

Article

Business Insights and Conditions Survey questions: 17 April to 30 April 2023

Contact:
Gemma Rabaiotti
bics@ons.gov.uk
+44 1633 455 592

Release date:
2 May 2023

Next release:
To be announced

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1 . Survey information

These questions are for Wave 81 of the fortnightly Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) dispatched on 17 April 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

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

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

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

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

How did the time spent on exporting in March 2023 compare with this calendar month last year?

- Time spent increased
- Time spent stayed the same
- Time spent decreased
- Not sure

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following exporting challenges in March 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

What was the main cause of these exporting challenges?

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the end of the EU transition period
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

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

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

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

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

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

How did the time spent on importing in March 2023 compare with this calendar month last year?

- Time spent increased
- Time spent stayed the same
- Time spent decreased
- Not sure

Did your business experience an increase in any of the following importing challenges in March 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

What was the main cause of these importing challenges?

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- End of the EU transition period
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the end of the EU transition period
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure

5 . UKCA

Does your business manufacture, import, or distribute products that require either a CE marking or the new UKCA marking?

- Yes, we manufacture products that need a CE or UKCA marking
- Yes, we import products that need a CE or UKCA marking
- Yes, we distribute products that need a CE or UKCA marking
- Not sure
- No, we do not manufacture, import or distribute products that need a CE or UKCA marking

Is your business aware that most CE marked products need to be UKCA marked from 1 January 2025?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Is your business using, or intending to use, the UKCA marking by 1 January 2025?

- Already using UKCA marking
- Not aware of, or do not know how to meet, requirements for the UKCA
- Not using the UKCA marking, but plan to by 1 January 2025
- Will not use UKCA marking, as not relevant to our products or business
- Not sure

6 . Supply chains

Was your business able to get the materials, goods or services it needed from within the EU in March 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 the materials, goods or services needed
- Not applicable

Was your business able to get the materials, goods or services it needed from within the UK in March 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 the materials, goods or services needed
- Not applicable

Did your business experience any global supply chain disruption in March 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

Which of the following, if any, will be the main concern for your business in May 2023?

- Business rates
- Competition with other businesses
- Energy prices
- Exchange rates
- Falling demand of goods and services
- Inflation of goods and services prices
- Interest rates
- Property rental costs
- Supply chain disruption
- Taxation
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- No concerns for the business

In the last 12 months, has your business sold goods or services to customers in other UK nations?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In the last 12 months, which of the following challenges, if any, has your business experienced when selling goods or services to customers in other UK nations?

- Challenges related to the Northern Ireland Protocol
- Differences in rules or regulations
- Lack of demand
- Supply chain disruption
- Transport capacity
- Transport costs
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Business did not experience any challenges

7 . Sending goods

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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In March 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 March 2023:

- Comments

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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

In March 2023, how did the volume of goods your business sent from Northern Ireland to GB compare with the previous calendar month?

- Volume increased
- Volume stayed the same
- Volume decreased
- Stopped sending goods to GB
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Please give more details about why the volume of goods sent from Northern Ireland to GB changed in March 2023:

- Comments

8 . Workforce trends

Is your business intending to permanently close any business sites in the next three months?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Not applicable

Where in the UK are the sites that will permanently close in the next three months?

- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales
- East of England
- East Midlands
- Greater London
- North East of England
- North West of England
- South East of England
- South West of England
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- Not sure

How do you expect closing these sites to affect your workforce?

- Decreased hours
- Increased hours
- Move to remove working
- Permanent redundancies
- Relocation
- Other (Please describe)
- Not sure
- Workforce will not be affected

Which, if any, of the following skills has your business had high demand for in the last 12 months?

- Advanced digital skills
- Basic digital skills
- Customer service skills
- Management or leadership skills
- Manual skills
- Transferable skills
- Other (Please describe)
- None of the above

Which, if any, of the following skills does your workforce require extra support or training in?

- Advanced digital skills
- Basic digital skills
- Customer service skills
- Management or leadership skills
- Manual skills
- Transferable skills
- Other (Please describe)
- None of the above

On average, how did employees' hourly wages in March 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 March 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 March 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