

Article

Business insights and impact on the UK subnational single-site economy: May 2025

Estimates from the voluntary fortnightly business survey (BICS) on financial performance, prices and workforce. These are official statistics in development.

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1 . Main points

- Nearly one in five (18%) trading UK single-site businesses reported that their turnover was higher in March 2025, compared with February 2025; Wales had the highest proportion of any country or region (19%) and the North West (16%) reported the lowest proportion.
- More than one in five (22%) trading UK single-site businesses reported that their turnover had decreased in March 2025, compared with February 2025; the North West had the highest proportion of any region (24%) and London (20%) had the lowest.
- The proportion of single-site businesses that reported that the prices of goods and services bought had increased, compared with the previous month, rose for all UK countries and regions between March 2024 and March 2025; the North West had the largest rise during this period, from 22% to 31%, and London had the smallest rise, from 21% to 27%.
- 11% of UK single-site businesses reported that the prices of goods or services sold increased in March 2025, compared with February 2025; the South East had the highest proportion of any country or region, at 13%.
- All countries and regions except Scotland reported a decrease in the proportion of single-site businesses that were experiencing worker shortages between early April 2024 and early April 2025; the South East reported the lowest proportion in early April 2025, at 5%.

These are official statistics in development, and we advise caution when using the data. The Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) questions and topics are regularly reviewed, and questions are often added, removed, or amended to reflect changing circumstances and analytical priorities.

2 . Overview

The data presented in this article are weighted single-site estimates from Wave 106 to Wave 130 of our Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), as reported in our [Business insights and impact on the UK economy bulletins](#).

For some questions, businesses were asked for their experiences for the survey live period. Other questions ask specifically about the most recent calendar month, in relation to the time of completion.

This article focuses on a single-business-site approach to reflect sites spread across various geographies. Single-site businesses represent approximately 98% of all businesses and approximately half of total UK turnover and employment. BICS does not cover all sectors of the economy and only includes private sector businesses.

The data reported are subject to [uncertainty](#), for example, sampling variability and [non-sampling error](#). This means that the characteristics of single-site businesses that responded within a certain region and wave can have an effect on subnational BICS estimates. We regularly update [confidence intervals](#) associated with the survey questions.

More information on quality is available in our [BICS quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

3 . Financial performance

Businesses were asked how their turnover compared with the previous calendar month.

Figure 1: Interactive map showing single-site subnational estimates at International Territorial Level 1

Decrease in turnover compared with the previous calendar month, single-site businesses currently trading, broken down by country and region, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025

Notes:

1. Weighted single-site estimates from BICS Waves 106 to 130.
2. Data have been removed for confidentiality reasons. This includes percentages less than 1%, breakdowns with a count of 10 or less, and breakdowns with a microbusiness count of 10 or less (a microbusiness has less than 10 employees).
3. Some data points have been removed for presentational purposes.

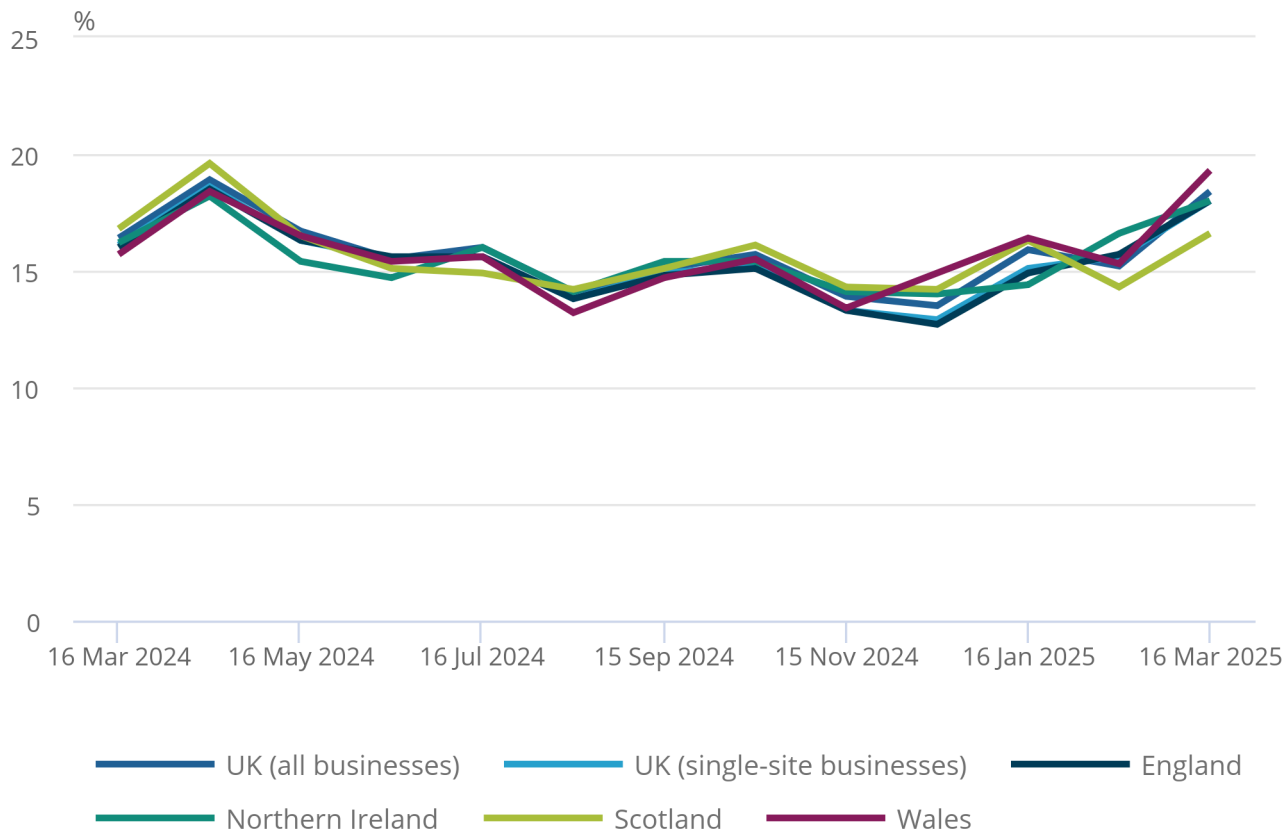
Download the data

Figure 2: Nearly one in five (18%) UK single-site businesses reported that their turnover had increased in March 2025, compared with February 2025

Increase in turnover compared with the previous month, single-site businesses currently trading, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025

Figure 2: Nearly one in five (18%) UK single-site businesses reported that their turnover had increased in March 2025, compared with February 2025

Increase in turnover compared with the previous month, single-site businesses currently trading, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025



Source: Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Final weighted all-UK site results and weighted single-site estimates are from BICS Wave 106 and Wave 130.
2. Response rates vary across countries and between waves. Low response rates can affect the interpretation of these estimates.
3. Data are plotted in the middle of the period of each wave.

Nearly one in five (18%) trading UK single-site businesses reported that their turnover was higher in March 2025 than the previous month. This is up 2 percentage points when compared with March 2024, and is the highest proportion reported since April 2024. Wales (19%) reported the highest proportion of any country or region, and also had the largest increase from March 2024 (16%).

The North West (16%) had the lowest proportion of single-site businesses that reported that their turnover was higher than the previous month in March 2025. This proportion is broadly stable, compared with March 2024.

The North West (24%) also reported the highest proportion of single-site businesses that experienced a decrease in turnover in March 2025. Scotland (23%) reported an increase of 3 percentage points between March 2024 and March 2025, which is the largest movement of any country or region. The other UK nations remained broadly stable. However, each nation has fallen between 5 and 8 percentage points since peaking in December 2024.

4 . Prices

Prices bought

Figure 3: Interactive map showing single-site subnational estimates at International Territorial Level 1

Prices bought increased, single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by country and region, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025

Notes:

1. Weighted single-site estimates from BICS Waves 106 to 130.
2. Data have been removed for confidentiality reasons. This includes percentages less than 1%, breakdowns with a count of 10 or less, and breakdowns with a microbusiness count of 10 or less (a microbusiness has less than 10 employees).
3. Some data points have been removed for presentational purposes.

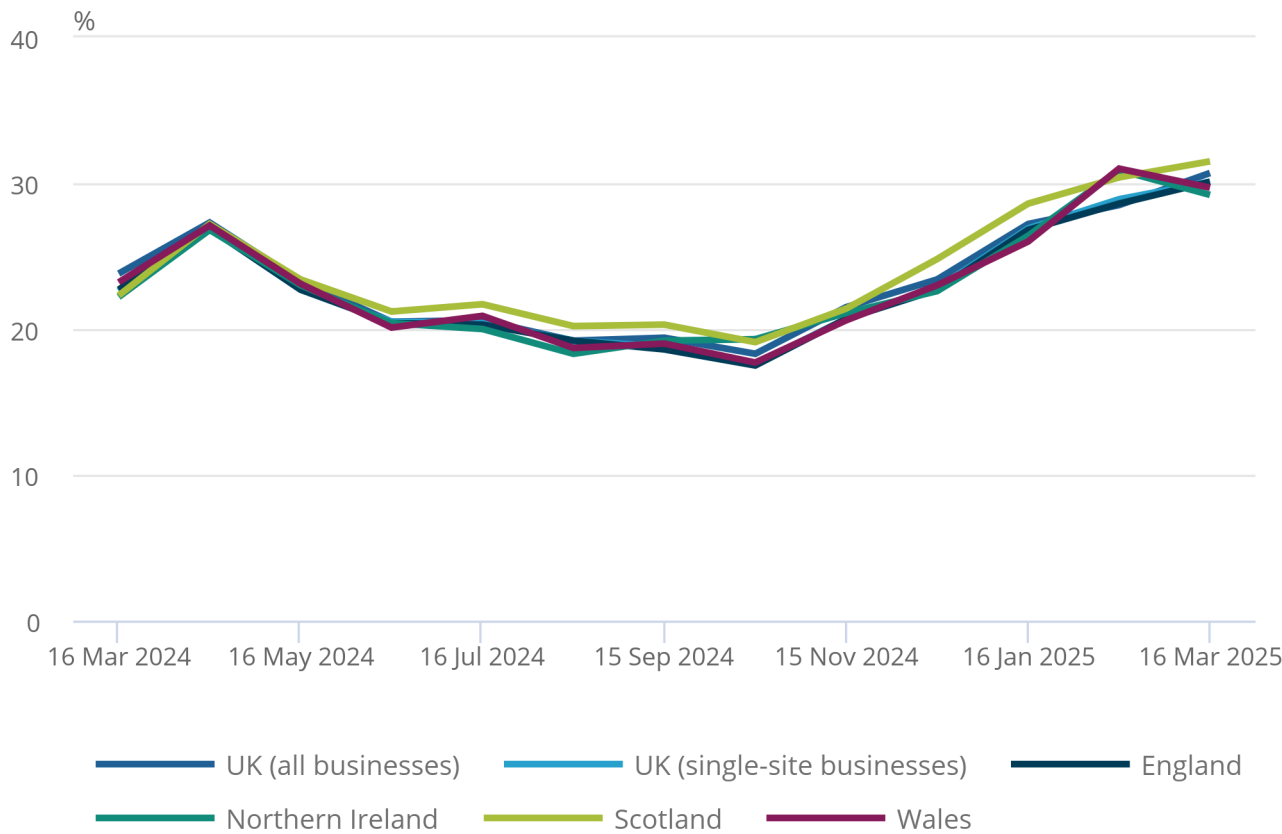
Download the data

Figure 4: Nearly a third (30%) of single-site UK businesses reported increased prices of goods or services bought in March 2025, compared with February 2025

Prices bought increased, single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025

Figure 4: Nearly a third (30%) of single-site UK businesses reported increased prices of goods or services bought in March 2025, compared with February 2025

Prices bought increased, single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025



Source: Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Final weighted all-UK site results and weighted single-site estimates are from BICS Wave 106 and Wave 130.
2. Response rates vary across countries and between waves. Low response rates can affect the interpretation of these estimates.
3. Data are plotted in the middle of the period of each wave.

The proportion of UK single-site businesses that reported an increase in the prices of goods or services they bought, compared with the previous month, rose 8 percentage points to 30% between March 2024 and March 2025. A steady increase has been reported since October 2024 (18%).

Scotland and the West Midlands (32%) had the highest proportions of single-site businesses that reported an increase in the prices of goods or services they bought in March 2025, compared with the previous month. The North West reported the largest increase of any region, up 9 percentage points to 31% between March 2024 and March 2025. London had the lowest proportion in March 2025; it also had the smallest increase from March 2024 (21% up to 27%).

Prices sold

Figure 5: Interactive map showing single-site subnational estimates at International Territorial Level 1

Prices sold increased, single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by country and region, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025

Notes:

1. Weighted single-site estimates from BICS Waves 106 to 130.
2. Data have been removed for confidentiality reasons. This includes percentages less than 1%, breakdowns with a count of 10 or less, and breakdowns with a microbusiness count of 10 or less (a microbusiness has less than 10 employees).
3. Some data points have been removed for presentational purposes.

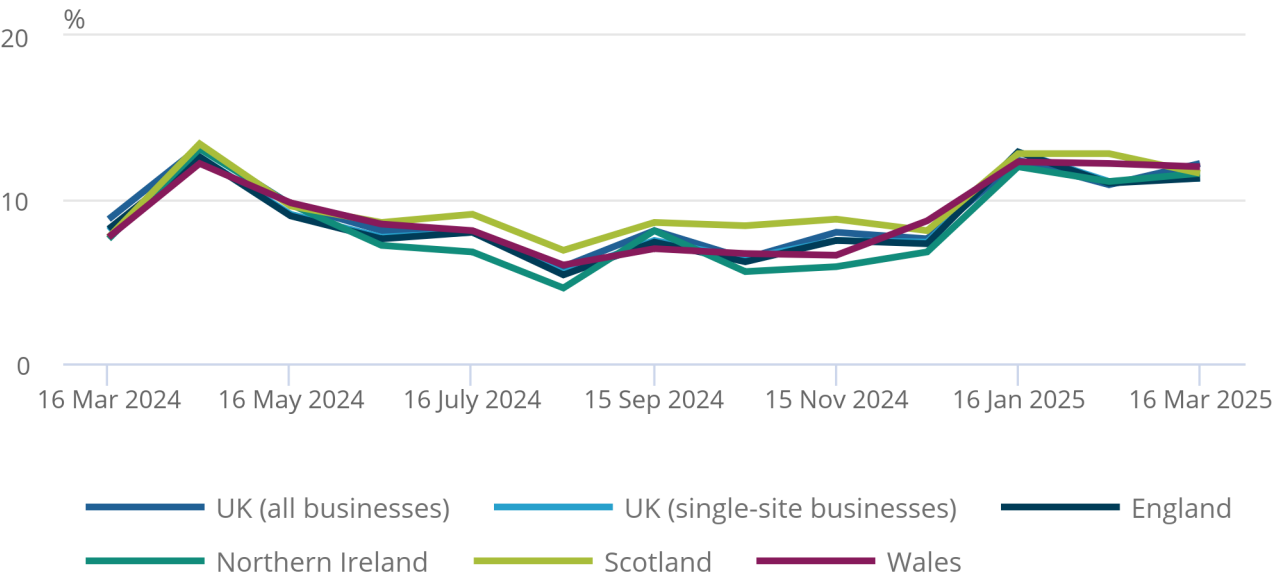
Download the data

Figure 6: Approximately one in nine (11%) single-site UK businesses reported increased prices of goods or services sold in March 2025, compared with February 2025

Prices sold increased, single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025

Figure 6: Approximately one in nine (11%) single-site UK businesses reported increased prices of goods or services sold in March 2025, compared with February 2025

Prices sold increased, single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2025



Source: Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Final weighted all-UK site results and weighted single-site estimates are from BICS Wave 106 and Wave 130.
2. Response rates vary across countries and between waves. Low response rates can affect the interpretation of these estimates.
3. Data are plotted in the middle of the period of each wave.

The proportion of single-site businesses that reported an increase in the prices of goods or services they sold, compared with the previous month, was higher in March 2025 than March 2024 for all UK nations. Peaks were observed in April 2024 and January 2025. The proportions reported have remained broadly stable since January 2025. Wales reported the highest proportion, at 12% in March 2025. This is up 4 percentage points, compared with March 2024.

The proportion of businesses that reported higher prices of goods or services sold between March 2024 and March 2025 increased for all regions in England. The West Midlands had the largest movement across this period, up 4 percentage points to 12%. The South East (13%) had the highest proportion overall.

Scotland had a higher proportion than the other nations between June and November 2024. This can partially be attributed to Scotland having a higher proportion of single-site businesses within the wholesale and retail trade industry in the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) sample. This industry had a high proportion of businesses indicating that prices sold had increased during this period across the UK.

5 . Worker shortages

Businesses not permanently stopped trading in the UK were asked if they were experiencing a shortage of workers.

Figure 7: Interactive map showing single-site subnational estimates at International Territorial Level 1

Experiencing worker shortages, single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by country and region, weighted by count, UK, 2 April 2024 to 20 April 2025

Notes:

1. Weighted single-site estimates from BICS Waves 106 to 130.
2. Data have been removed for confidentiality reasons. This includes percentages less than 1%, breakdowns with a count of 10 or less, and breakdowns with a microbusiness count of 10 or less (a microbusiness has less than 10 employees).
3. Some data points have been removed for presentational purposes.

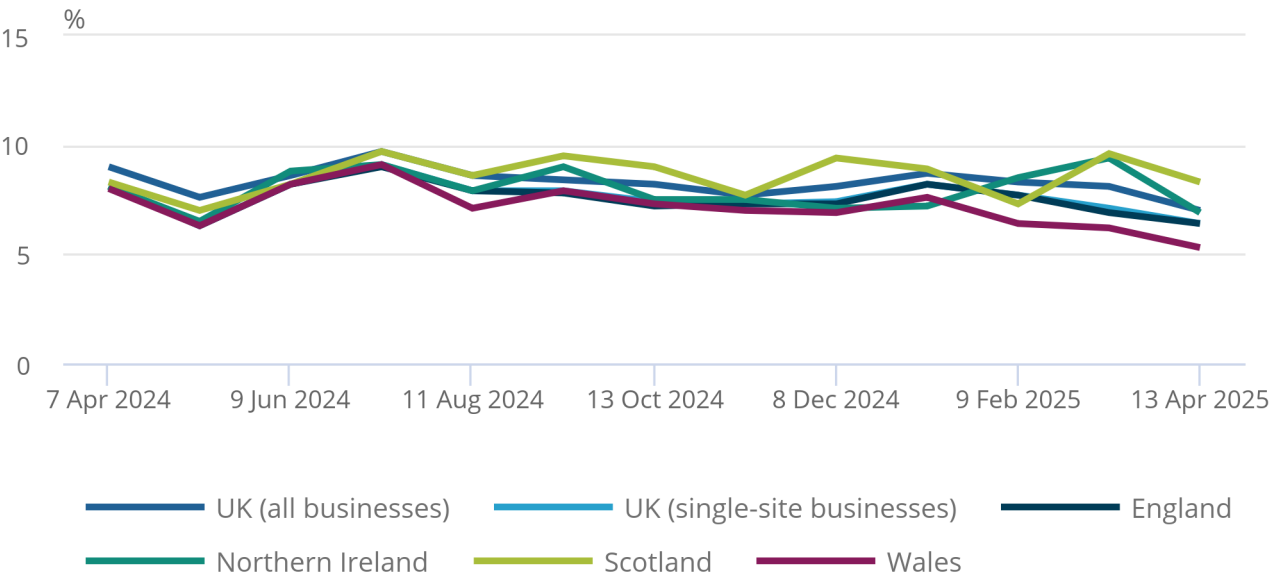
Download the data

Figure 8: Scotland reported the largest proportion of single-site businesses experiencing worker shortages (8%) in early April 2025

Percentage of single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading that experienced worker shortages, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 2 April 2024 to 20 April 2025

Figure 8: Scotland reported the largest proportion of single-site businesses experiencing worker shortages (8%) in early April 2025

Percentage of single-site businesses not permanently stopped trading that experienced worker shortages, broken down by country, weighted by count, UK, 2 April 2024 to 20 April 2025



Source: Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Final weighted all-UK site results and weighted single-site estimates are from BICS Wave 106 and Wave 130.
2. Response rates vary across countries and between waves. Low response rates can affect the interpretation of these estimates.
3. Data are plotted in the middle of the period of each wave.

Scotland regularly had a higher proportion of single-site businesses that reported having worker shortages than the UK overall between early April 2024 and early April 2025. Scotland also reported the largest proportion for early April 2025, at 8%.

All countries and regions experienced a fall in the proportion of single-site businesses experiencing worker shortages in early April 2025, compared with early April 2024. This excludes Scotland, which remained unchanged. The South East reported the largest fall during this period, down 4 percentage points to 5%; this was also the lowest proportion reported by any region.

6 . Data on business insights and impact on the UK subnational single-site economy

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

Dataset | Released 30 May 2025

Subnational estimates from the voluntary fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) on topics such as trading status, financial performance, workforce, and business resilience. Geographical breakdowns include country and regional levels. Official statistics in development.

7 . Glossary

Reporting unit

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

8 . Data sources and quality

This article uses microdata from our Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) to help understand business impacts on the subnational UK economy. It mainly focuses on Wave 106 to Wave 130 of the BICS, which ran from 2 April 2024 to 20 April 2025, and covers the period since the last edition of this article.

Table 1: Sample and response rates for all businesses, single-site businesses and multi-site businesses for Waves 126, 128 and 130 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Wave	Wave 126	Wave 128	Wave 130
All businesses sample	39,194	39,036	38,997
All businesses rate	27.0%	27.1%	26.3%
Single-site businesses sample	28,349	28,212	28,232
Single-site businesses rate	23.9%	23.9%	23.1%
Multi-site businesses sample	10,845	10,824	10,845
Multi-site businesses rate	35.0%	35.2%	34.8%

Source: Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Additional datasets including response rates, proportional breakdowns of single-site businesses compared with multi-sites businesses, and the distribution of single-site businesses across industries can be found in the accompanying datasets.

Table 2: Response rates for single-site businesses broken down by country for Wave 130 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Wave	Wave 130
Northern Ireland single-site businesses sample	794
Northern Ireland single-site businesses rate	19.6%
Scotland single-site businesses sample	1,758
Scotland single-site businesses rate	22.4%
England single-site businesses sample	24,672
England single-site businesses rate	23.4%
Wales single-site businesses sample	1,008
Wales single-site businesses rate	20.4%

Source: Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Additional datasets including response rates, proportional breakdowns of single-site businesses compared with multi-sites businesses, and the distribution of single-site businesses across industries can be found in the accompanying datasets.
2. The BICS samples a random sample of businesses across the UK, not by country.

Subnational Business Insights and Conditions Survey estimates

Subnational BICS estimates have been created by using the results collected in the fortnightly survey. Each survey return from each reporting unit is then applied to the reporting unit's one local site. We have removed businesses with multiple sites from the sample, and results in this analysis are based on single-site businesses only, as identified on the [Inter-Departmental Business Register \(IDBR\)](#).

We outline the methodology behind our single-site subnational estimates, and its impact, compared with previously published results encompassing all businesses, in Section 2: Single site methodology and Section 3: Impact of single site methodology of our [Business insights and impact on the UK and sub-national economy: 9 December 2020 article](#).

Aggregates of [International Territorial Level \(ITL1\)](#) regions, such as the UK or England, may have higher or lower response proportions than any of their constituent regions. This is because of differences in the sample composition in terms of company workforce.

The larger aggregate regions, such as the UK or England, generally have a larger proportion of smaller companies. This means that if there is a substantial difference between the response proportions of larger and smaller companies, this will be reflected in the headline figures.

Weighting

Single-site estimates in this release are weighted, ensuring estimates are representative of all single-site businesses. The characteristics of single-site businesses that responded within a certain region and wave can have an effect on subnational BICS estimates. A detailed description of the weighting methodology and its differences to unweighted estimates is available in our [Business Impact of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Survey \(BICS\): preliminary weighted results article](#).

Weighted estimates for Scotland for businesses with 10 or more employees are available from the Scottish Government's [Business and innovation statistics collection](#).

Single-site sample

The single-site approach is not representative of all UK businesses, as it excludes businesses with multiple sites. Weighted single-site estimates are representative of all UK single-site businesses and approximately 98% of all businesses (and half of total UK turnover and employment). The composition by region and industry (when using the single-sites approach) holds up, when compared with the all businesses sample, as shown in the [accompanying datasets](#).

Official statistics in development

These statistics are based on information from the BICS. These statistics are labelled as "official statistics in development". Until September 2023, these were called "experimental statistics". Read more about the change in the [guide to official statistics in development](#).

Measuring the data

The BICS survey is voluntary and may only reflect the characteristics of those that responded. 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](#).

9 . Related links

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

Bulletin | Updated fortnightly

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience.

[Business and innovation statistics](#)

Web page | Updated frequently

A directory of statistical publications relating to business and innovation in Scotland, organised by subject, from the Scottish Government.

10 . Cite this bulletin

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