

Statistical bulletin

Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: October 2025

Social insights on daily life and events, including insights on public and business attitudes towards environmental issues, using data from our Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) and Business and Conditions Survey (BICS) in this edition.

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1 . Main points

The following information is from data collected between 1 and 26 October 2025, based on adults in Great Britain.

We asked people what were the important issues facing the UK today.

- The cost of living (87%), the NHS (80%), the economy (70%), immigration (61%), crime (58%), housing (52%), and climate change and the environment (51%) were the most commonly reported issues.

To coincide with the [United Nations Climate Change Conference COP30](#), we have considered public attitudes towards environmental issues by different characteristics, using data collected between 3 September and 26 October 2025.

- Groups of adults who were more likely to report that climate change and the environment was an important issue (51% among all adults) included adults with a degree or equivalent qualification (61%), those working in professional occupations (61%), and those living in the South West (61%).
- Around four in five (84%) adults reported having made changes to their lifestyle to help tackle environmental issues (73% some, 11% a lot); groups who appeared more likely to report this included females (88%), those working in professional occupations (88%), adults with a degree or equivalent qualification (88%), and adults aged 50 to 69 years (87%).
- Among the 16% of adults who did not report making any lifestyle changes to help tackle environmental issues, the most commonly reported reasons were thinking large polluters should change before individuals (34%), not thinking their changes will have any effect on environmental issues (32%), and it being too expensive to make changes (24%).

We examined business attitudes towards climate change from our UK Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), using data collected between 15 and 28 September 2025.

- 25% of businesses reported that they were concerned about the impact that climate change may have on their business; this proportion is broadly stable compared with late June, but has steadily declined since early February 2023 (41%).
- When asked which climate change risks businesses had assessed, supply chain disruption (7%) was the most commonly reported, but most businesses (71%) had not assessed any risk that we asked about; only a relatively small proportion of businesses had taken any actions towards them.
- The most reported barriers for businesses taking action to tackle environmental issues were competing business priorities (11%), high upfront costs (11%) and limited capital (11%), with over four in ten (44%) businesses reporting there were no barriers.

2 . Important issues facing the UK

We have asked respondents what they thought were the important issues facing the UK today, since October 2022.

The cost of living (87%), the NHS (80%), and the economy (70%) continue to be the most frequently reported important issues in the latest period (1 to 26 October 2025).

Other commonly reported issues during this time include immigration (61%), crime (58%), housing (52%), and climate change and the environment (51%).

Figure 1: The cost of living, the NHS and the economy have been the most-commonly reported important issues facing the UK since October 2022

Proportion of adults reporting each important issue, Great Britain, October 2022 to October 2025

Notes

1. Respondents could select more than one option.
2. The length of each data collection period presented in this time series may be different.

Climate change as an important issue for people

Around half (51%) of adults reported climate change and the environment as an important issue in the latest data for October 2025 (Figure 1). This proportion has gradually decreased since July to August 2023 (69%).

By pooling two recent survey waves together (from 3 September to 26 October 2025), we have examined the characteristics of those who report climate change and the environment as an important issue in more detail. Groups who appeared more likely to report this issue in the pooled period included:

- adults with a degree or equivalent qualification (61%), compared with adults with a below degree level qualification (47%)
- adults working in professional occupations (61%), compared with adults working in skilled trades (41%)
- those living in the South West (61%), compared with those living in the West Midlands (46%) (Figure 2)

For more information on how reporting of important issues has varied among different groups of the population, see our [Public and business attitudes to the environment and climate change, Great Britain: 2024 bulletin](#).

Figure 2: Adults with a degree or equivalent qualification were more likely to report climate change and the environment as an important issue

Proportion of adults reporting climate change and the environment is an important issue, by characteristic, Great Britain, September to October 2025

Notes

1. Estimates by quintile of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) are provided among adults in England only.

Business concern over climate change

We also regularly ask UK businesses through our [Business Insights and Conditions Survey \(BICS\)](#) whether they are concerned about the impact climate change may have on their business.

A quarter (25%) of businesses reported in late September 2025 that they were concerned about the impact climate change may have on their business (5% very, 20% somewhat). While this proportion is broadly stable with late June, it has declined since early February 2023 (41%, of which 11% very and 30% somewhat concerned).

Figure 3: The proportion of businesses who are very or somewhat concerned about the impact climate change may have on their business has generally declined since early 2023

Climate change concern, businesses not permanently stopped trading, broken down by response option, weighted by count, UK, September 2022 to September 2025

Notes

1. Question: "Is your business concerned about the impact climate change may have on the business?".
2. Base: All businesses in the UK surveyed, who had not stopped trading.

Reporting some level of concern about the impact climate change might have on their business appeared to increase by size of business; 48% for larger businesses (250 employees or more), compared with 24% among businesses with zero to nine employees.

An estimated 17% of businesses reported in late September 2025 that they were concerned about the impact that nature or biodiversity risks may have on the business, while 62% were not concerned and the remaining businesses reported they were not sure (21%).

Further details on environment-related questions asked to businesses, including all response options broken down by industry type and size band, can be found in our [BICS Wave 141 dataset](#).

3 . Effects of environmental issues on people and businesses

During the latest pooled period (3 September to 26 October 2025), we asked adults in Great Britain for their opinions on environmental issues.

Around 4 in 10 (38%) adults in Great Britain reported low levels of satisfaction with the current state of the environment.

We also asked adults in Great Britain how they felt climate change had affected them over the past 12 months. In the latest pooled period, the most commonly reported impacts were:

- heatwaves (55%)
- strong winds (38%)
- drought (26%)

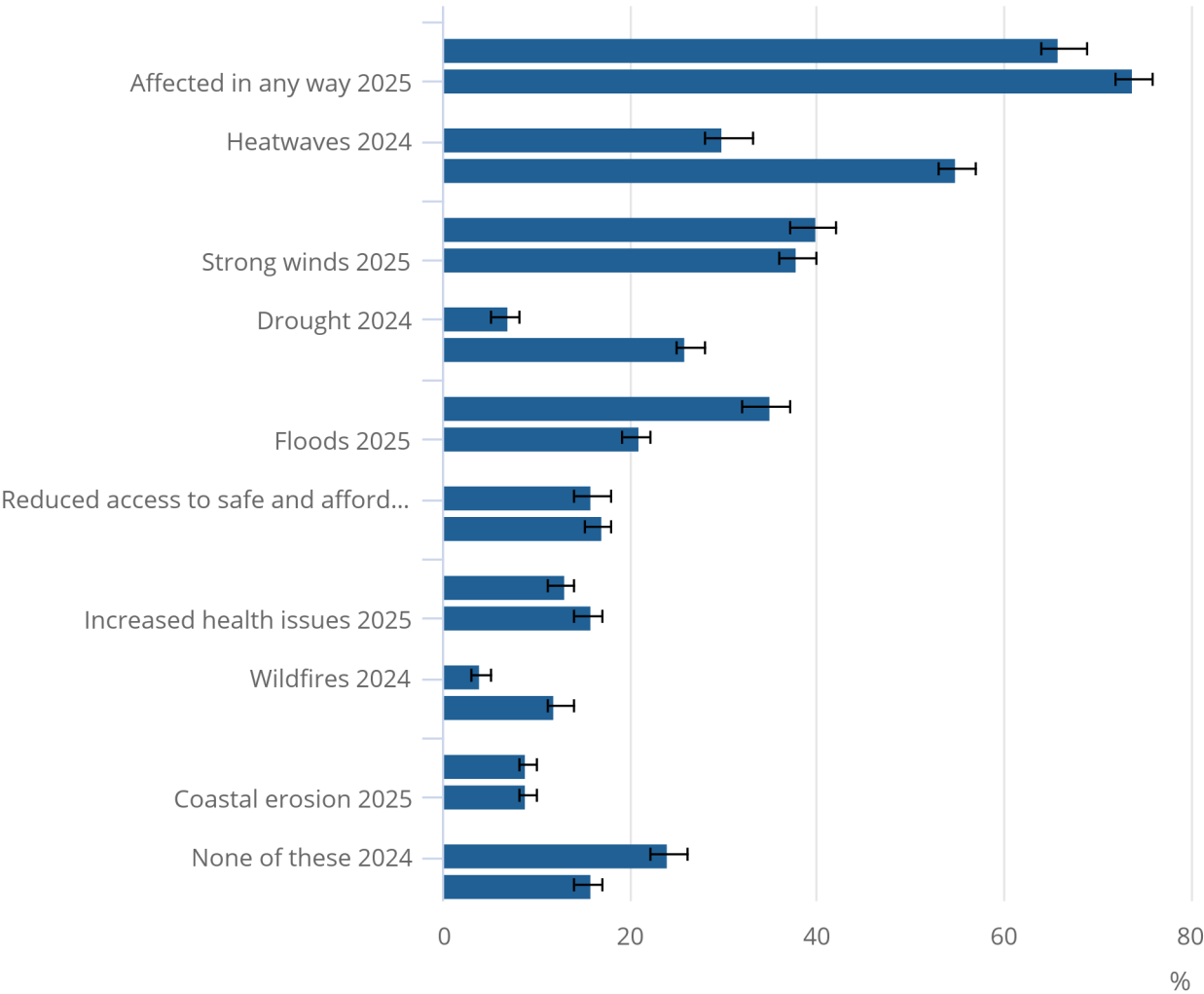
Nearly three-quarters of adults (74%) reported they had been affected in at least one of the ways we asked about. This is an increase from two-thirds of adults (66%) when the same question was asked in October 2024 (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Over half (55%) of adults said they were affected by heatwaves in the past 12 months

Proportion of adults reporting ways climate change had affected them in the last 12 months, Great Britain, 3 September to 26 October 2025 and 2 to 27 October 2024

Figure 4: Over half (55%) of adults said they were affected by heatwaves in the past 12 months

Proportion of adults reporting ways climate change had affected them in the last 12 months, Great Britain, 3 September to 26 October 2025 and 2 to 27 October 2024



Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Respondents could select more than one option.
2. The category “Affected in any way” represents the proportion of respondents who selected at least one option apart from “I do not believe in climate change”, “None of these” or “Don’t know”.

Expected effects on people in the next 10 years

We also asked about the ways in which they felt climate change would affect them in the next 10 years. The most commonly reported effects this year included:

- increased temperatures (74%)
- water shortages (60%)
- increased flooding (55%)
- stronger winds (45%)
- rising sea levels or coastal erosion (43%)

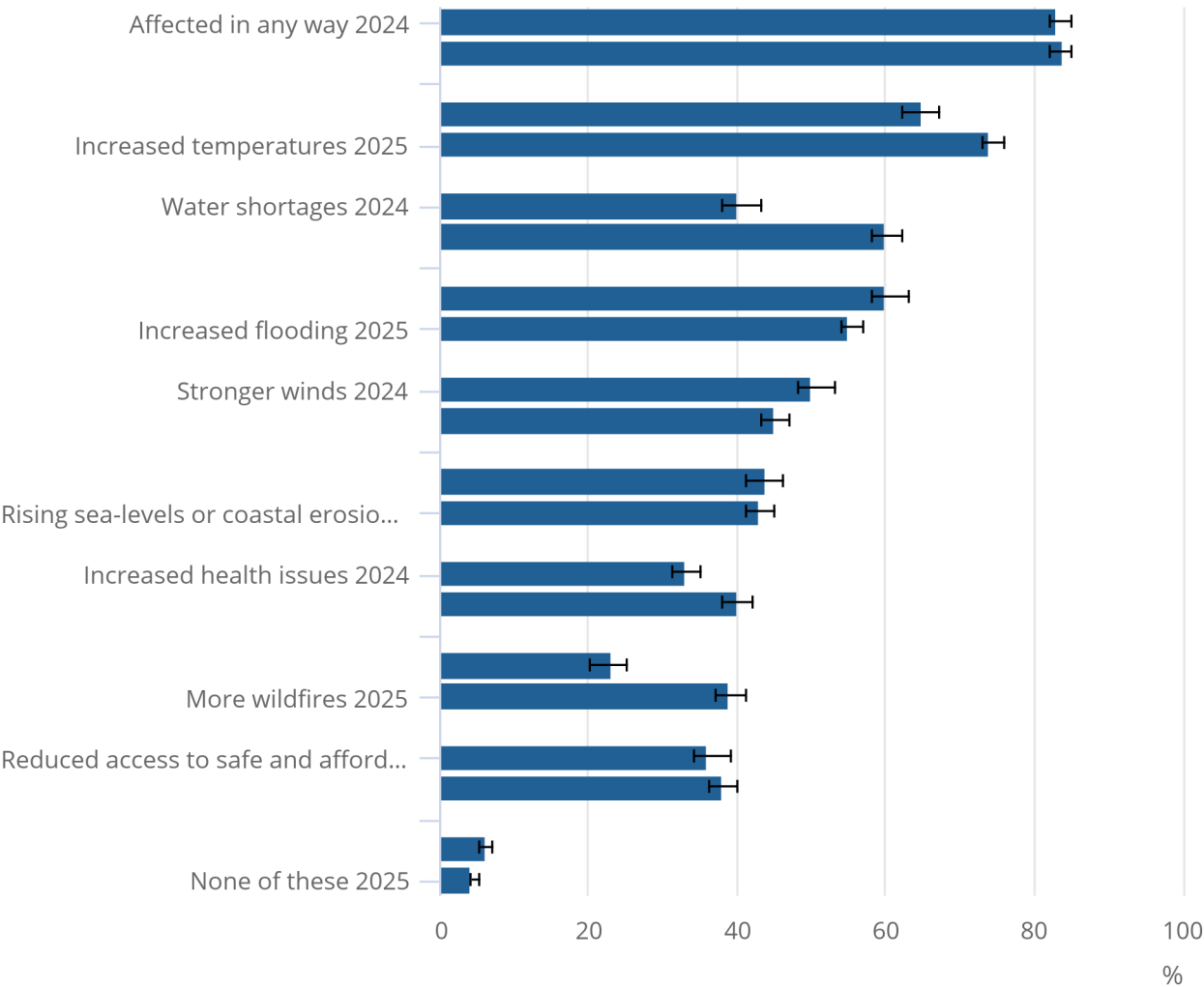
Around 8 in 10 (84%) adults expected to be affected in the next 10 years in at least one of the ways we asked about. This is a similar proportion to that reported last year (83%) in October 2024 (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Around three-quarters (74%) of adults felt climate change would affect them in the next 10 years through increased temperatures

Proportion of adults reporting ways in which they think climate change will affect them in the next 10 years, Great Britain, 3 September to 26 October 2025 and 2 to 27 October 2024

Figure 5: Around three-quarters (74%) of adults felt climate change would affect them in the next 10 years through increased temperatures

Proportion of adults reporting ways in which they think climate change will affect them in the next 10 years, Great Britain, 3 September to 26 October 2025 and 2 to 27 October 2024



Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Respondents could select more than one option.
2. The category “Affected in any way” represents the proportion of respondents who selected at least one option apart from “I do not believe in climate change”, “None of these” or “Don’t know”.

Impact of severe weather events on businesses in the last 12 months

The majority of businesses (74%) reported through our Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) in late September 2025 that they had not been impacted by severe weather events in the last 12 months. The most reported severe weather events that businesses had been impacted by were:

- storms (10%)
- increased temperature or heat (7%)
- flooding (5%)

4 . Actions taken to prevent or prepare for environmental issues

Looking at the extent people report making changes to their lifestyle to help tackle environmental issues:

- 11% said they had made a lot of changes
- 73% said they had made some changes
- 16% said they had not made any changes

Among all adults, 84% said they made changes to their lifestyle (either a lot or some). The groups that were more likely to report making changes included:

- females (88%)
- those working in professional occupations (88%)
- those with a degree or equivalent qualification (88%)
- those aged 50 to 69 years (87%)

Figure 6: Females and those working in professional occupations were among the groups more likely to have made changes to tackle environmental issues

Proportion of adults reporting they had made some or a lot of changes to help the environment, by characteristic, Great Britain, September to October 2025

Types of changes people are making

Among the 84% of adults in Great Britain who reported that they had made changes to their lifestyle to help tackle environmental issues in the latest pooled period, the most commonly reported actions they had made in the last 12 months were:

- waste reduction (83%)
- shopping habits (49%)
- their diet (43%)
- their travel (41%)
- energy efficiency changes to their home (37%)

The likelihood of reporting different types of actions made appeared to vary by personal characteristics.

Groups who appeared more likely to reduce their waste included:

- those living in Wales (93%) or Scotland (89%)
- those in administrative or secretarial occupations (90%)
- two adult households with no dependent children (87%)

Figure 7: Adults living in Wales were among the groups most likely to report waste reduction as an action taken to help tackle environmental issues in the past 12 months

Proportion of adults who reported reducing their waste to help tackle environmental issues, by characteristic, Great Britain, September to October 2025

Barriers to people taking action towards environmental issues

Among the 16% of adults that did not report making any lifestyle changes to help tackle environmental issues, the most commonly reported reasons given were:

- thinking large polluters should change before individuals (34%)
- not thinking that they would have an effect on environmental issues (32%)
- it being too expensive (24%)

Among the 16% of adults that did not report making any changes to help tackle environmental issues, around one in ten (11%) reported not believing in climate change.

Businesses assessing the risks of climate change

In September 2025, around 7 in 10 businesses (71%) had not assessed any climate change related risks from a selection of responses.

We also asked businesses who had assessed at least one climate change risk, which action, if any, they had then taken to adapt to it. Of these, the majority reported they were not sure (47%) or chose "none" of the actions listed (23%). Businesses did report making adaptations for supply chain disruption and distribution (13%), increased flooding (12%) and temperature increases (11%).

Businesses' actions to protect the environment

When asked about what actions, if any, their business had taken to protect the environment, around two-thirds (64%) of businesses reported they had taken none of the actions listed. Some businesses reported that they monitor climate-related risks (7%) or have a climate change strategy (4%), have a net zero or greenhouse gas emissions target (3%), or monitor nature or biodiversity-related risks (3%).

The following barriers to tackling environmental issues were the most commonly reported:

- no barriers (44%)
- not sure (21%)
- competing business priorities (11%)
- unclear on what actions to take (11%)
- high upfront costs (11%)
- limited capital (11%)

5 . Data on public opinions and social trends

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: household finances](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2025

People's experiences of changes in their cost of living and household finances in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal well-being and loneliness](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2025

Personal well-being, loneliness and what people in Great Britain felt were important issues; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: working arrangements](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2025

Working arrangements of people in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: social mobility](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2025

Social mobility and life opportunities across different generations in Great Britain; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public attitudes towards the environment and climate change, by personal characteristics, Great Britain](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2025

People in Great Britain's attitudes towards the environment and climate change; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), September to October 2025. Uses longer data collection periods to allow estimates by various personal characteristics.

[Opinions and Lifestyle Survey: sample sizes, response rates and user requested data](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2025

Survey information including sample sizes, response rates and user requested data for the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: winter pressures](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2025

Actions people have taken to save money on food because of increases in the cost of living and how often people are able to keep comfortably warm in their homes; indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

6 . Glossary

Climate change

Climate change is not specifically defined for respondents on either the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) or the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS). More information on climate change is available from the [Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's Climate change explained](#).

Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the IMD, is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. The IMD ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area).

We have used 2019 IMD indices for this publication, with a plan to use the newly updated 2025 IMD in the new year.

Deciles are calculated by ranking the 32,844 small areas in England, from most deprived to least deprived, and dividing them into 10 equal groups. These range from the most deprived 10% of small areas nationally to the least deprived 10% of small areas nationally. We have further grouped deciles into quintiles for this analysis, to ensure robust sample sizes.

Highest qualification

Highest education level is derived based on the highest qualification reported by the respondent. "Below degree level" includes higher educational qualifications below degree level: A-Levels or Highers, ONC or National Level BTEC, O Level or GCSE equivalent (Grade A-C) or CSE equivalent, GCSE (Grade D-G) or CSE (Grade 2-5) or Standard Grade (level 4-6). "Other qualifications" represent all other qualifications not listed, excluding degree level and equivalent.

Ethnicity

The ethnicity disaggregation used has been chosen to provide the most granular breakdown possible while producing robust estimates based on sample sizes, in line with Government Statistical Service (GSS) harmonised standards for ethnicity data. The five-category ethnicity breakdown includes:

- Asian or Asian British: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese or any other Asian background
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British: African, Caribbean or Any other Black, African or Caribbean background
- Mixed and Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian or Any other Mixed and Multiple ethnic background
- Other ethnic background group: Arab or Any other ethnic group
- White: White British, White Irish, Other White

Occupation

Occupation is self-reported on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) and therefore should be treated with caution. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) is used, this is a common classification of occupational information for the UK, in which jobs are classified by their skill level and are categorised into the following nine major groups:

- managers, directors and senior officials
- professional occupations
- associate professional occupations
- administrative and secretarial occupations
- skilled trades occupations
- caring, leisure and other service occupations
- sales and customer service occupations
- process, plant and machine operatives
- elementary occupations

Parental status

In the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), an adult is defined as a parent if they are the parent of a dependent child living in the household. In this case, dependent children include children and stepchildren.

A dependent child is someone aged under 16 years, or someone who is aged 16 to 18 years, has never been married, and is in full-time education.

Statistical significance

This bulletin presents the OPN data as a summary of results. Further data, including confidence intervals for the estimates shown in the charts presented, are contained in our associated datasets. Where comparisons between groups are presented, 95% confidence intervals should be used to assess the statistical significance of the change. For more information on these terms, see our [Uncertainty and how we measure it for our surveys methodology](#).

Other definitions

Definitions of all breakdowns of estimates used in this bulletin are available in more detail in the Notes tab of our accompanying [Public attitudes towards the environment and climate change, by personal characteristics, Great Britain](#).

7 . Data sources and quality

The analysis in this bulletin is based on adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain.

In the latest period, 1 to 26 October 2025, we sampled 7,870 households. This sample was randomly selected from people who had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). The responding sample for the latest period contained 3,230 individuals, representing a 41% response rate.

The latest pooled period, covering 3 September to 26 October 2025, contained 6,550 individuals.

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population, based on our population estimates. Estimates for some groups of the population may be subject to greater [uncertainty](#) because of smaller sample sizes for these groups (for example, younger adults).

From the 2 to 27 July 2025 data collection period onwards, the population totals used in weighting OPN estimates are based on 2022 mid-year estimates using updated population projections. For England and Wales, they are projected forward using scaling factors from 2021-based national population projections. For Scotland, they are projected forward using scaling factors from 2020-based national population projections.

For all estimates in the datasets, [confidence intervals](#) are provided. Where comparisons between estimates are made, associated confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of the differences. In some cases, additional statistical hypothesis testing was performed to identify differences between groups.

Further information on the survey design and quality can be found in our [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Information on the strengths, limitations, appropriate uses and how data are created from the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) is available in our [BICS Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#), which was last updated on 10 October 2024.

For wave 141, data was collected from 15 to 28 September 2025, with a reference period of 1 to 31 August 2025, based on 38,840 businesses sampled, with 10,672 (27.5%) responding.

For full details of the survey questions used, see our [BICS questions: 15 September 2025 to 5 October 2025 article](#).

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

Not all industries are covered by the BICS survey sample. Industries excluded from the sample include those in agriculture, oil and gas extraction or energy generation and supply, public administration and defence, public provision of education and health, finance and insurance. This should be considered when interpreting these results.

8 . Related links

[Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 6 November 2025](#)

Bulletin | Released 6 November 2025

Data on the UK economy and society. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and innovative methods. These are official statistics in development.

[Business insights and impact on the UK economy: 2 October 2025](#)

Bulletin | Released 2 October 2025

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

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: September 2025](#)

Bulletin | Released 17 October 2025

Social insights on daily life and events, including attitudes towards important issues among different groups of the population, from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Public Attitudes Tracker: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero](#)

Dataset | Released 28 October 2025

Triannual survey collecting data on public awareness, behaviours and attitudes relating to the department's policy areas.

9 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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