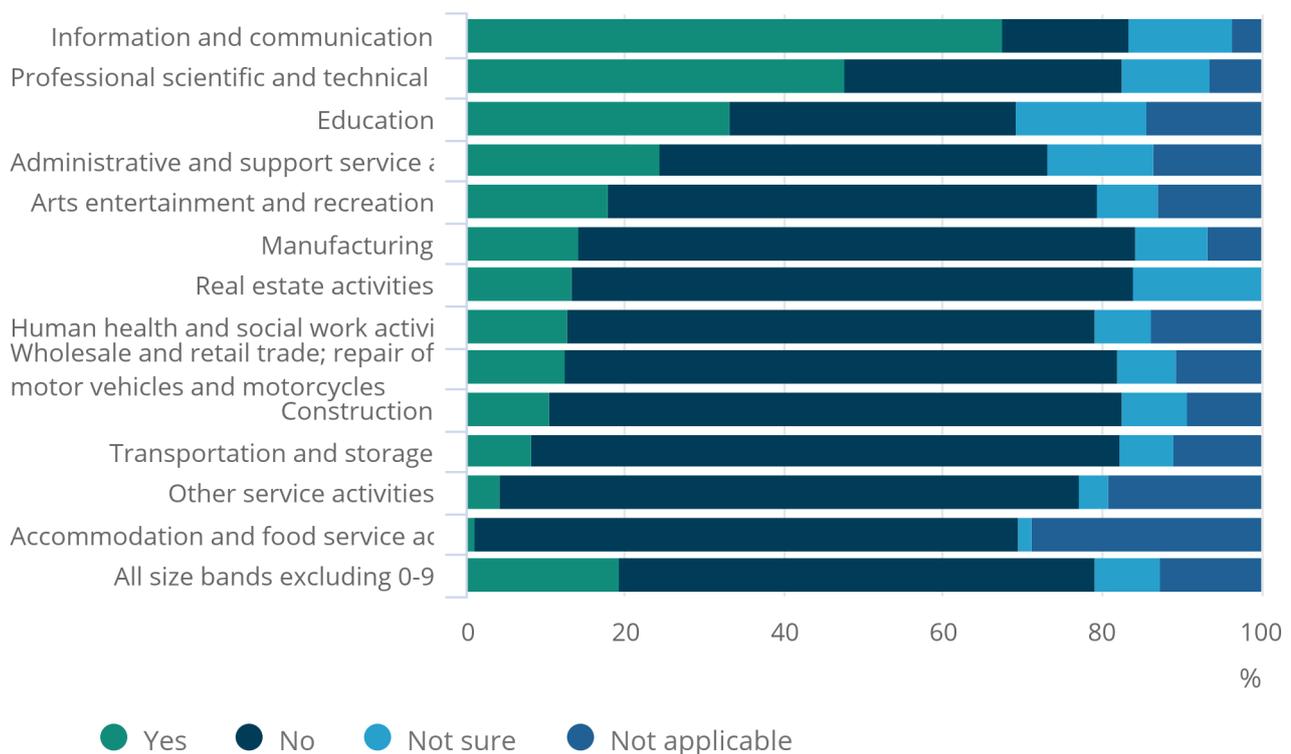
Homeworking

Figure 7: In early June 2022, 68% of businesses with 10 or more employees in the information and communication industry were using, or intending to use, increased homeworking as a permanent business model

Increased home working arrangements, businesses not permanently stopped trading with 10 or more employees, broken down by industry, weighted by count, UK, 30 May to 12 June 2022

Figure 7: In early June 2022, 68% of businesses with 10 or more employees in the information and communication industry were using, or intending to use, increased homeworking as a permanent business model

Increased home working arrangements, businesses not permanently stopped trading with 10 or more employees, broken down by industry, weighted by count, UK, 30 May to 12 June 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

1. Industries may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.
2. “Mining and quarrying” and “Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities” have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in “All size bands excluding 0-9”.

In early June 2022, the percentage of businesses with 10 or more employees who reported that they were using, or intending to use, increased home working as a permanent business model, remained broadly stable compared with early April 2022.

The main reason businesses reported that they were using, or intending to use, increased homeworking was improved staff well-being, at 79%. However, this percentage has decreased from 83% reported in early April 2022.

Further details, including the full list of concerns broken down by industry and size band, are available in [our accompanying dataset](#).

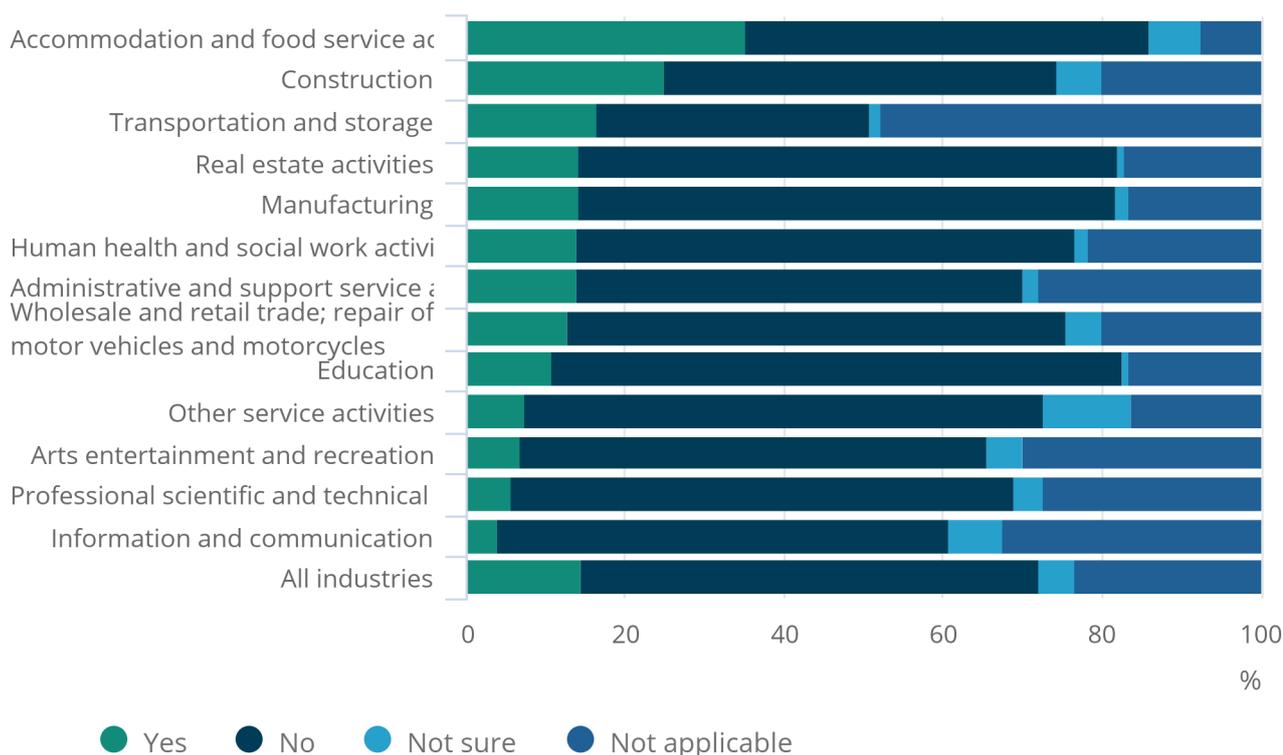
Worker shortages

Figure 8: The accommodation and food service activities industry continued to report the largest percentage of businesses experiencing worker shortages, at 35%

Worker shortages, businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, weighted by count, UK, 30 May to 12 June 2022

Figure 8: The accommodation and food service activities industry continued to report the largest percentage of businesses experiencing worker shortages, at 35%

Worker shortages, businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by industry, weighted by count, UK, 30 May to 12 June 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes:

1. Industries may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.
2. “Mining and quarrying” and “Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities” have been removed for disclosure purposes, but their totals are included in “All industries”.

In early June 2022, 15% of businesses not permanently stopped trading reported that they were experiencing a shortage of workers, up from 13% reported in early May 2022.

Among businesses not permanently stopped trading, the biggest reported effects of these worker shortages were that:

- 46% of businesses reported their employees worked increased hours, up from 40% in early May 2022
- 44% of businesses were unable to meet demands, down from 50% in early May 2022

When excluding businesses with fewer than 10 employees, the percentage of affected businesses that reported their employees were working increased hours was higher, at 62%. In comparison, the percentage for businesses unable to meet demands was lower, at 39%.

Further details including the full list of concerns broken down by industry and size band are available in [our accompanying dataset](#).

8 . Business Insights and Conditions Survey data

[Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#)

Dataset | Released 16 June 2022

Weighted estimates from the voluntary fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) about financial performance, workforce, prices, trade, and business resilience. This dataset includes additional information collected as part of the survey not presented in this publication.

[Business insights and impact on the UK economy confidence intervals](#)

Dataset | Released 1 June 2022

Confidence intervals for weighted estimates from the voluntary fortnightly business survey (BICS) about financial performance, workforce, prices, trade, and business resilience. These data are not official statistics but have been developed to deliver timely indicators to help understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and other events.

Access to microdata

You can access the BICS microdata for Waves 1 to 57 through the Secure Research Service (SRS). The BICS microdata for each wave are released on a rolling basis in the week following the publication of each wave. The microdata are made confidential and do not disclose information on any specific business.

Only researchers accredited under the [Digital Economy Act](#) are able to access data in the SRS. You can apply for accreditation through the [Research Accreditation Service \(RAS\)](#). You need to have relevant academic or work experience and must successfully attend and complete the assessed Safe Researcher Training.

To conduct analysis with microdata from the SRS, a project application must be submitted to the [Research Accreditation Panel \(RAP\)](#). To access the SRS, you must also work for an organisation with an Assured Organisational Connectivity agreement in place.

9 . Glossary

Reporting unit

The business unit to which questionnaires are sent is called the reporting unit. The response from the reporting unit can cover the enterprise as a whole or parts of the enterprise identified by lists of local units.

10 . Measuring the data

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [Business Insights and Conditions Survey \(BICS\) QMI](#), updated on 24 January 2022.

The BICS is voluntary, and the results are experimental. More information is available in our [Guide to experimental statistics](#).

Table 2: Sample and response rates for Waves 56, 57 and 58 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

| Wave | 19 May 2022 Publication Wave 56 | 1 June 2022 Publication Wave 57 | 16 June 2022 Publication Wave 58 |
|----------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sample | 38,047 | 37,987 | 37,929 |
| Response | 8,971 | 9,418 | 8,671 |
| Rate | 23.6% | 24.8% | 22.9% |

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Notes

1. Response rates for all waves can be found in the accompanying dataset.

The results are based on responses from the voluntary fortnightly BICS, which captures businesses' views on financial performance, workforce, prices, trade, and business resilience. The Wave 58 survey was live for the period 30 May to 12 June 2022. The [BICS survey questions](#) are available.

Coverage

The Monthly Business Survey (MBS) covers the UK for production and Great Britain (GB) only for services. The Retail Sales Index (RSI) and construction are GB focused. Therefore, the BICS will be UK-focused for production-based industries but GB-focused for the other elements of the economy covered. The industries covered are:

- non-financial services (includes professional, scientific, communication, administrative, transport, accommodation and food, private health and education, and entertainment services)
- distribution (includes retail, wholesale, and motor trades)
- production (includes manufacturing, oil and gas extraction, energy generation and supply, and water and waste management)
- construction (includes civil engineering, housebuilding, property development and specialised construction trades such as plumbers, electricians, and plasterers)

The following industries are excluded from the survey:

- agriculture
- public administration and defence
- public provision of education and health
- finance and insurance

For more information on the methodology of producing the BICS, such as [weighting](#), please see our [BICS quality and methodology information](#).

11 . Strengths and limitations

More quality and methodology information (QMI) on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [Business Insights and Conditions Survey \(BICS\) QMI](#).

12 . Related links

[Comparison of furloughed jobs data, UK: March 2020 to June 2021](#)

Article | Released 2 September 2021

An overview of the similarities and differences between the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) furlough estimates and HMRC's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics, over the period 23 March 2020 to 30 June 2021.

[COVID-19 question bank](#)

Webpage | Updated frequently

This webpage provides a bank of questions from multiple Office for National Statistics (ONS) surveys related to coronavirus (COVID-19) to be used in other surveys to further support harmonisation and questionnaire development. This bank also provides users with an understanding of what data the ONS has in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.

[Understanding the business impacts of local and national restrictions, UK: February 2022](#)

Article | Released 17 February 2022

Experimental estimates from the voluntary fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), for single-site businesses only, on topics such as trading status, financial performance, workforce, and business resilience. Geographical breakdowns include country, regional and local authority levels.

[Business and individual attitudes towards the future of homeworking, UK: April to May 2021](#)

Article | Released 14 June 2021

Analysis of the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on office working and of business and individual attitudes to future working practices.

[Business Impact of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Survey: preliminary weighted results](#)

Article | Released 14 September 2020

Early estimates of weighted responses from the voluntary fortnightly business survey, focusing on businesses' responses on how turnover, workforce and trading status have been affected in two-week reference periods, from Wave 7 (1 to 14 June 2020) to Wave 12 (10 to 23 August 2020).