

Article

# Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 11 December to 26 December 2023

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## Table of contents

1. [Survey information](#)
2. [Trading Status of Your Business](#)
3. [Exporting](#)
4. [Importing](#)
5. [Supply Chains](#)
6. [Sending goods](#)
7. [Artificial Intelligence](#)
8. [Workforce trends](#)
9. [Industrial action](#)
10. [Comments](#)

# 1 . Survey information

These questions are for Wave 98 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on 11 December 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

In November 2023, did your business export to additional countries compared with this calendar month last year?

- Yes, to countries within the EU
- Yes, to non-EU countries
- Yes, to both EU and non-EU countries
- No

How did your business's exporting in November 2023 compare with this calendar month last year?

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

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following exporting challenges in November 2023, 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

## 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

In November 2023, did your business import from additional countries compared with this calendar month last year?

- Yes, from countries within the EU
- Yes, from non-EU countries
- Yes, from both EU and non-EU countries
- No

How did your business's importing in November 2023 compare with this calendar month last year?

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

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following importing challenges in November 2023, 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

## **5 . Supply Chains**

Was your business able to get the materials, goods or services it needed from within the UK in November 2023?

- 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 materials, goods or services needed
- Not applicable

Did your business experience any global supply chain disruption in November 2023?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

What was the main reason for global supply chain disruption?

- Conflict in Ukraine
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- Increased costs
- Shortage of hauliers and carriers
- Shortage of materials
- UK exiting the EU
- Other transportation issues
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

## 6 . Sending goods

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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In November 2023, 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 November 2023:

- Comments

## 7 . Artificial Intelligence

Which, if any, of the following artificial intelligence technologies does your business currently use?

- Autonomous vehicles
- Data processing using machine learning
- Image processing using machine learning
- Robotics
- Text generation using Large Language Models
- Visual content creation
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business is not currently using artificial intelligence technologies

What does your business currently use artificial intelligence applications for?

- Develop a new product or service, or explore a new market
- Image processing using machine learning
- Improve business operations
- Provide, or personalise, products or services to customers
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Not applicable

How did your business adopt these artificial intelligence technologies?

- Developed in-house
- Outsourced to external providers or third parties
- Through purchase of external software or ready-to-use
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Which, if any, of the following artificial intelligence technologies does your business plan to adopt within the next 3 months?

- Autonomous vehicles
- Data processing using machine learning
- Image processing using machine learning
- Robotics
- Text generation using Large Language Models
- Visual content creation
- Other (Please describe) \ Not sure
- Business does not plan to adopt artificial intelligence technologies in the next 3 months

What does your business plan to adopt artificial intelligence technologies for?

- Develop a new product or service or explore a new market
- Image processing using machine learning
- Improve business operations
- Provide, or personalise, products or services to customers
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Not applicable

In the last 3 months, which, if any, of the following factors have prevented or delayed your business in the adoption of artificial intelligence technologies?

- Cost
- Difficulty identifying business use cases
- Employee concern about any potential impact of using artificial intelligence technologies
- Level of expertise in artificial intelligence
- Product or service availability
- Security concerns
- Uncertainty about government regulations or industry standards
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business has not attempted to use artificial intelligence technologies
- Business has not been prevented or experienced delays in the adoption of artificial intelligence technologies

## 8 . Workforce trends

On average, how did employees' hourly wages in November 2023 compare with employees' hourly wages in the previous calendar month?

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

Is your business currently experiencing a shortage of workers?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

How has the shortage of workers affected your business?

- Employees working increased hours
- Business had to pause trading entirely
- Had to pause trading of some of the business
- Business had to recruit temporary workers
- Unable to meet demands
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business has not been affected

## **9 . Industrial action**

Was your business affected by industrial action in November 2023?

- 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 November 2023?

- 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