

Statistical bulletin

Business insights and impact on the UK economy: 2 October 2025

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

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23 October 2025

Notice

2 October 2025

This release has a headline-only format and is accompanied by our full dataset.

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1 . Main points

- Nearly a quarter (23%) of businesses reported that they are currently using some form of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in late September 2025, up 3 percentage points from June 2025; this proportion has been steadily increasing since the question was introduced in September 2023 (9%).
- In late September 2025, 4% of businesses that currently use some form of AI technology reported that their overall workforce headcount had decreased as a result of using those technologies; 7% of businesses that were planning to adopt some form of AI technology within the next three months reported that they expect headcount to decrease as a result.
- A quarter (25%) of businesses reported in late September 2025 that they were concerned about the impact climate change may have on their business; while broadly stable with late June, this proportion has steadily declined since early February 2023 (41%).
- More than a quarter (26%) of businesses reported that they currently have no debt obligations, down 3 percentage points from late June 2025; the proportion of businesses reporting this has fallen by 23 percentage points since early December 2023 and is now the lowest proportion reported since this response option was introduced in October 2021.
- Approximately one in six (17%) trading businesses reported they had no cash reserves in late September 2025; although broadly stable with late June 2025, it is the largest proportion recorded since this question was introduced in late June 2020.
- In late September 2025, 32% of businesses with 10 or more employees that had exported goods in the last 12 months reported they were affected by US tariffs in the last month, broadly stable with late August.

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 . Headline figures

The data presented in this bulletin are the final results from Wave 141 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), which was live from 15 to 28 September 2025.

Data reported within BICS bulletins and datasets are estimates that are subject to [uncertainty](#), for example, sampling variability and [non-sampling error](#). Further information on quality is available in our [Business Insights and Conditions Survey Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#), and we regularly update [confidence intervals](#) associated with the survey questions.

Single-site weighted regional estimates up to Wave 130 are available in our [Business insights and impact on the UK subnational single-site economy: May 2025 article](#).

More about economy, business, and jobs

Explore the latest trends in employment, prices, and trade in our [economic dashboard](#).

View [all economic data](#).

The percentage of businesses that reported they were trading in late September 2025 was 96%, with 86% fully trading, and 10% partially trading (for example, trading with reduced hours or staff numbers). Meanwhile, 2% of businesses reported "temporarily paused trading", and 2% reported "permanently ceased trading" as their business's trading status.

3 . Data from the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

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

Dataset | Released 2 October 2025

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. These are official statistics in development.

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

Dataset | Released 2 October 2025

Confidence intervals for weighted estimates from the voluntary fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) about financial performance, workforce, prices, trade, and business resilience. These are official statistics in development.

Access to microdata

You can access the microdata for Waves 1 to 140 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) 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, as explained on the UK Statistics Authority website](#) are able to access data in the SRS. You can apply for researcher accreditation using the People and Projects Service (PPS).

To conduct analysis with microdata from the SRS, a project application must be submitted to the [Research Accreditation Panel \(RAP\), as explained on the UK Statistics Authority website](#). Project accreditation applications should be submitted using the Project Accreditation Service for SRS (PASS). For more information, please see our [guidance on applying for an accredited research project](#).

To use the SRS, you must access it through the appropriate safe setting. For more information on the full range of safe setting options, please see our [guidance on accessing data securely](#).

Making our published spreadsheets accessible

Following the [Government Statistical Service \(GSS\) guidance on releasing statistics in spreadsheets](#), we will be amending our published tables over the next couple of publications to improve the usability, accessibility and machine readability of our published statistics. If you have any questions or comments, please email us at bics@ons.gov.uk.

4 . Glossary

Reporting unit

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

Private sector businesses

The Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) is a survey of private sector businesses, meaning that the public sector is not sampled. Some businesses are also excluded; please see the Coverage section of this bulletin for more information.

Trading businesses

Trading businesses refers to businesses that responded that their trading status was "currently fully trading" or "currently partially trading" only.

If trading businesses is not specifically specified, the statistics presented refer to businesses that have "Not permanently stopped trading". This includes trading businesses and those that said their trading status was "paused trading and intends to restart in the next two weeks" or "paused trading and does not intend to restart within the next two weeks".

5 . Data sources and quality

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](#), which was updated on 10 October 2024.

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

Table 1: Sample and response rates for Wave 139, 140, and 141 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey

Wave	4 September 2025 Publication Wave 139	18 September 2025 Publication Wave 140	2 October 2025 Publication Wave 141
Sample	38,855	38,829	38,840
Response	10,078	10,348	10,672
Rate	25.9%	26.7%	27.5%

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

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 141 survey was live for the period 15 to 28 September 2025. For full details of the survey questions used, see our [Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 15 to 28 September article](#).

Because of an issue during survey deployment, results for the question on which specific job roles have been most affected by artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are unavailable for this wave of BICS. No other questions in this wave have been affected by this issue.

Coverage

The BICS sampling frame is based on the same industries as our Monthly Business Survey (MBS). The MBS covers the UK for production industries only, and Great Britain for construction, retail and services industries. The MBS is an important input to the output measure of gross domestic product (GDP), which includes monthly GDP.

For detailed information on the industries covered by the MBS and BICS, see our [GDP\(o\) data sources catalogue](#). The following are some industries that are excluded from MBS and BICS:

- agriculture
- oil and gas extraction
- energy generation and supply
- 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 [Business Insights and Conditions Survey \(BICS\) QMI](#).

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](#).

6 . Related links

[Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 2 October 2025](#)

Bulletin | Updated frequently

Early 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 subnational single-site economy: May 2025](#)

Article | Released 30 May 2025

Estimates from the voluntary fortnightly business survey (BICS) on prices, financial performance, workforce and business resilience.

7 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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