



The  
Growth  
Company

# **GC SITUATION REPORT AND QUARTERLY BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS**

**MARCH 2025**

**WITH QUARTERLY DATA FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2025 TO 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2025**

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# 1. ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND SURVEY HEADLINES

The GC Situation Report contains leading economic data from both national (mostly ONS) and local business survey sources. This month's survey report findings are based on 776 surveys completed between 2nd January 2025 and 2nd April 2025 by GC clients from the Business Growth Hub and MIDAS. Comparisons have been made with last quarter's 786 responses completed between December and February 2025. The survey response profile is broadly representative of the Greater Manchester business base, but for an over-representation of SMEs, Manufacturing, DCT firms, and under-representation of Retail and Hospitality businesses – reflecting the Business Growth Hub and MIDAS client profiles.

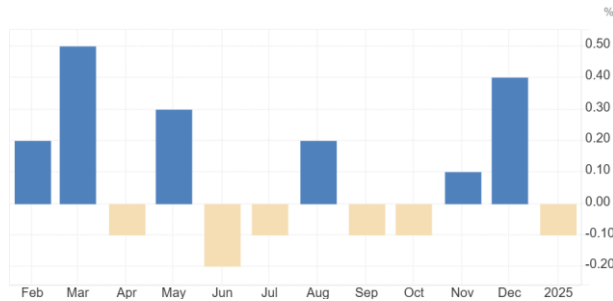
## Economic context

- **Economic Stagnation & Growth:** UK output stagnated in late 2024, with declining business and consumer confidence. **Real GDP growth forecast has been halved by the OBR to 1.0%**, recovering to an average of 1.75% for the rest of the decade.
- **Inflation & Productivity:** Inflation is projected to **peak at 3.7% in mid-2025 due to energy, food, and wage pressures** before stabilising. Productivity levels are forecast over 1% lower than previous estimates, risking a 1.4% of GDP deficit.
- **Fiscal Outlook:** A projected £9.9bn surplus has shifted to a £4.1bn deficit by 2029-30, before new policies. **Borrowing is expected to be £3.5bn higher**, with debt 0.6% of GDP higher than the October forecast.
- **Government Policies & Reforms:** Planning reforms may boost output by 0.2% by 2029, but **cumulative growth is still 0.5 % points lower than previous forecasts**. Departmental cuts aim to raise £14bn by 2029-30, partially offsetting the fiscal deterioration.
- **Uncertainty & Risks:** **The economic outlook remains uncertain due to productivity trends, interest rates, and global trade risks.** Labour force statistics also provide no clear signal of any improvement in the economy.
- **US Tariffs.** The Government's official forecaster estimates **a worst-case scenario trade war could reduce UK economic growth by 1% and wipe out the £9.9bn of economic headroom** Chancellor Rachel Reeves gave herself at last week's Spring Statement.
- **The Bank of England Decision Maker Panel** survey highlights continued price growth (ahead of inflation expectations to date), wage growth to remain unchanged from current trend and employment growth expected to fall over the year ahead.

## Organisation Growth Survey - business headlines, more detail in main report

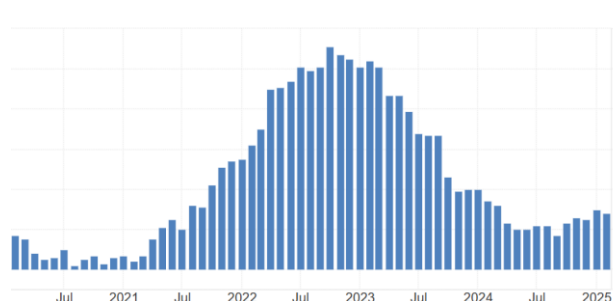
- **Business Confidence and performance.** The GC Confidence Index decreased to 7.0 from 7.1 in the previous quarter, the lowest since May 2020.
- **Sectors with highest confidence include Business Financial & Professional Services, Engineering, and Hospitality.** Whilst the lowest confidence was reported in Construction, Life Sciences, Health & Social Care, Green Tech and Other Manufacturing. The proportion of firms expecting future profits to rise decreased to 49%, vs 54% last month. **The main sectors expecting increased profits are DCTs, Other Manufacturing, Financial & Professional Services.**
- **Economic Impacts.** Key impacts of the current economy are similar to the previous report and include rising costs 31% (vs 30%), cashflow 13% (vs 14%), decreased sales 11% (vs 12%), and minor supply chain issues, 9% (vs 8%).
- **The main current and pressing challenges** facing business include getting access to domestic markets 51% (vs 52%), developing new products / services 32% (vs 34%), developing business models 26% (vs 27%), managing business finances 25% (unchanged), and workforce development / skills 19% (vs 20%).
- **The main areas of future support.** These remain largely unchanged from last month, and include innovation 33% (vs 35%), business planning 28% (vs 31%), sales & marketing 28% (vs 29%), workforce development and skills 25% (unchanged), and financial advice & guidance 19% (vs 22%).

UK GDP fell in January 2025 (Latest)



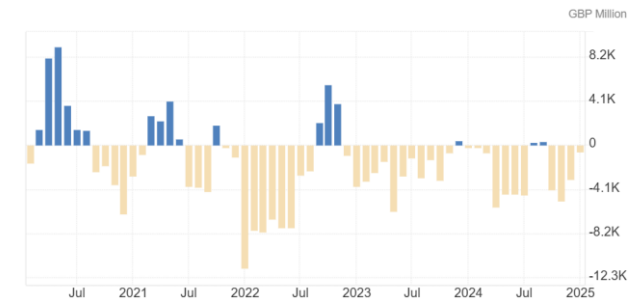
- **UK GDP contracted 0.1% in January 2025, following a rise of 0.4% in November, and worse than market expectations of a 0.1% gain. Considering the three months up to January 2025, GDP grew 0.2%.**
- The production sector had the largest downward contribution with 0.9%, after a 0.5% rise in the previous period.
- Manufacturing shrank 1.1% led by basic metals & metal products (-3.3%) and basic pharmaceutical products & pharmaceutical preparations (-3.1%).
- Mining and quarrying contributed a 3.3% fall, largely due to a 3.7% contraction in extraction of oil and natural gas. Construction declined 0.2%.
- Services overall expanded 0.1%, led by admin. services (1.9%) and wholesale & retail (0.7%).

UK CPI - Inflation fell in February 2025



- **Annual UK inflation fell to 2.8% in February 2025 from 3% in January, below market expectations of 2.9%, though in line with BoE's forecast.**
- The largest downward contribution to inflation came from prices of clothing which for the first time since October 2021.
- Inflation also eased in recreation and culture (3.4% vs 3.8%), particularly in live music and recording media, and housing & utilities (1.9% vs 2.1% previously).
- Food inflation was unchanged at 3.3%, prices rose faster for transport (1.8% vs 1.7%) and rose faster for restaurants & hotels (3.4% vs 3.3%).
- Services inflation held steady at 5%. The annual core inflation rate declined to 3.5%. Compared to the previous month, the CPI increased 0.4%, rebounding from a 0.1% decline, but falling short of market expectations of a 0.5% increase.

UK Balance of Trade improves to -£0.6bn in December 2024



- **The UK's trade deficit declined to £0.6bn in January 2025 from £3.28bn in December 2024, making it the smallest trade gap since September 2024.**
- Exports rose by 3.6% MoM to a five-month high of £75.7bn, while imports went up 0.1% to £76.3bn. Goods exports rose by £1.8bn (6.3%) in January 2025 due to a rise in exports to EU and non-EU countries.
- Goods imports remained stable in January 2025, due to a fall in imports from the EU was offset by a rise in imports from non-EU Countries.
- Exports of goods to the US increased by £0.1bn, the second consecutive monthly rise, while imports of goods from the US fell by £0.1bn.
- Service imports rose slightly by £0.1bn (0.5%) in January 2025, and services exports increased by £0.8bn (1.9%).

## 2. SECTOR INSIGHT AND PURCHASING MANAGER INDICES

- **The S&P Global UK Composite Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI)** rose to 52.0 in March 2025 from 50.5 in February, indicating an expansion (i.e. values above 50). This signals only modest private sector growth, the reading reaching its highest level since September, driven by the strongest expansion in the service sector since August. Manufacturing output shrank for the fifth consecutive month, posting its sharpest decline since October 2023. New order volumes showed a stark divergence, with manufacturers reporting a steep drop in demand amid rising global economic uncertainty and potential US tariffs, while service providers recorded their first increase in new work this year. Employment also fell for a sixth straight month. Input cost inflation eased further from January's nine-month high, while prices charged continued to rise at a strong pace. Business confidence remained subdued, hovering just above January's 25-month low.
- **Company Insolvencies:** In February 2025, there were 2,035 company insolvencies in England and Wales, 3% higher than in January 2025 (1,978) but 7% lower than in February 2024 (2,188). Company insolvencies in February 2025 consisted of 393 compulsory liquidations, 1,520 creditors' voluntary liquidations (CVLs), 115 administrations and 7 company voluntary arrangements (CVAs). There were no receivership appointments. Compulsory liquidations were higher than in January 2025, while CVLs, administrations and CVAs were lower. 1 in 191 companies (52.4 per 10,000 companies) entered insolvency between 1 March 2024 and 28 February 2025. This was a decrease from 57.6 per 10,000 companies in the 12 months ending 29 February 2024.
- **Retail sales** in the UK rose by 1.0% in February 2025, compared with a rise of 1.4% in January 2025. This rise was partly offset by food stores sales volume falling by 2.0%, following a 4.8% rise in January 2025. Non-food store sales grew strongly by 3.1% in total with rises across all four sub-sectors, the highest level since March 2022. Department stores rose by 0.7%, textile, clothing & footwear stores rose by 2.3%, household goods rose by 6.8%, and other non-food stores rose by 3.1%.
- **The GfK Consumer Confidence Index** rose to -19 in March 2025, marking its second consecutive monthly improvement after -22 in January and -20 in February. This exceeded market expectations of -21 but still remains negative, reflecting ongoing consumer caution. General economic situation expectations for the next 12 months improved by 2 points to -29, while personal finance sentiment for the year ahead dipped by 1 point to +1. The major purchase index, which gauges confidence in buying big-ticket items, remained at -17. Whilst this current 'stability' is reassuring, it wouldn't take much to unsettle consumer mood, says Neil Bellamy, consumer insights director at NIQ GfK.

The S&P Global – UK Manufacturing PMI falls to 44.9

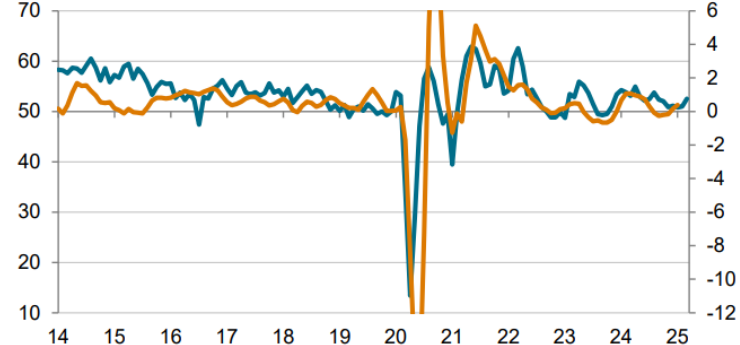
S&P Global UK Manufacturing PMI  
Index, sa, >50 = improvement m/m



- **The S&P Global UK Manufacturing PMI** decreased to 44.9 in March 2025, indicating a contraction (i.e. values below 50), less than 46.9 in February.
- **The UK PMI remains the lowest reading in 17 months.** The downturn at UK manufacturers deepened and the rates of contraction in output and new orders accelerated, as the difficult operating environment persisted.
- S&P Global Market Intelligence state that **many companies have reported domestic market conditions are deteriorating**, costs are rising due to changes in the national minimum wage and NI contributions, geopolitical tensions are increasing, and global trade faces disruptions from tariffs.
- **Business confidence slumped to a near two-and-a-half year low**, as concerns about Government policy, rising costs, increased geopolitical tensions and potential tariff uncertainty impacted on current and future conditions.

The S&P Global – UK Services PMI increased to 52.5

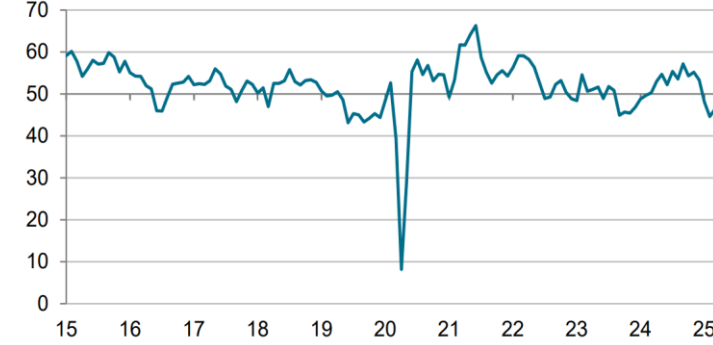
Services PMI Business Activity Index, sa, >50 = growth m/m  
Index of Services % 3m/3m



- **The S&P Global UK Services PMI** was revised to 52.5 in March 2025 from a preliminary 53.2, indicating an expansion (i.e. values above 50), up from February's 51.0 and the highest reading since August 2024.
- **Business activity gained momentum, supported by a slight rebound in new work and export orders.** However, employment remained weak, with staffing levels declining for the sixth consecutive month due to rising payroll costs.
- While new business grew at its fastest pace since November, firms still faced challenges from **constrained household budgets and geopolitical uncertainty**.
- **Input price inflation in Services eased to a three-month low**, leading to the slowest increase in service charges since December 2024.

The S&P Global – UK Construction PMI rises to 46.4

S&P Global UK Construction PMI Total Activity  
Index, sa, >50 = growth m/m



- **The S&P Global UK Construction PMI** increased to 46.4 in March 2025, indicating a contraction (i.e. values below 50), up from February 2025's 57-month low of 44.6 and exceeding market expectations of 46.0.
- **Civil engineering was the weakest-performing construction sector**, the Index decreasing to 38.8 – it's steepest decline since October 2020. Residential construction (44.7) continued to shrink, albeit at a slower pace, while commercial building (47.4) saw its sharpest decline since January 2021.
- **Inflows of new orders continued to drop**, while the rate of job shedding was the steepest since October 2020. On the price front, input cost inflation accelerated to it's strongest since January 2023.
- **Business confidence slipped to its lowest since October 2023**, amid lower workloads, elevated interest rates and worries about the economic outlook.

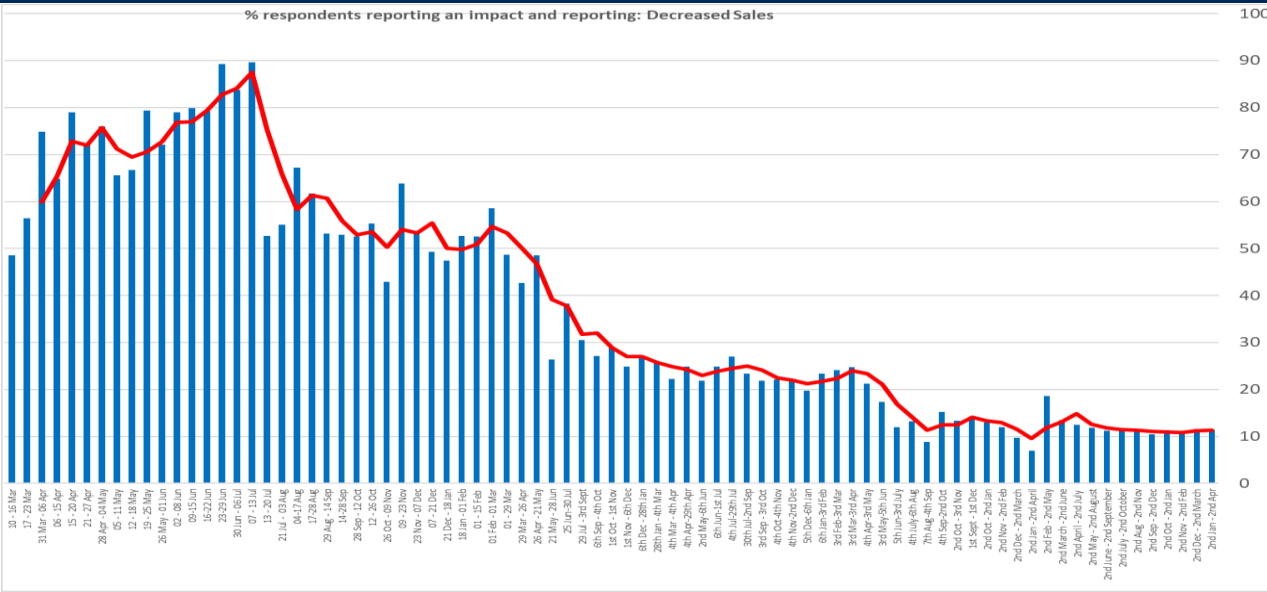
# 3. ORGANISATION GROWTH SURVEY RESULTS

Previous survey results shown in brackets

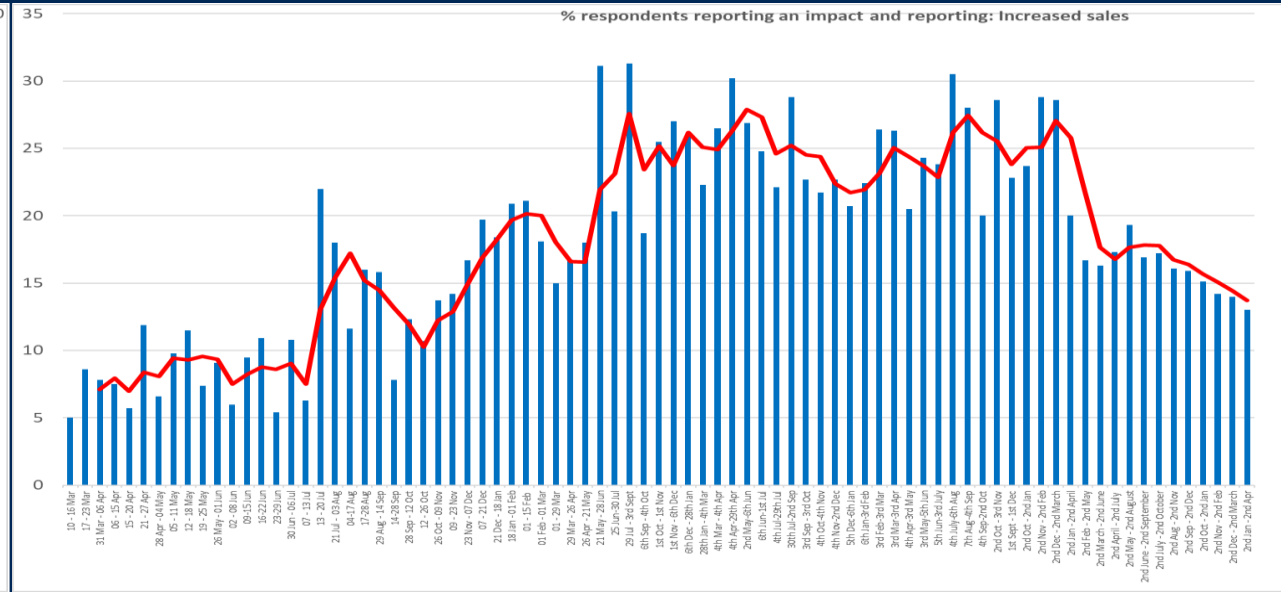
GROWTH, BUSINESS CONFIDENCE AND INVESTMENT	MAIN IMPACTS AND FINANCIAL RESILIENCE	FUTURE BUSINESS CHALLENGES AND SUPPORT NEEDS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>The GC Business Confidence Index (GC-BCI) is a ranking of how confident businesses are on their growth prospects for the year ahead.</b></li><li>➤ <b>The GC-BCI for March 2025 is 7.0 out of 10</b>, lower than last quarter 7.1, the lowest score in the past three years after COVID recovery, 2021/22 to 2024/25.</li><li>➤ Confidence levels are above average for Business Financial &amp; Professional Services, and Hospitality. The lowest confidence was reported in Construction, Life Sciences, Health &amp; Social Care, Green Tech; and the latest responses continue to show increasing uncertainty (lower scores in) Manufacturing, DCTs.</li><li>➤ <b>Current sales.</b> 13% (vs 14%) of firms reported an increase in sales.</li><li>➤ <b>Future profits.</b> 49% (vs 54%) expect profits to increase in the year ahead. 4% (vs 3%) expect profits to decrease.</li><li>➤ The sectors most optimistic about future profitability are DCTs, Manufacturing, and Business Financial &amp; Professional Services; and lower expectations in Engineering, Construction and Green Tech.</li><li>➤ <b>Investment.</b> 26% (vs 29%) of firms expect to increase capital expenditure in the year ahead. DCTs, Manufacturing, Business Financial &amp; Professional Services, Hospitality are most likely to increase cap-ex spending and expectations are lowest in Engineering, Other Service Activities, Construction.</li><li>➤ <b>Workforce Development.</b> 26% of firms plan to increase investment, up from last month's report (24%). The sectors most likely to increase investment are Business, Finance &amp; Professional Services, DCTs and Manufacturing.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Main impacts.</b> Rising costs were reported by 31% of firms, up from previous (30%), followed by cashflow issues at 13% (vs 14%), decreased sales at 11% (vs 12%), and minor supply chain issues at 9% (vs 8%).</li><li>➤ <b>Cash reserves.</b> 54% of firms (unchanged) report having cash reserves to last over 6 months, with 77% of SMEs (0–49 employees) similarly reporting cash reserves for this duration. Reserves were highest in Manufacturing, Financial &amp; Professional Services and DCTs, and lowest in Engineering, and Green-Tech.</li><li>➤ <b>Cashflow.</b> 13% (vs 14%) of firms reported cashflow problems. Micro-sized firms (&lt;10 employees) were more likely to face cashflow challenges than larger SMEs (50–249+ FTEs), with higher cashflow risks in DCTs, Manufacturing.</li><li>➤ 4% (unchanged) of firms reported late payments from suppliers and customers. However, the level reporting this risk was the highest since May 2024.</li><li>➤ <b>Analysis of insolvency risk for March 2025</b> shows decrease in the total number of firms (10+ employees) in GM with 1-3 insolvency risk red flags.</li><li>➤ <b>RedFlag data for GM shows:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 803 (down from 844 last month) firms in have 1 flag - some risk;</li><li>➤ 37 (down from 62) have 2 flags - medium risk;</li><li>➤ 27 (down from 44) have 3 flags - insolvency imminent.</li></ul></li><li>➤ The proportion of firms in Greater Manchester with a red-flag, within the business population decreased 0.3% month-on-month (UK 0.6%) and is 1 percentage point lower in GM than 12 months ago (same as the UK).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>The primary challenges for businesses</b> in the near term are access to new domestic sales opportunities, with 51% (vs 52%) citing this as a concern. This need is more acute in Manufacturing, DCTs, Financial &amp; Professional Services.</li><li>➤ <b>The next most common challenges</b> include developing new products and services at 32% (vs 34%), developing business models at 26% (vs 27%), managing business finances at 25% (unchanged), and workforce development and skills 19% (vs 20%).</li><li>➤ <b>International trade.</b> 21% of firms (unchanged) currently export goods or services, with 17% (vs 20%) expanding into new markets, a trend particularly notable in the DCTs and Manufacturing. Additionally, 10% of firms engaged in overseas trade are looking to expand in their current markets (unchanged).</li><li>➤ <b>Key areas where businesses seek support</b> include innovation 33% (vs 35%), business planning 28% (vs 31%), sales &amp; marketing 28% (vs 29%), workforce development &amp; skills 25% (unchanged) and financial advice 19% (vs 22%).</li><li>➤ These support needs were broadly similar across DCTs, BFPS, Manufacturing (Innovation, Marketing, and Workforce Development), whereas construction were more likely to request business planning and workforce development ; and Life Sciences – support for innovation and R&amp;D.</li><li>➤ <b>13% (vs 11%) require assistance with managing their environmental impact.</b> This need is more pronounced in SMEs, and larger firms (250+ employees) and is more likely to be reported by Manufacturing, Hospitality, and DCTs sectors.</li></ul>
RECRUITMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS	RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION	SOCIAL VALUE AND GOOD EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Recruitment:</b> 23% (vs 24%) of firms are currently recruiting new staff, recruitment rates are higher amongst SMEs than other businesses. By sector, recruitment is more active in DCTs, Business Financial &amp; Professional Services, and Manufacturing. Life Sciences and Engineering sectors are least active.</li><li>➤ <b>Workforce skill gaps.</b> 40% (vs 44%) reported that their existing workforce skills are fully aligned with their business plan objectives. 44% (vs 43%) indicated that skills are only partially at the required level, and 3% (vs 2%) stated that their workforce skills are not at the right level. Small SMEs, particularly with 0–9 employees, were most likely to identify skill gaps.</li><li>➤ <b>The main technical skill gaps.</b> Specialist technical skills 27% (vs 24%), knowledge of products / services 10% (vs 11%), advanced specialist IT skills 7% (unchanged) solving complex problems 7% (vs 8%), and adapting to new equipment or materials 5% (unchanged).</li><li>➤ <b>The main people and practical / personal skill gaps.</b> Sales and selling 17% (unchanged), motivating staff 12% (unchanged), ability to time manage 10% (vs 8%) and customer handling skills 9% (vs 10%).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Innovation activities in last year:</b> 31% (vs 34%) have invested in new / significantly improved services, 23% (vs 26%) in R&amp;D, 17% (vs 19%) introduced new / significantly improved goods, 20% (vs 19%) new business practices, and 13% (vs 12%) have invested in significantly improved production methods.</li><li>➤ <b>Digital innovation.</b> 8% (vs 11%) have invested in acquisition of digital products, and 4% (unchanged) made investments in the acquisition of advanced machinery or equipment - specifically for Manufacturing and DCTs.</li><li>➤ <b>Future innovation.</b> 30% (vs 36%) of firms are most likely to look to increase investment and R&amp;D in future, in particular, DCTs, and Manufacturing. 26% (vs 24%) said they were likely to invest in workforce development and skills. Highest in Business Financial &amp; Professional Services, DCTs and Manufacturing.</li><li>➤ <b>Digital Transformation.</b> 16% (vs 15%) firms are looking to invest in Digital Transformation. Highest in DCTs, BFPS, and Manufacturing.</li><li>➤ <b>AI Adoption:</b> 34% (vs 38%) have adopted AI into business. Firms were most likely to have implemented AI into data analytics, to replace routine admin. tasks, sales and marketing systems, and for automating production processes.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Guaranteeing at least 16 hours of work per week.</b> 94% (unchanged) said this currently applies, and 5% (vs 6%) said that they are likely to consider in future.</li><li>➤ <b>Paying the Real Living Wage.</b> 48% of firms (vs 49%) paid the RLW, while 24% (unchanged) indicated they are likely to implement it in the future.</li><li>➤ <b>Offering flexible working options to employees.</b> 40% (vs 43%) said this currently applies, and 29% (unchanged) said likely to include in future.</li><li>➤ <b>Involving employees in the overall direction of the business.</b> 29% (vs 31%) said this currently applies. 33% (vs 35%) said likely to do so in future.</li><li>➤ <b>Looking to increase the diversity of the workforce.</b> 36% of firms said this currently applies (vs 40%), while 33% indicated they are likely to include this in the future (vs 32%).</li><li>➤ <b>Promoting healthy work practices.</b> 40% of firms (vs 42%) said this currently applies, while 27% (vs 28%) indicated likely to do so in future.</li><li>➤ <b>Investing in leadership.</b> 38% of firms (vs 40%) said that they are investing in leadership, while 38% (unchanged) indicated likely to do so in future.</li></ul>

# SURVEY TIME SERIES OF THE MAIN IMPACTS OF THE ECONOMY ON BUSINESS

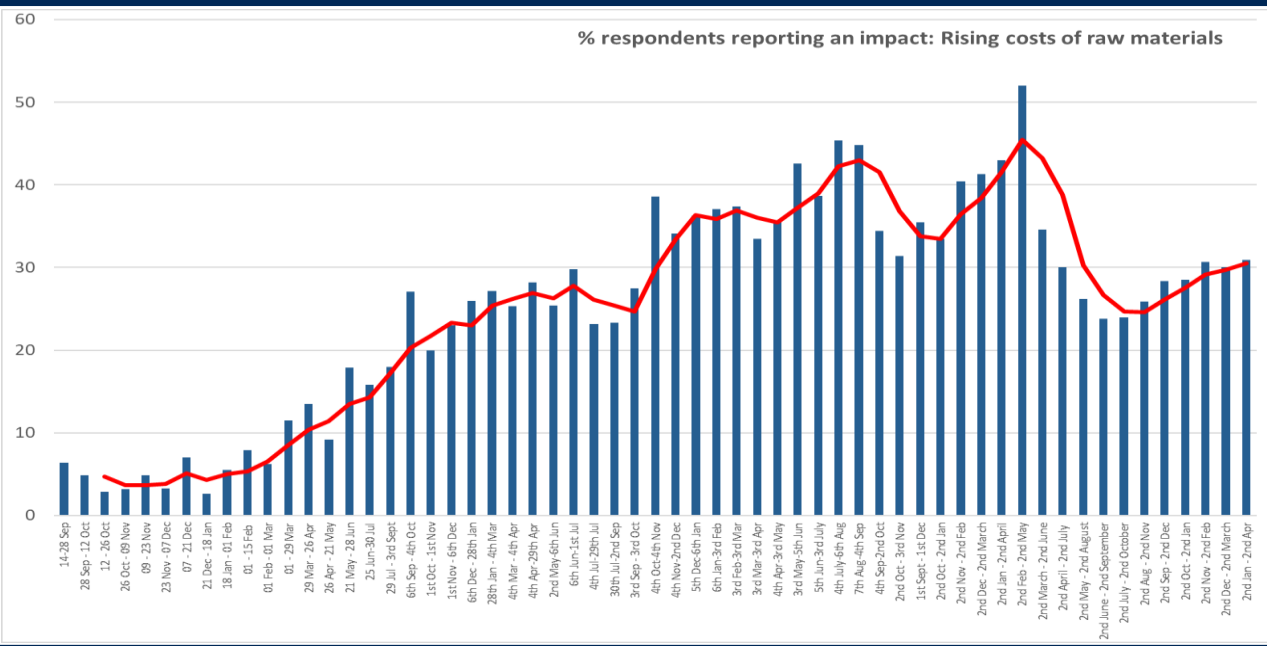
## Percentage stating decreased sales (Red line = moving average)



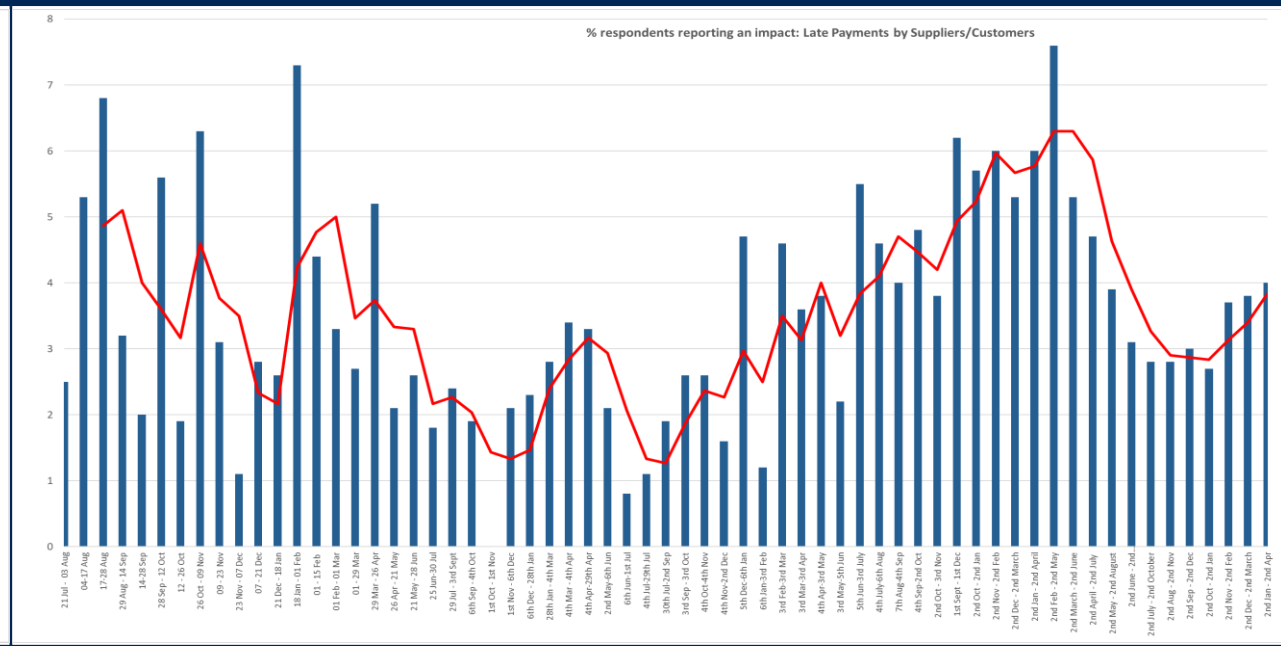
## Percentage stating increased sales



## Percentage stating rising costs



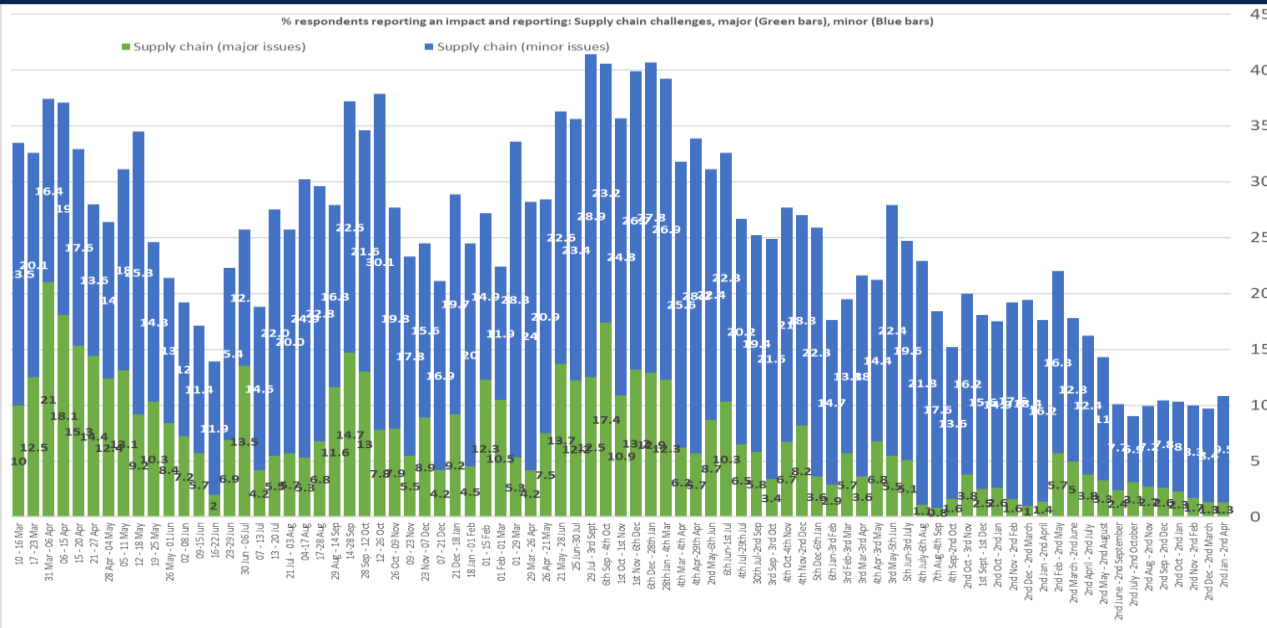
## Percentage stating late payments



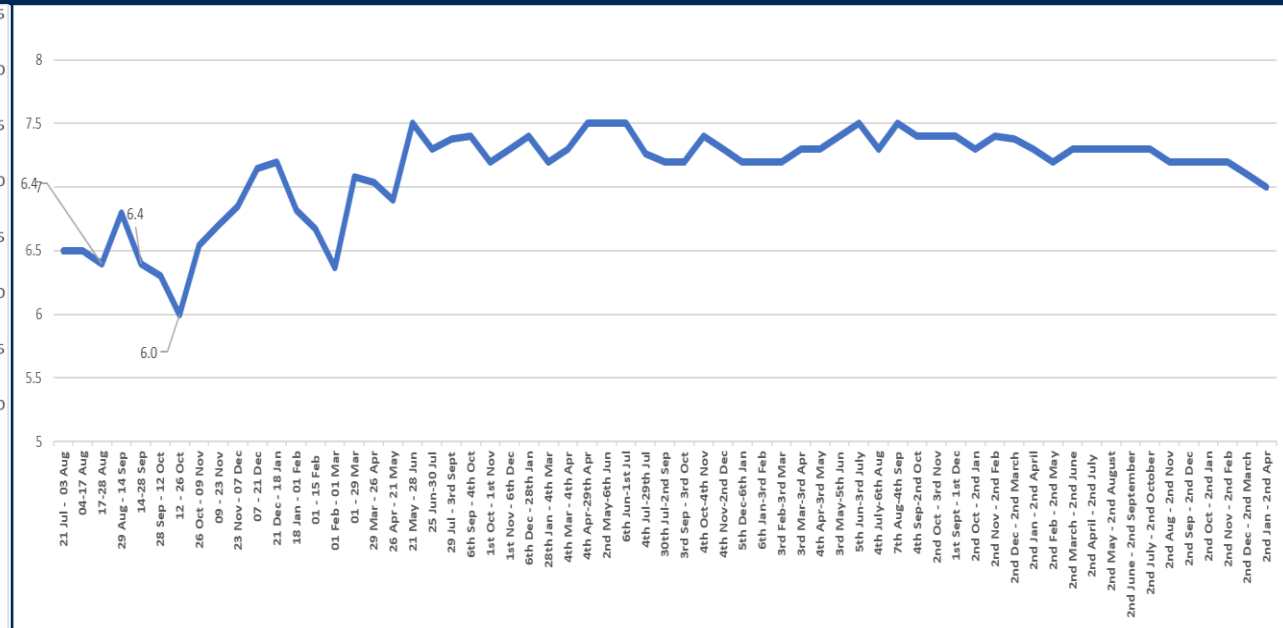


## SURVEY DATA TIME SERIES OF MAIN IMPACTS OF ECONOMY ON BUSINESS

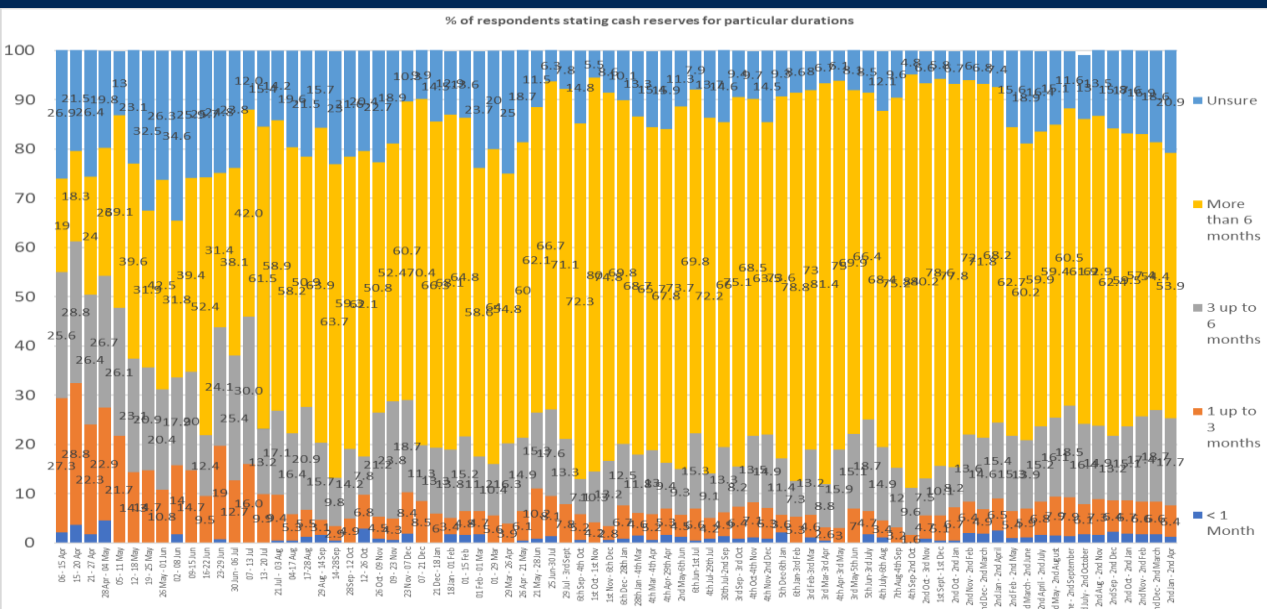
Percentage reporting minor supply chain issues (blue), major issues (green)



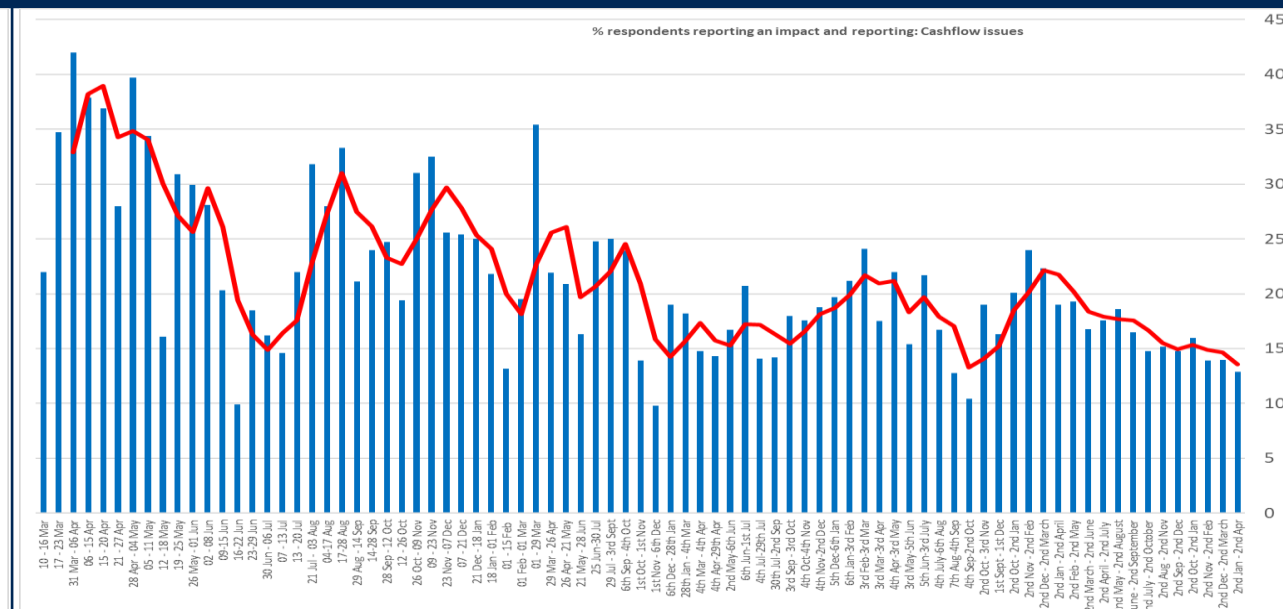
**Aggregate confidence index – 1 low confidence, 10 high confidence**



## Percentage stating cash reserves can sustain certain periods of time

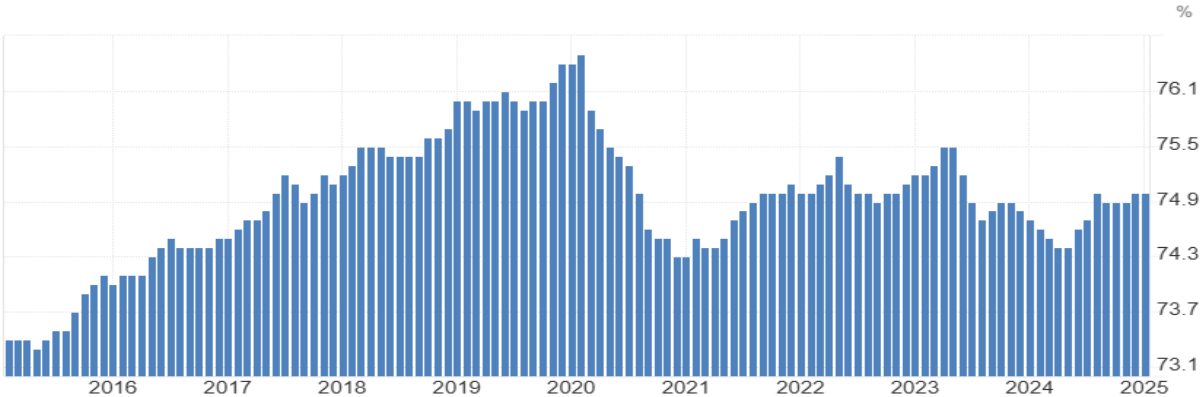


## Percentage reporting cashflow problems



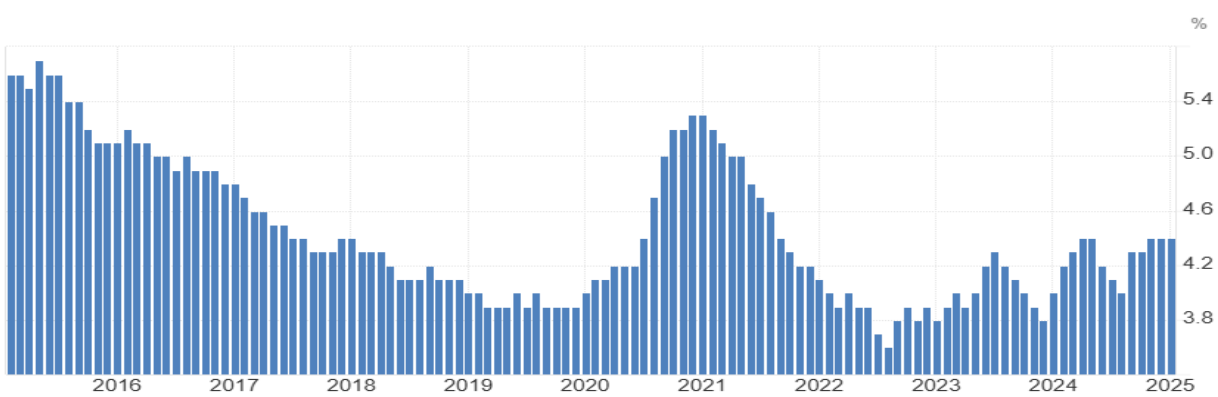
# 4. LABOUR MAKRET HEADLINES – ONS QUARTERLY LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

United Kingdom - Employment Rate 75%



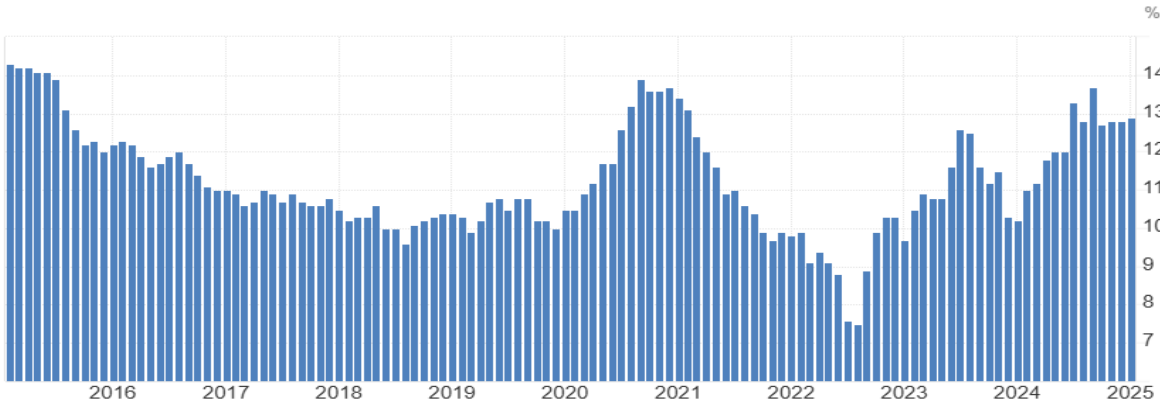
➤ **The Employment Rate** in the United Kingdom remained unchanged at 75 percent in January. Employment Rate in the United Kingdom averaged 71.7 percent from 1971 until 2025, reaching an all time high of 76.5 percent in February of 2020 and a record low of 65.6 percent in April of 1983.

United Kingdom - Unemployment Rate 4.4%



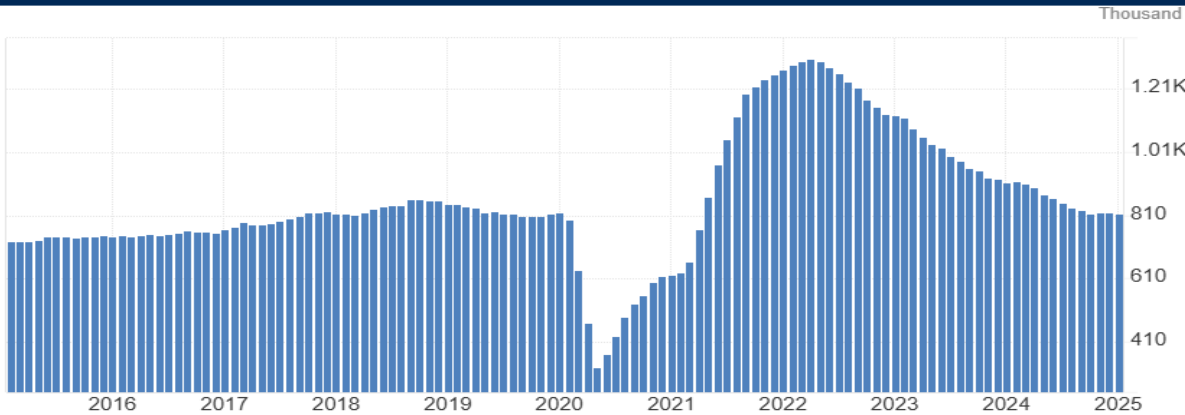
- **The UK's unemployment rate** held steady at 4.4% from November to January 2025, in line with expectations, remaining at its highest level since the three months ending May 2024.
- The number of individuals unemployed for up to 12 months increased, while those unemployed for over 12 months declined. Compared to the same period last year, unemployment rose for both short- and long-term job seekers.
- The number of unemployed individuals grew by 144 thousand to 33.9 million, largely due to a rise in full-time employment. The number of people holding second jobs also increased, now accounting for 3.7% of all employed individuals.

United Kingdom - Youth Unemployment Rate 12.9%



➤ **The Youth Unemployment Rate** in the United Kingdom increased to 12.9 percent in January from 12.8 percent in December of 2024. Youth Unemployment Rate in the United Kingdom averaged 13.2 percent from 1992 until 2025, reaching an all time high of 20.3 percent in November of 2011 and a record low of 7.5 percent in August of 2022.

United Kingdom - Vacancy Notifications 816k



➤ **Job Vacancies** in the United Kingdom decreased to 816k in January from 821k in December of 2024. Job Vacancies in the United Kingdom averaged 697k from 2001 to 2025, reaching an all time high of 1.3m in April of 2022, and a record low of 328k in May of 2020.

# 5. TOURISM, HOSPITALITY, AND LEISURE

## VisitBritain - Domestic Consumer Sentiment Tracker Fieldwork 3rd – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2025

VisitBritain published results of the sentiment tracker in August 2023. This tracker looks to understand the impact of major events such as the cost-of-living crisis on the UK public’s intent to take overnight trips within the UK and abroad. It addresses areas such as current attitude to travel, intention to travel for daytrips, short breaks and holidays, when they plan to book and take the trip, destination and accommodation chosen.

The key headlines are:

- Perception of the ‘worst still to come’ regarding cost-of-living crisis is at 53% which is up 2% from February 2025.
- Proportion intending a UK overnight trip in the next 12 months is 80% down 1% since February 2025.
- Proportion intending an overseas overnight trip in the next 12 months 63%, down 3% since February 2025.
- The top 3 barriers to an overnight stay in the UK are UK weather, rising cost of living and personal finances .
- Top 3 areas for an overnight stay April to June 2025 is Southwest, London, Scotland. North-West is in 4<sup>th</sup> spot., consistent with Feb 2025.
- Top 3 areas for overnight stays July to September 2025 is South-West, London. North-West consistent with February 2025.
- Top 3 destinations April to June 2025 are city or large town, countryside or village, coastal/seaside town consistent with Feb 2025.
- Top 3 destination July to September 2025 are coastal/seaside town, large town, countryside or village.
- Hotels remain top accommodation choice for both February to Mar 2025 and April to June 2025 consistent with those seen in January 2025.

<https://www.visitbritain.org/research-insights/domestic-sentiment-tracker>

## Hotel Performance monitor – December 2024 (Source Marketing Manchester)

**Occupancy rates.** The occupancy rates in February for Greater Manchester (76%) and Manchester city centre (74%) were both below 2024 rates (77% for both geographies).

**Average daily rates.** The average daily rates for Greater Manchester (£83) and Manchester city centre (£92), were both above 2024 levels for their respective geographies (£81 and £90).

**The revenue per available room (REVPAR)** for Greater Manchester (£63) and Manchester city centre (£69) were both on par with 2024 levels (£63 and £69) due to the decrease in occupancy rate but increase in average daily rate.

	GM Occupancy	GM Average Rate	GM REVPAR	MCR Centre Occupancy	MCR Centre Average rate	MCR Centre REVPAR
	%	£	£	%	£	£
2025	76%	£83	£63	74%	£92	£69
2024	77%	£81	£63	77%	£90	£69

## Marketing Manchester Campaigns Impact / Reach

➤ 120.4million across all channels



## 6. GOVERNMENT MEASURES, OTHER DATA AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THEME	ANNOUNCEMENT / ISSUE - (HOLD CTRL AND CLICK ON <LINKS> TO ACCESS THE FULL ITEM)
US Tariffs and the UK Government response.	<p>The US Government has announced an additional 10% tariff on top of existing US duties, fees and taxes on imports from the UK. This will come into effect on 5 April at 00:01 EST. These additional tariffs do not apply to US imports of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Steel and aluminium articles and automobiles/automobile parts, which are subject to separate additional 25% tariffs.</li><li>• Copper, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors and lumber.</li><li>• Energy, energy products and other minerals not available in the US. <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a></li></ul> <p>The UK Government is seeking views from UK business on the potential impacts of any future UK tariffs in response to the US government’s recent tariff announcements. <b>Businesses and stakeholders can respond <a href="#">here</a>. The consultation will close on the 1<sup>st</sup> May.</b></p>
Aerospace contract awarded to Airbus UK.	<p>Airbus UK has been awarded a European Space Agency contract to engineer the landing platform to safely deliver a rover onto Mars. The British-built rover will explore Mars in 2030 and support 200 high-skilled jobs. <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a></p>
UK Seafood in Vietnam.	<p>Vietnam has granted market access for British live seafood products. The opportunity will unlock exporting potential to a country who are among the highest consumers of seafood per capita and the highest in South-East Asia. <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a></p>
National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority.	<p>NISA has been launched and will accelerate the delivery of major government projects as well as develop and implement the 10-year infrastructure strategy. The Authority will look to fix the foundations of the infrastructure system by bringing strategy and delivery under one roof. Alongside this, the Government has published the <b>Teal Book</b>, the definitive guide for successful project delivery in Government, which is set to transform how projects are planned, managed, and delivered. <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a></p>
Collaboration between the UK and Singapore.	<p>Minister for Investment Poppy Gustafsson has signed a new partnership with OCBC, Singapore’s second largest bank, to facilitate £10 billion of investment into the sectors which include energy, infrastructure and real estate. <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a></p>
New Innovate UK Executive Chair.	<p>Tech entrepreneur and Metail founder Tom Adeyoola has been selected as the preferred head of Innovate UK and is due to be confirmed by Parliament. Tom Adeyoola brings experience spanning technology, investment, entrepreneurship, and digital transformation. As co-founder of Extend Ventures, he has worked with Innovate UK to improve diversity in grant funding and support underrepresented entrepreneurs. He also serves on the steering board of The Startup Coalition, advocating for high-growth tech businesses across the UK. <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a></p>
Spring Statement	<p>The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, presented her 2025 Spring Statement to Parliament on 26 March and published supporting documents on the gov.uk website. <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a>; and House of Commons Library Summary <a href="#">&lt;Link&gt;</a></p> <p>When the Chancellor finished her statement in the Commons, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) published updated forecasts for the UK’s economic and fiscal outlook. While the Chancellor announced policy measures, this was a much smaller affair than the 2024 Autumn Budget. The Chancellor adjusted spending plans and made some other changes to ensure she continues to meet her “non-negotiable” fiscal rules. The Chancellor said the “world is changing before our eyes” referring to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and uncertainty in global trade policy. She said that the Government’s choices were “delivering security for our country and security for working people”.</p>



## **APPENDIX 1: SURVEY RESPONSE RATES**

**MARCH 2025**

**WITH QUARTERLY DATA FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2025 TO 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2025**

[www.growthco.uk](http://www.growthco.uk)

SURVEY RESPONSE RATES FOR GM OVER TIME VS ONS ENTERPRISE UNIT PROFILE FOR GM (EXCLUDES OUT OF AREA)

Size / Sector (as identified by the business) C = Confidential, 5 or less responses Percentages rounded to nearest figure	GM ONS IDBR Enterpris e Count 2022	MAR 2025	FEB 2025	JAN 2025	Dec 2024	NOV 2024	OCT 2024	SEP 2024	AUG 2024	JUL 2024	JUN 2024	MAY 2024	MAR 2024	FEB 2024	JAN 2024	DEC 2023	NOV 2023	OCT 2023	SEP 2023	AUG 2023
Size-band (employees)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
‘0’ employment to 9 (MICRO)	89%	55%	58%	56%	59%	54%	55%	56%	62%	60%	58%	59%	57%	46%	49%	53%	51%	59%	41%	58%
10 to 49 (SMALL)	9%	25%	24%	23%	20%	24%	25%	26%	24%	23%	24%	24%	26%	27%	22%	13%	20%	16%	24%	16%
50 to 249 (MEDIUM)	2%	13%	12%	14%	15%	15%	13%	12%	9%	11%	6%	7%	9%	9%	7%	14%	16%	13%	19%	13%
250+ (LARGE)	<1%	6%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%	C	7%	12%	10%	8%	10%	10%	11%	8%	7%	10%	6%
UNKNOWN	-	-	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	8%	12%	8%	C	C	6%	8%
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
BUSINESS FINANCIAL, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	27%	14%	13%	13%	12%	12%	12%	12%	10%	8%	10%	10%	10%	13%	14%	14%	18%	11%	22%	15%
CONSTRUCTION	12%	C	C	C	6%	6%	C	C	C	C	C	C	6%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
DIGITAL, CREATIVE, TECHNOLOGY	6%	21%	23%	23%	24%	25%	24%	21%	21%	22%	18%	16%	13%	18%	19%	22%	23%	23%	24%	23%
EDUCATION	2%	C	6%	C	8%	9%	8%	6%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
ENGINEERING	2%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
UTILITIES, ENERGY, WATER, WASTE, GREEN TECH	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	6%	6%	6%	7%	8%	10%	6%	7%	C	C	C	C	8%
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE	C	7%	6%	C	C	6%	7%	9%	9%	8%	8%	7%	8%	C	C	C	6%	C	6%	C
HOSPITALITY, TOURISM, & SPORT	7%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	6%	7%	6%	7%	C	C	5%	7%	6%	10%	C	8%
LOGISTICS	5%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	6%	C
MANUFACTURING (excluding Engineering)	3%	18%	17%	15%	13%	12%	13%	13%	15%	17%	16%	16%	21%	26%	20%	19%	18%	19%	17%	22%
LIFE SCIENCES	N/A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
RETAIL & WHOLESALE	18%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	6%	7%	9%	9%	9%	9%	11%	8%	7%	9%	C	6%
OTHER SERVICES (excluding SIC unknown)	4%	11%	7%	6%	6%	C	6%	6%	8%	6%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C

LOCAL AUTHORITY SURVEY RESPONSE (EXCLUDING RESPONSES OUTSIDE AREA): PROFILE BY SIZE, SECTOR, AND LOCATION

Size / Sector (as identified by the business) <u>C = Confidential, 5 or less responses</u> <i>Percentages rounded to nearest figure</i>	GM ONS IDBR Enterprise Count 2022	GM	Bolton	Bury	Manchester	Oldham	Rochdale	Salford	Stockport	Tameside	Trafford	Wigan
Size-band (employees)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
‘0’ employment to 9 (MICRO)	89%	55%	49%	58%	57%	45%	53%	63%	52%	56%	66%	46%
10 to 49 (SMALL)	9%	25%	28%	36%	20%	33%	31%	24%	28%	22%	19%	36%
50 to 249 (MEDIUM)	2%	13%	21%	C	16%	15%	12%	7%	15%	15%	9%	12%
250+ (LARGE)	<1%	6%	C	6%	7%	8%	4%	6%	6%	7%	6%	7%
UNKNOWN	-	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C



**APPENDIX 2:  
GROWTH SURVEY DETAILED RESULTS,  
LOCAL AUTHORITY AND EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION DATA**

**MARCH 2025**

**WITH QUARTERLY DATA FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2025 TO 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2025**

[www.growthco.uk](http://www.growthco.uk)



# OGS: BUSINESS CONFIDENCE INDEX (GC-BCI)

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

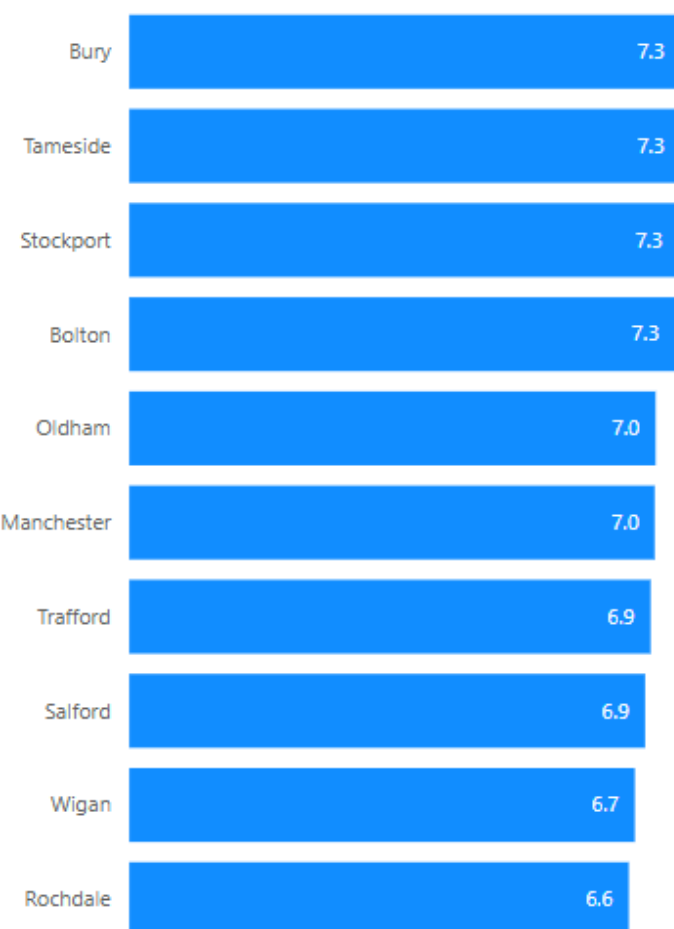
Submitted Date

HOME

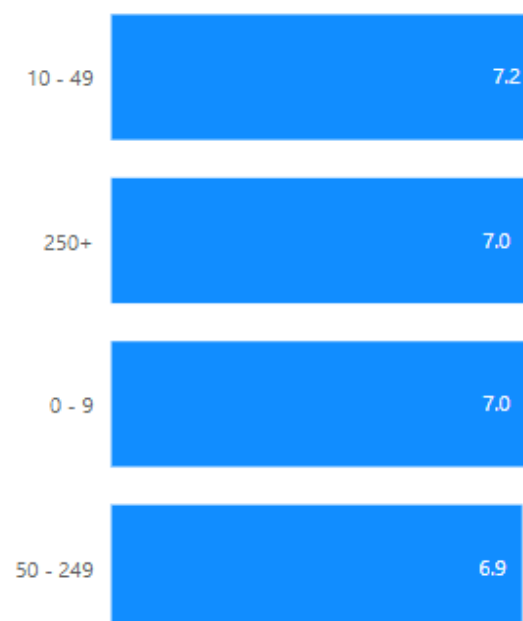
Responses

776

GC-BCI by LA# (1 low - 10 high)



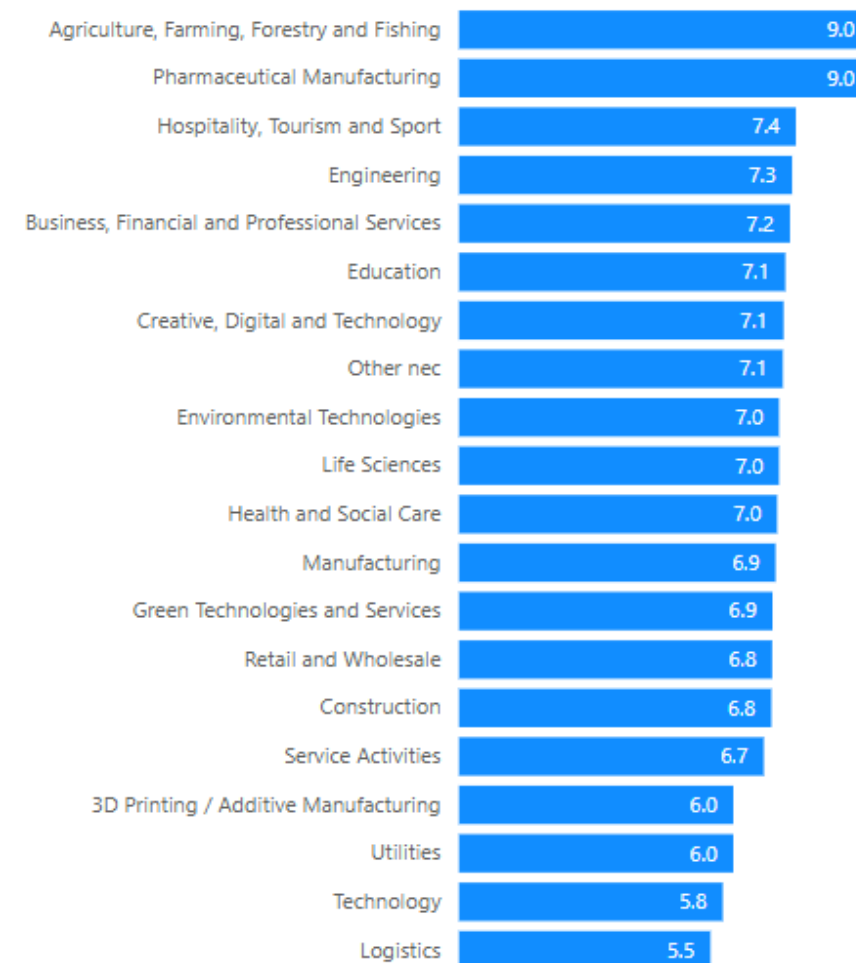
GC-BCI by size - employees (1 low - 10 high)



GC-BCI average score (1 low - 10 high)

7.0

GC-BCI by sector (1 low - 10 high)



# OGS: OPTIMISIM - PROFITABILITY / TURNOVER / CAP-EX SPENDING

Responses

776

Respondents

656

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All



All



All



02/01/2025



02/04/2025



HOME

Expectations for profitability increase (%)

Expectations for turnover increase (%)

Expectations for cap-ex spending increase (%)

Increase

49%

Increase

60%

Don't know / no response / refused (no...

37%

Don't know / no response / refused (no...

32%

Don't know / no response / refused (no...

28%

Stay the same

33%

Stay the same

15%

Stay the same

11%

Increase

26%

Decrease

Decrease

Decrease

...

# OGS: CHALLENGES AND FUTURE SUPPORT NEEDS

Responses  
776

Respondents  
656

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

All

02/01/2025

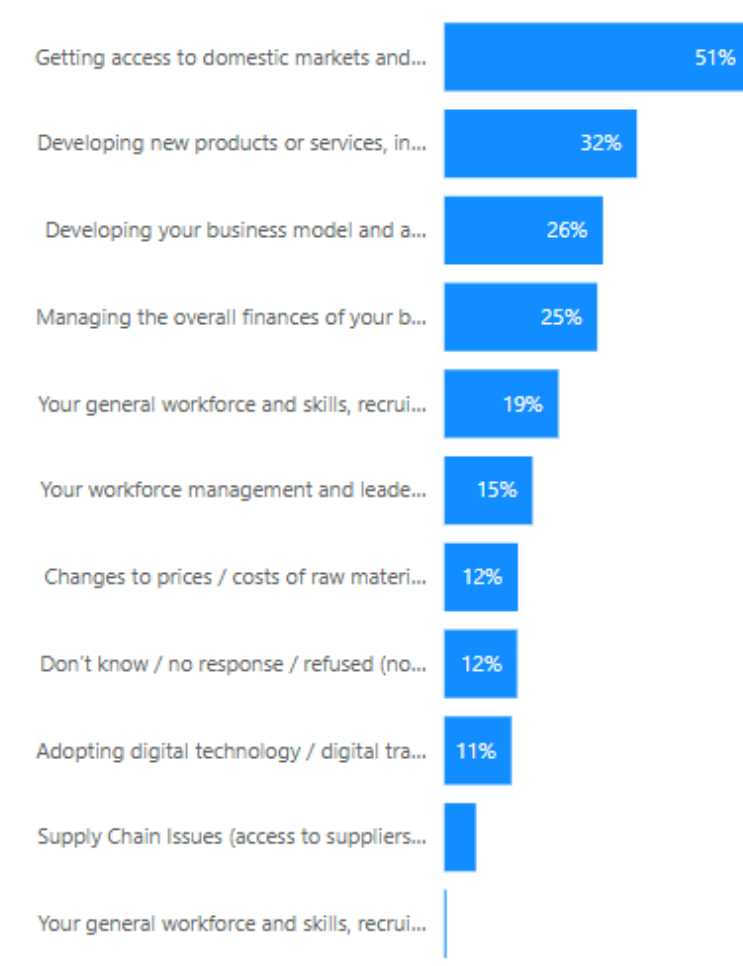
02/04/2025

HOME

Main economic impacts faced in last 3 months (%)



Main current challenges facing the organisation (%)



Future support needs in year ahead (%)



# OGS: INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT

Responses

776

Respondents

656

[HOME](#)

Local Authority

All

Sector

All

Size Band

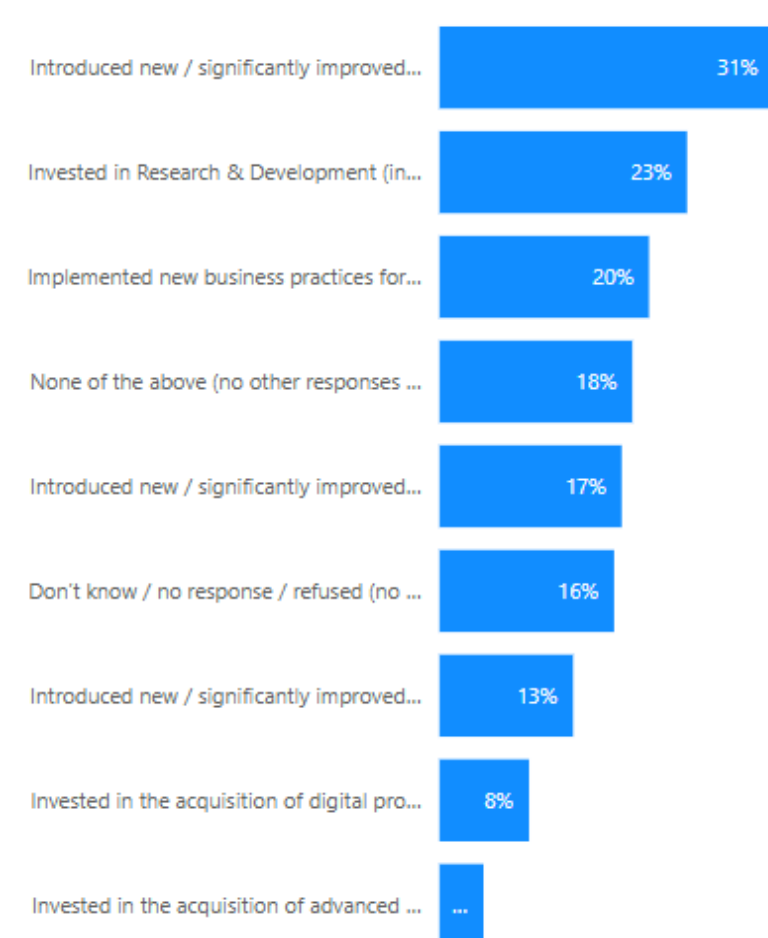
All

Submitted Date

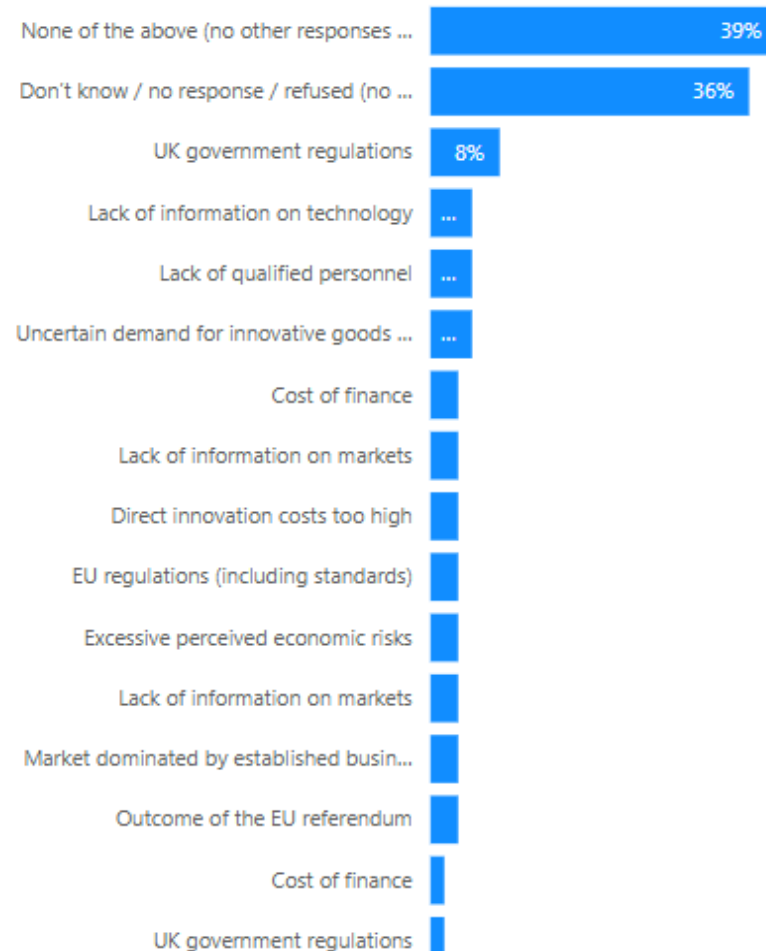
02/01/2025

02/04/2025

## Innovation activities in last year (%)



## Main barriers to Innovation (%)



## Looking to increase investment in ... (%)



# OGS: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - BY TYPE AND BARRIERS TO ADOPTION

Responses  
776

Respondents  
656

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

02/01/2025

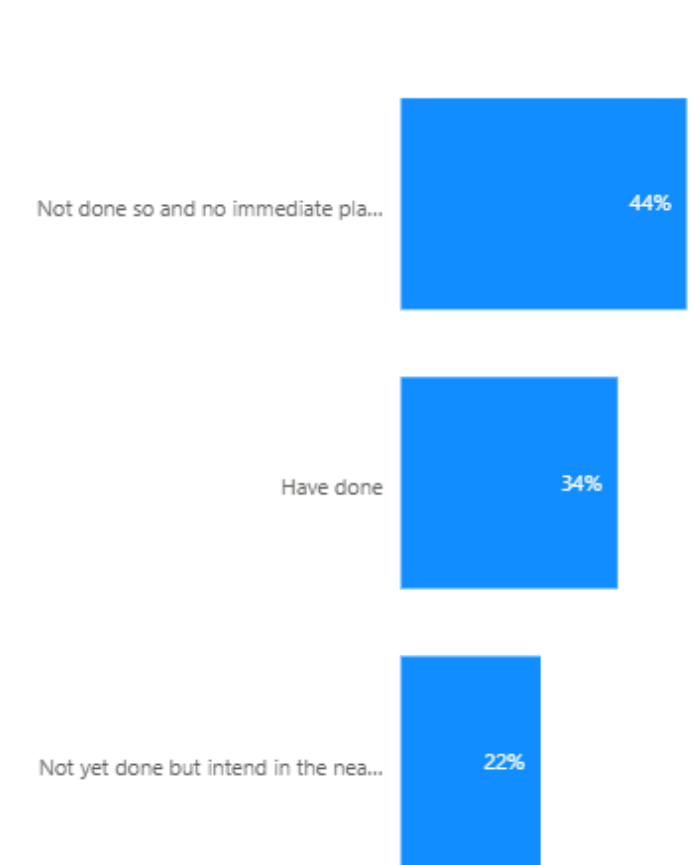
02/04/2025

HOME

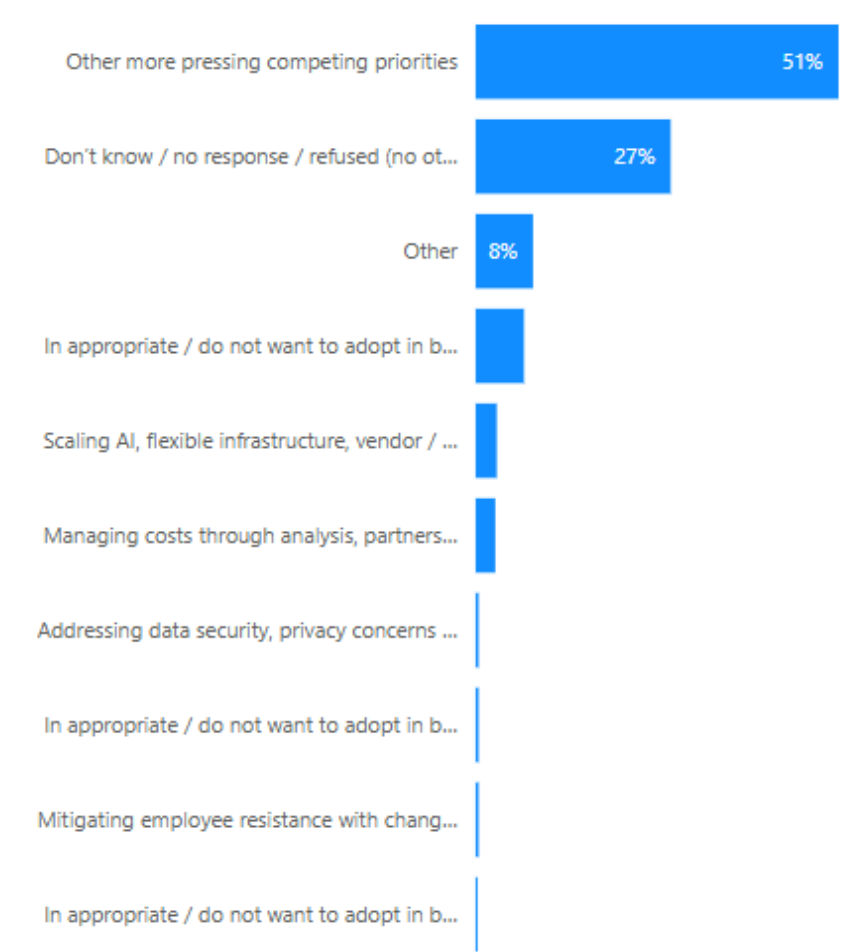
Which areas of AI implemented (%)



Adopted AI into business (%)



AI - What is holding up plans (%)



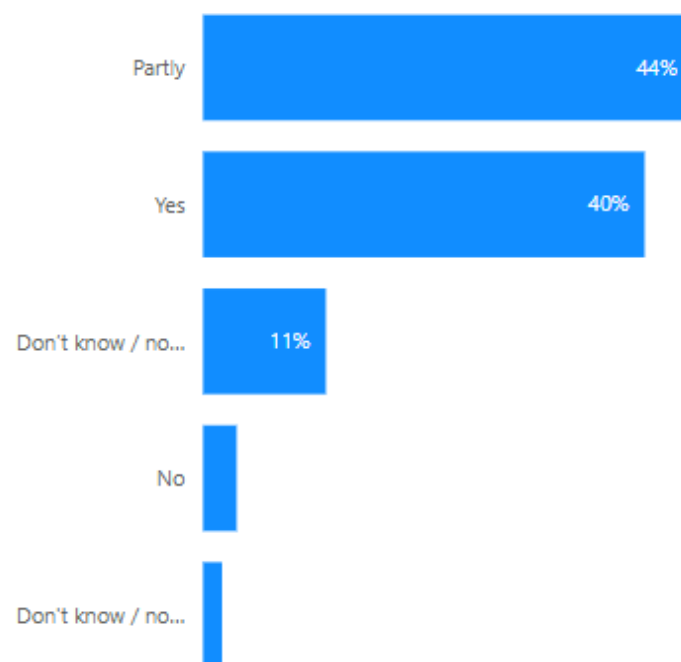


Local Authority	Sector	Size Band	Submitted Date	
All	All	All	02/01/2025	02/04/2025

## Technical and practical skills gaps (%)



## Current workforce skills at right level by size (%)



## Current workforce skills at right level - average (%)

38.9

## People and personal skills gaps (%)



# OGS: SOCIAL VALUE

Responses

776

Respondents

656

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

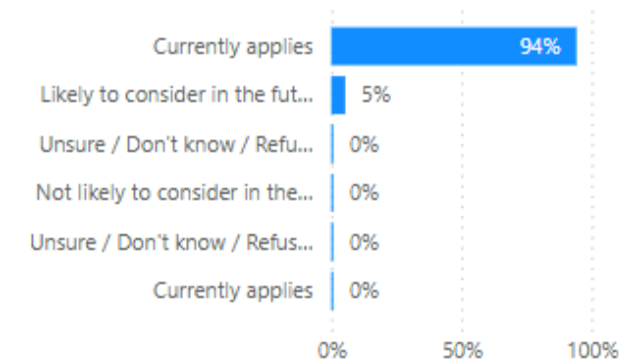
All

02/01/2025

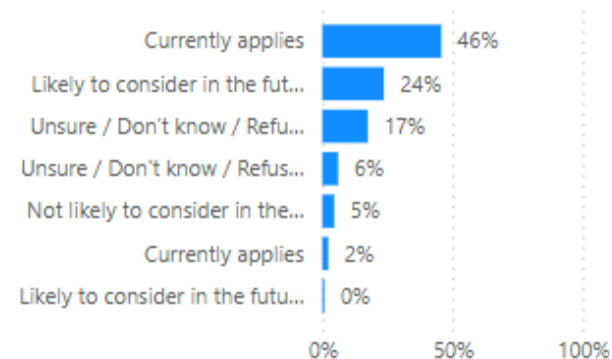
02/04/2025

HOME

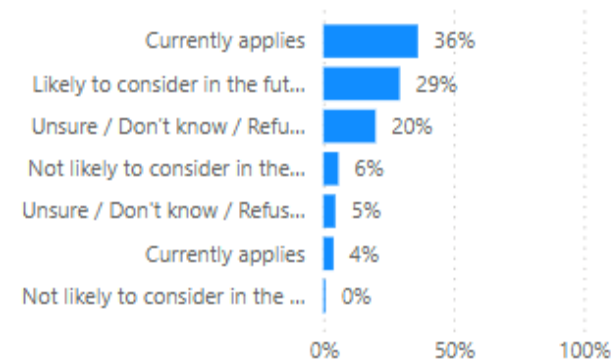
## Guarantee at least 16 hours (%)



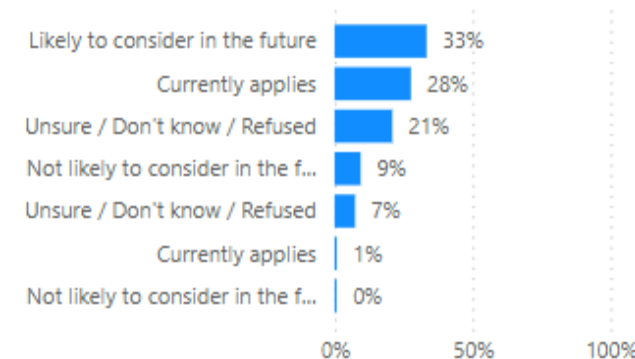
## Pay real living wage (%)



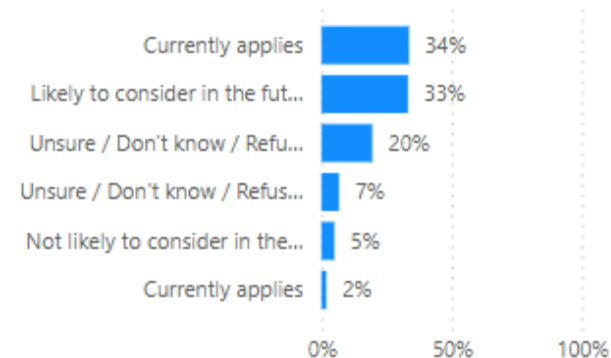
## Flexible working options (%)



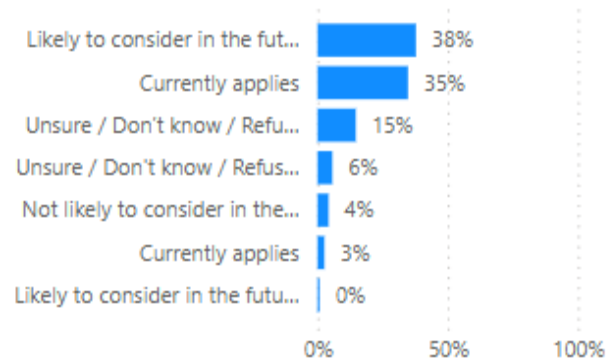
## Involve employees in the direction of business (%)



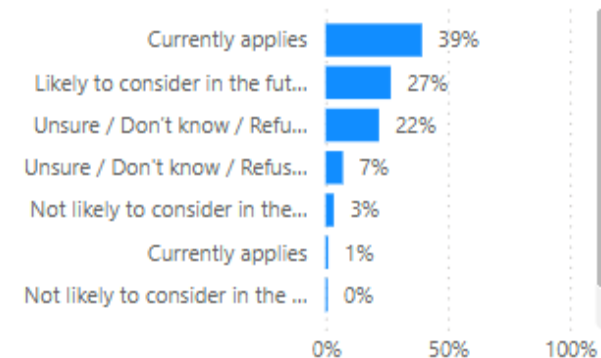
## Looking to increase diversity of workforce (%)



## Invest in leadership (%)



## Promote healthy work practices (%)



## Firms with Social Value

443

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

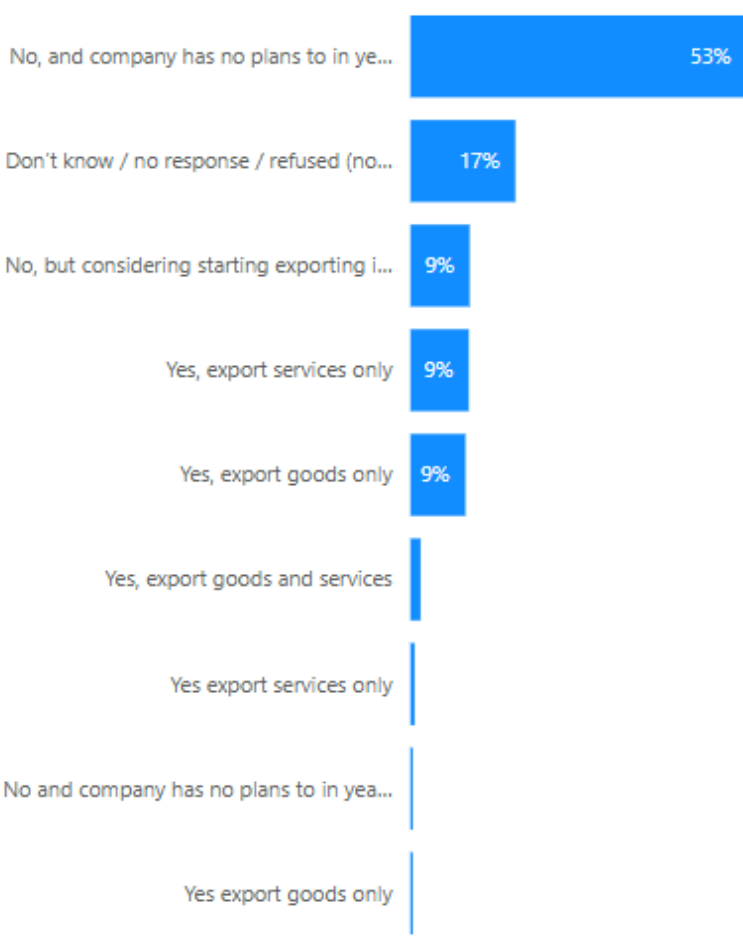
Submitted Date

02/01/2025

02/04/2025

HOME

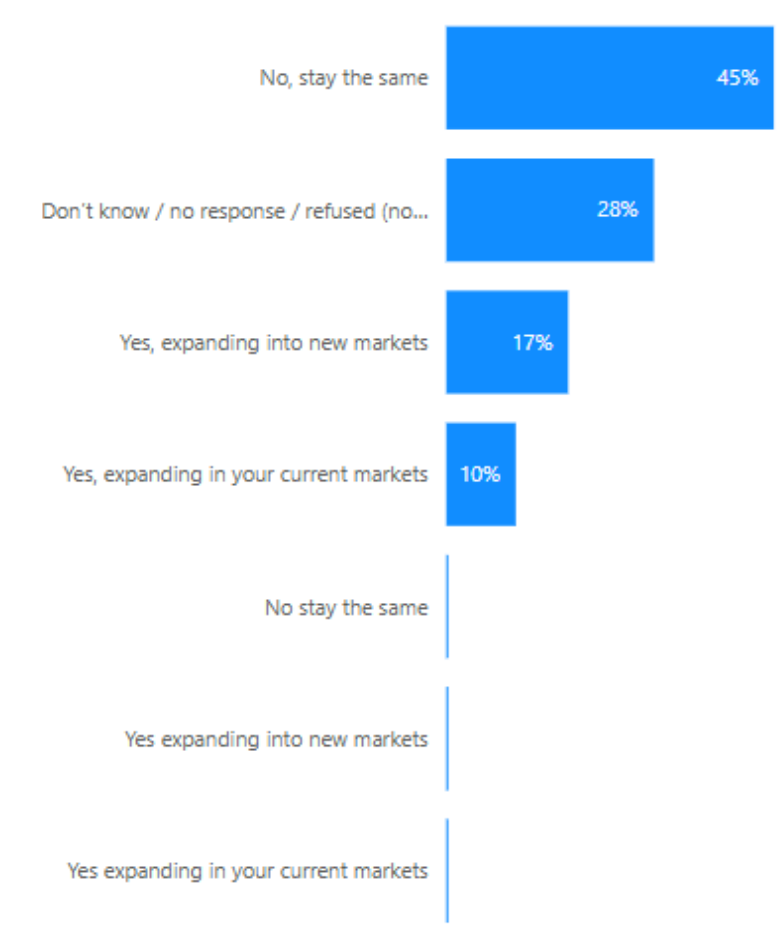
Currently export goods or services (%)



Currently export goods or services by sector (%)



Planning to increase levels of exports next year (%)



# OGS: RECRUITMENT

Responses	Respondents
776	656

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

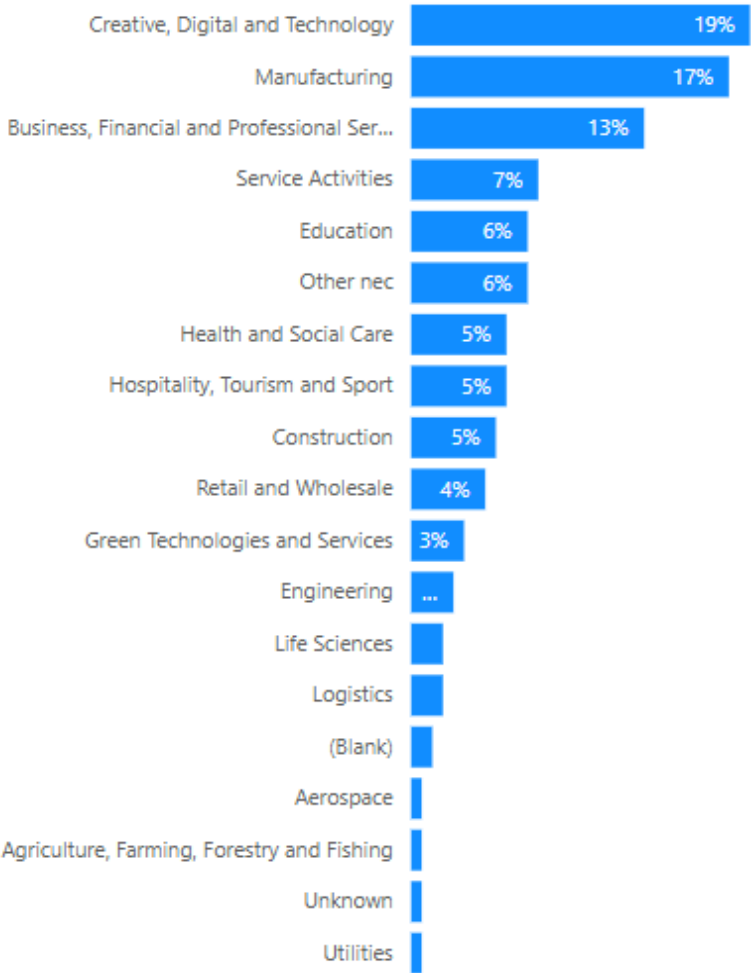
All

02/01/2025

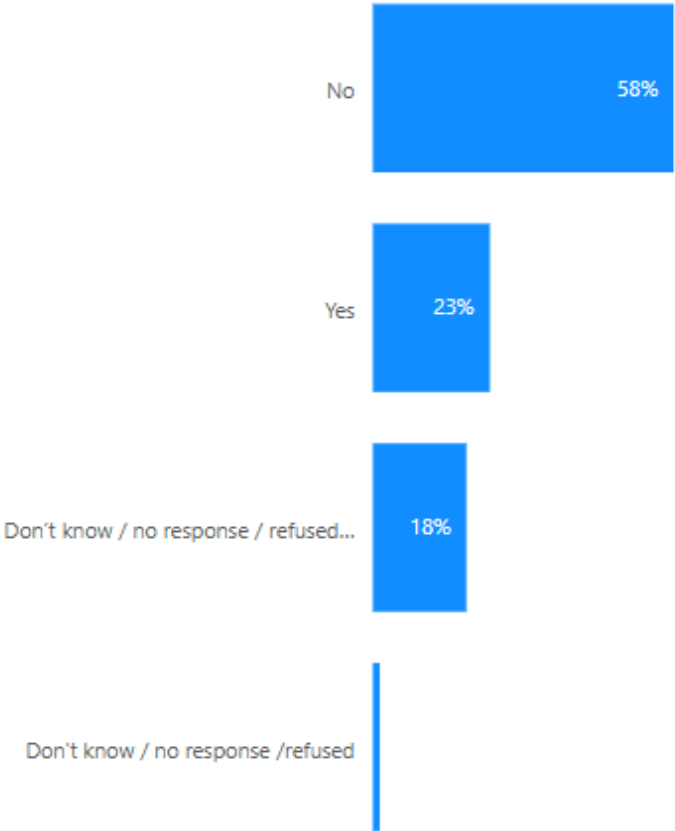
02/04/2025

HOME

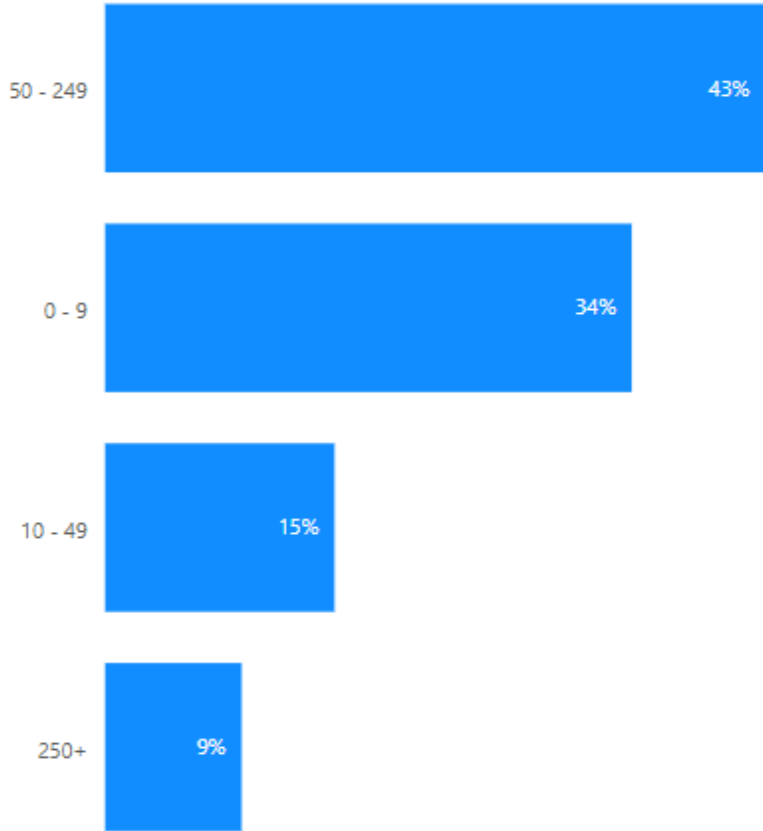
Currently recruiting new staff by Sector (%)



Currently recruiting new staff (%)



Currently recruiting new staff by size band



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - FEMALE LED

Responses

305

Respondents

272

Local Authority

All

Sector

All

Size Band

All

Submitted Date

02/01/2025

02/04/2025

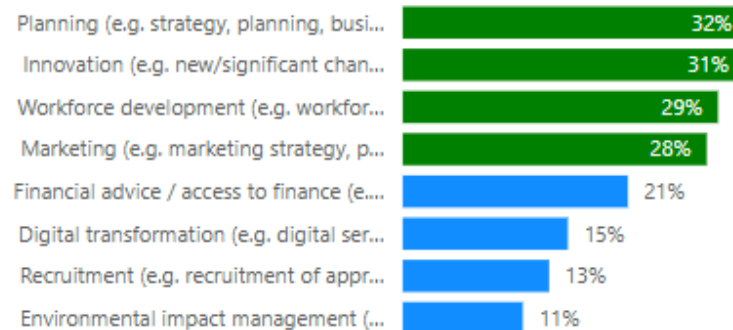
HOME

**Note:** BGH clients only for Female Led

## Economic Impact



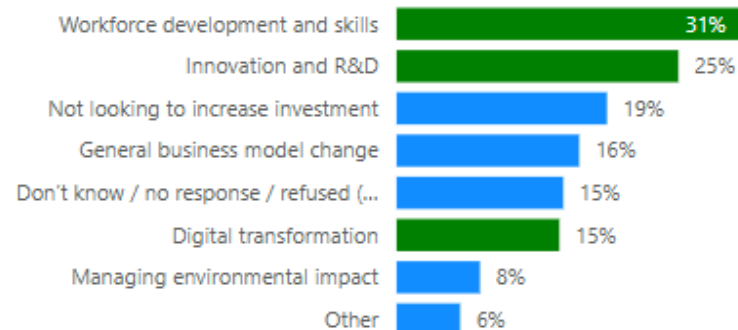
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



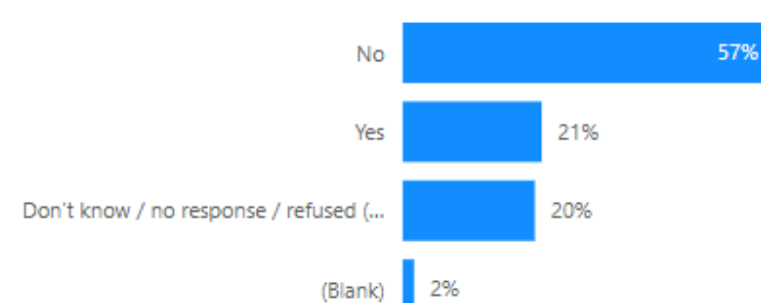
## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)





# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - ETHNIC MINORITY GROUP

Responses  
**117**

Respondents  
**112**

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

All

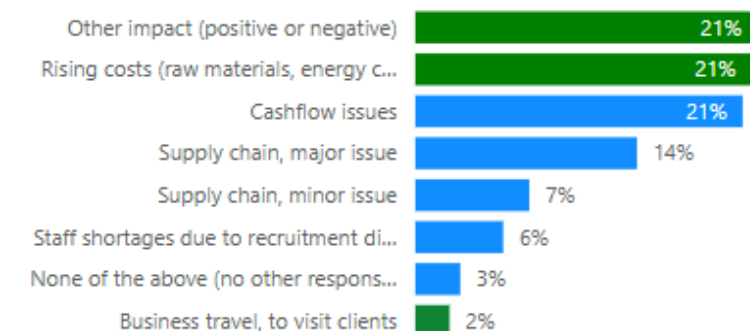
02/01/2025

02/04/2025

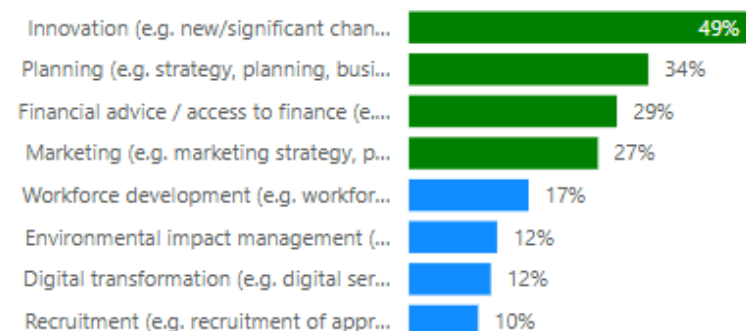
HOME

**Note:** BGH clients only for Ethnic Minority Group

## Economic Impact



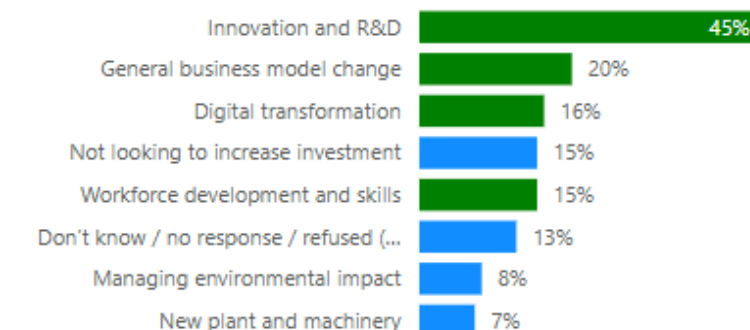
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



## Future support needs (%)



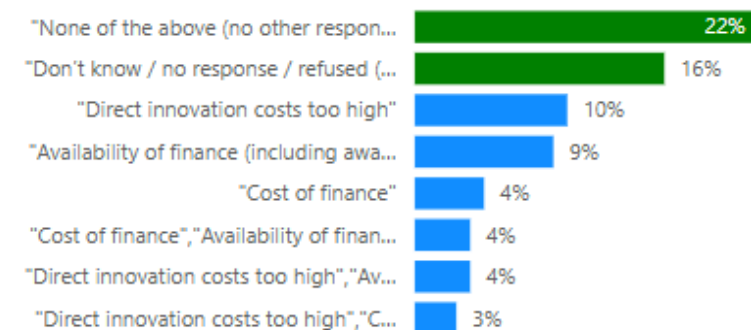
## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - OVER 50s LED INSIGHTS

**Responses****210****Respondents****190****Local Authority**

All

**Sector**

All

**Size Band**

All

**Submitted Date**

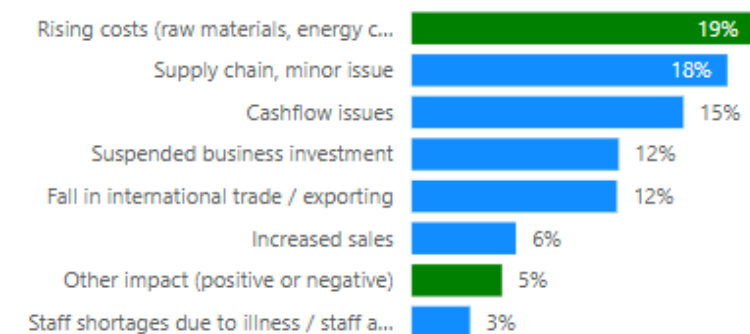
02/01/2025



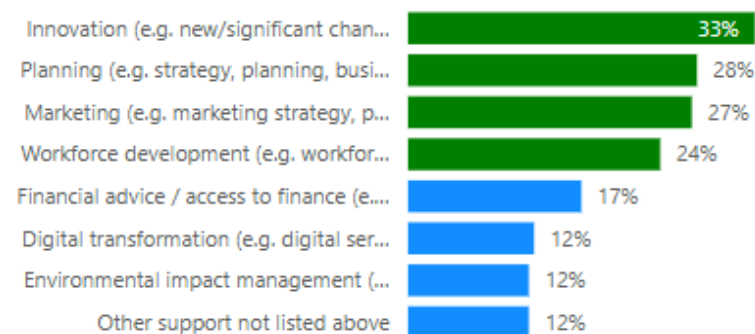
02/04/2025

**HOME****Note:** BGH clients only for Over 50s

## Economic Impact



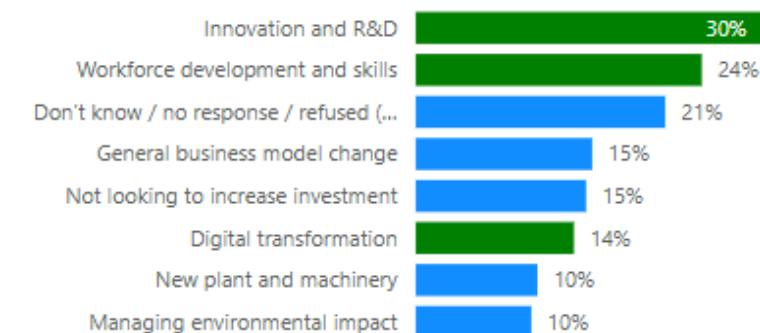
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - DISABILITY LED INSIGHTS

Responses

27

Respondents

25

HOME

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

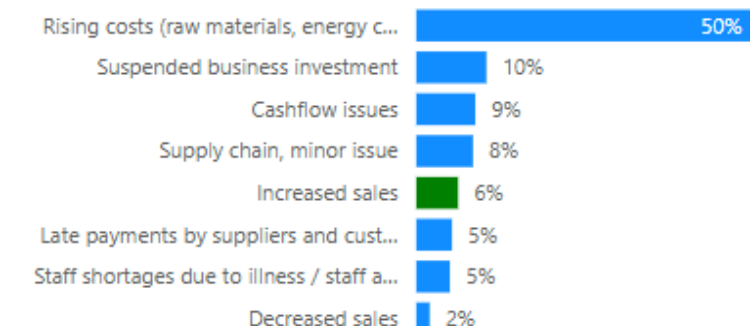
All

02/01/2025

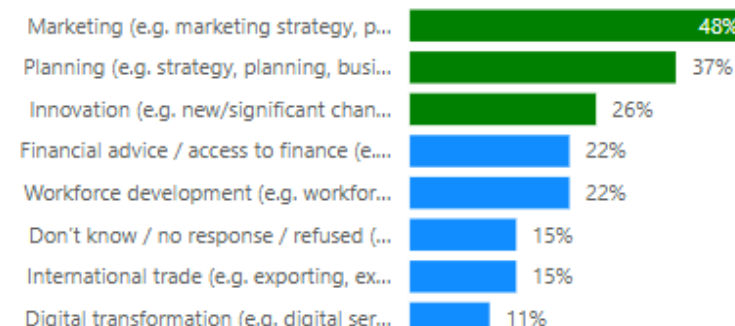
31/03/2025

**Note:** BGH clients only for Disability Led

## Economic Impact



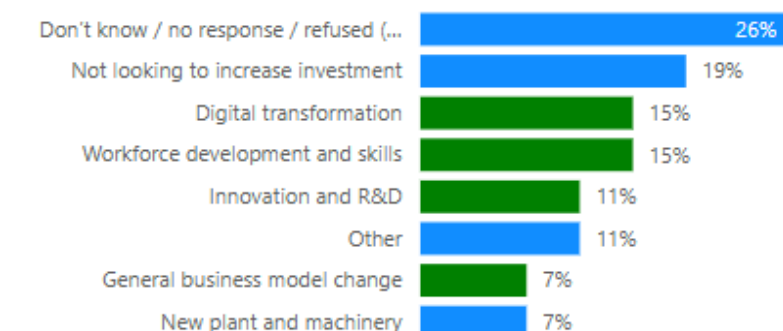
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



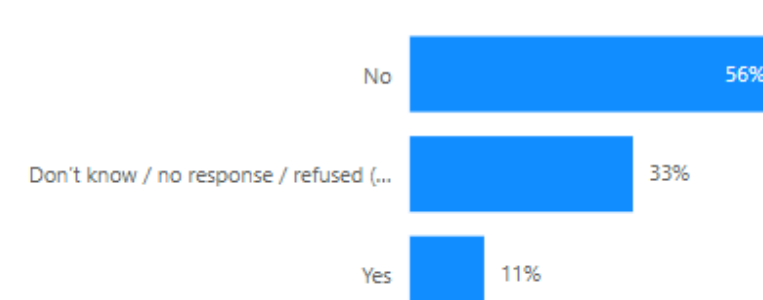
## Future support needs (%)



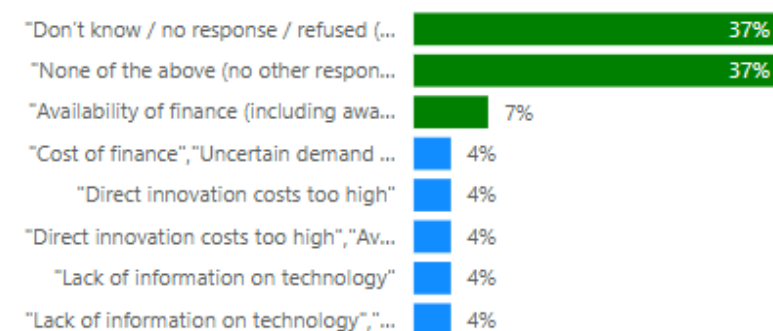
## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - GREATER MANCHESTER SUMMARY

Responses

776

Respondents

656

HOME

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

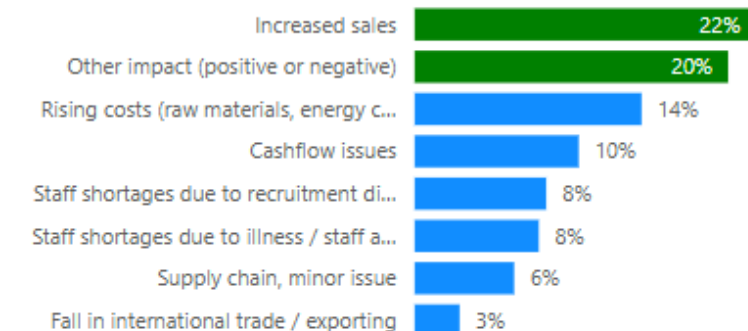
All

All

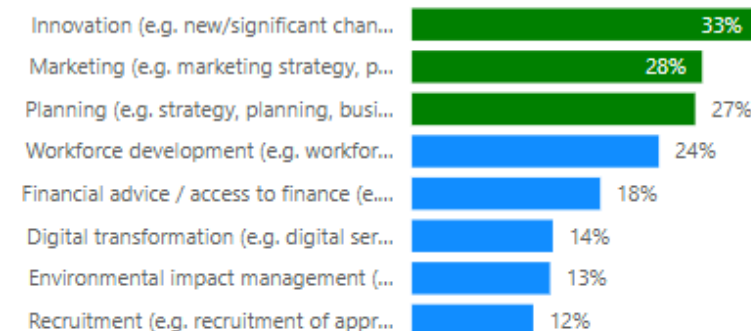
02/01/2025

02/04/2025

## Economic Impact



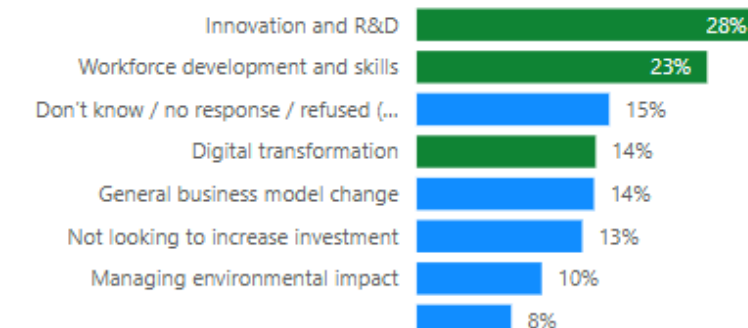
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



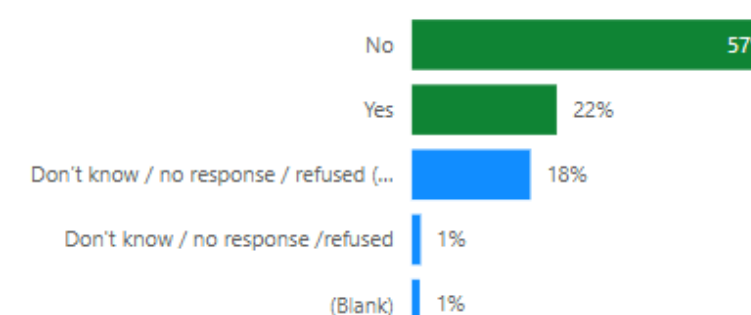
## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - BOLTON

Responses

47

Respondents

40

HOME

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Bolton

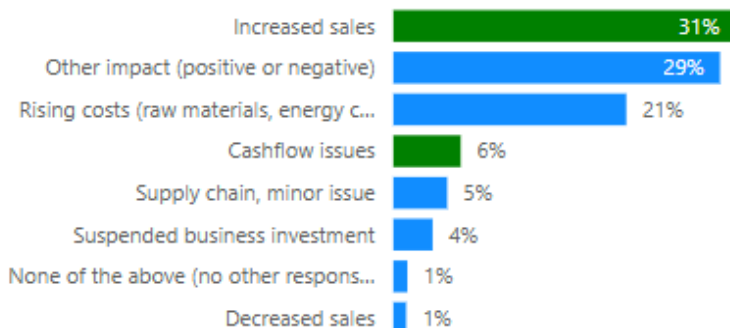
All

All

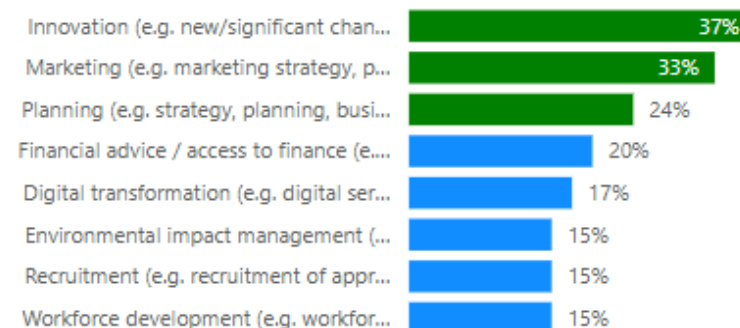
02/01/2025

02/04/2025

## Economic Impact



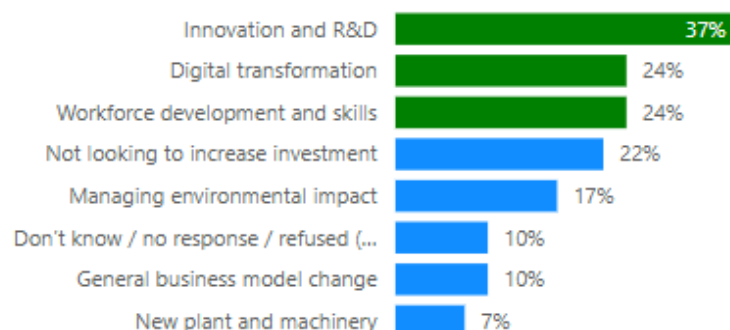
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



## Future support needs (%)



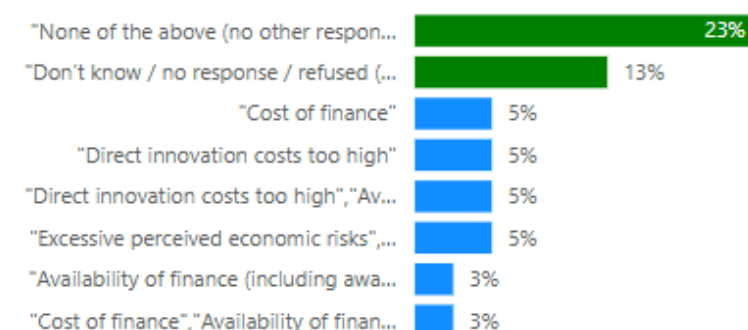
## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)





# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - BURY

Responses

36

Respondents

35

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Bury

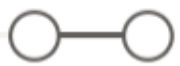
All

All

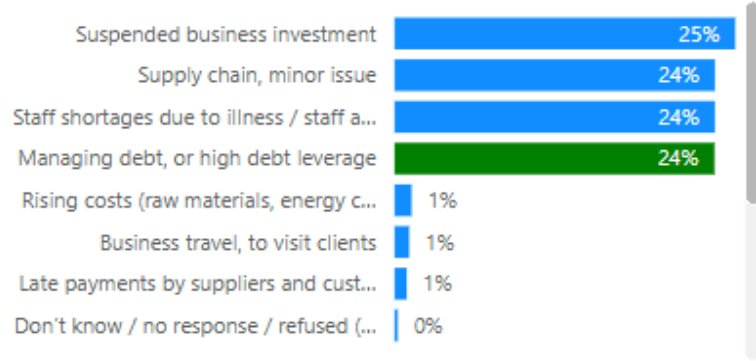
02/01/2025

31/03/2025

HOME



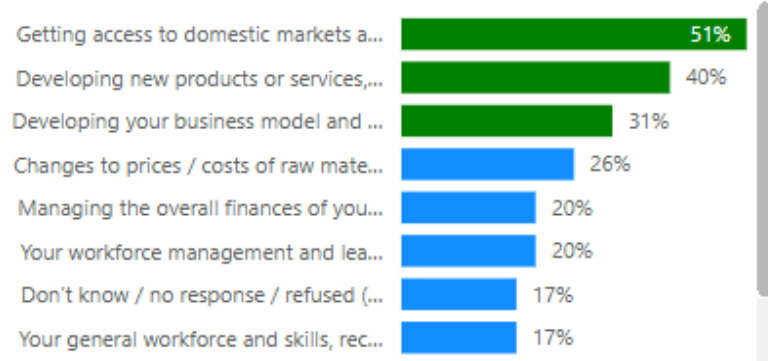
## Economic Impact



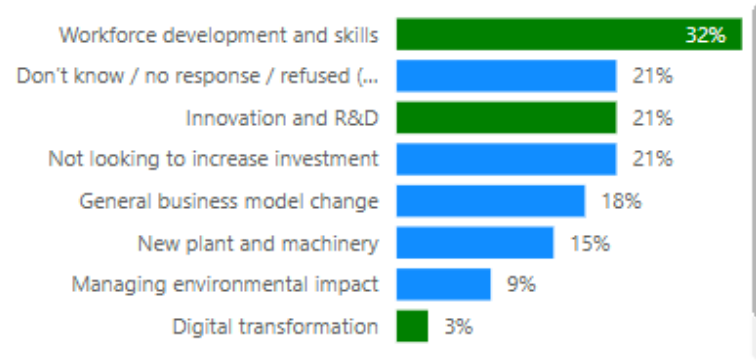
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



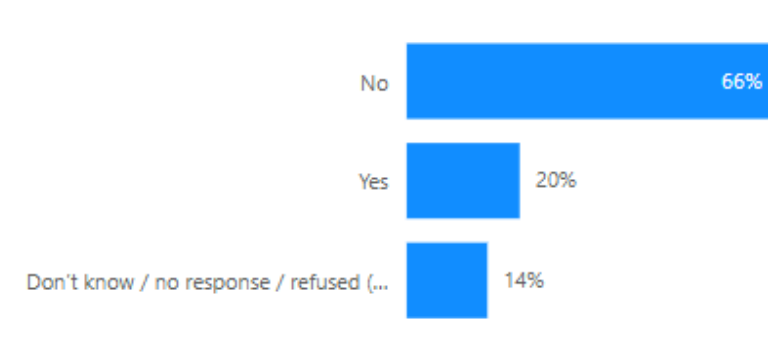
## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - MANCHESTER

Responses

270

Respondents

211

Local Authority

Manchester

Sector

All

Size Band

All

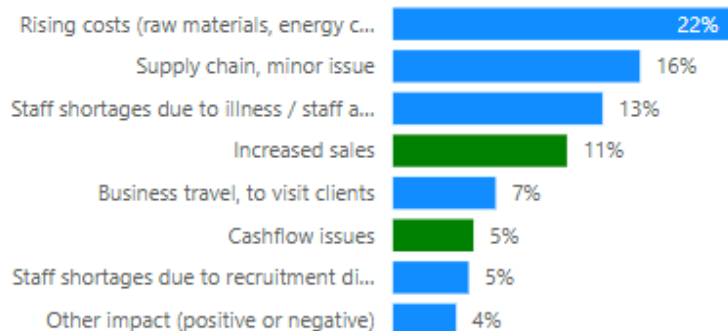
Submitted Date

02/01/2025

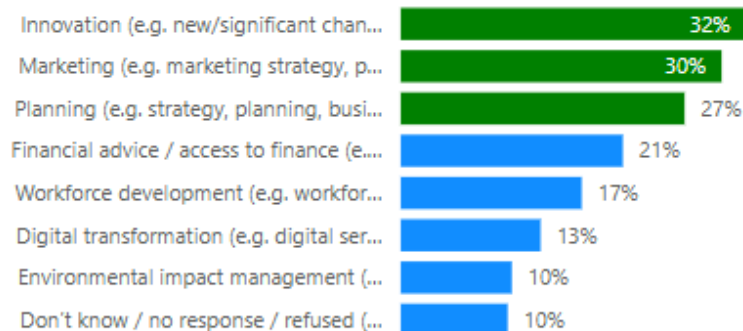
02/04/2025

HOME

## Economic Impact



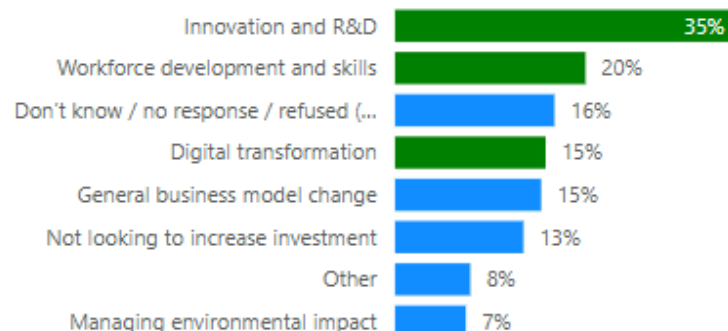
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



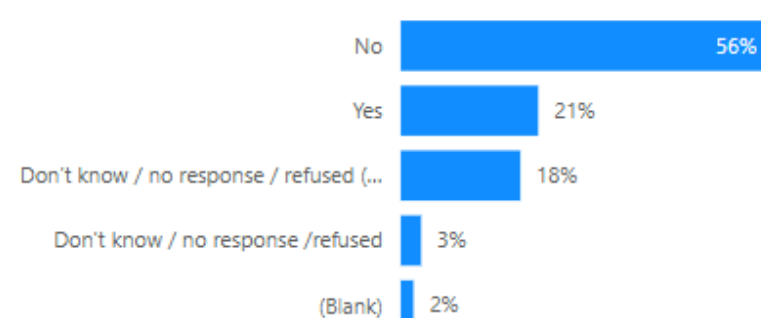
## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - OLDHAM

Responses

40

Respondents

37

HOME

Local Authority

Oldham

Sector

All

Size Band

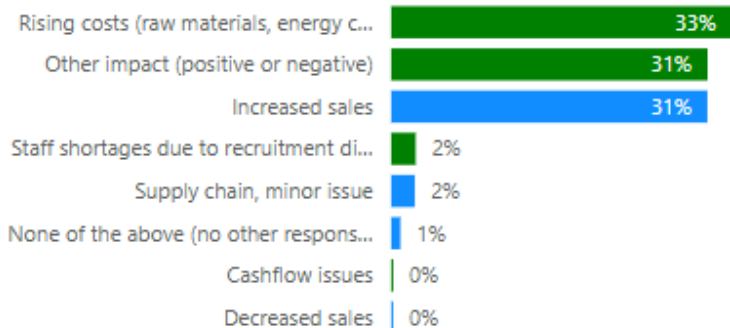
All

Submitted Date

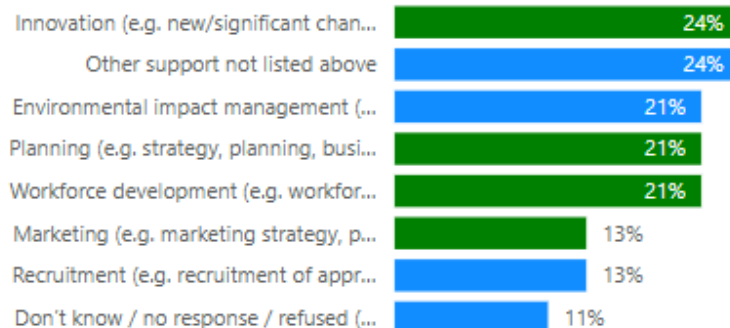
02/01/2025

01/04/2025

## Economic Impact



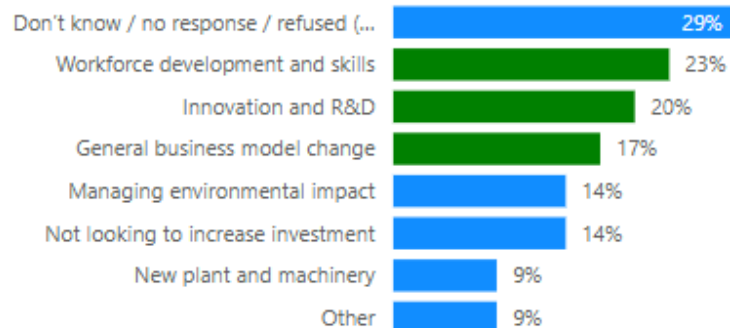
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - ROCHDALE

Responses

49

Respondents

44

Local Authority

Rochdale

Sector

All

Size Band

All

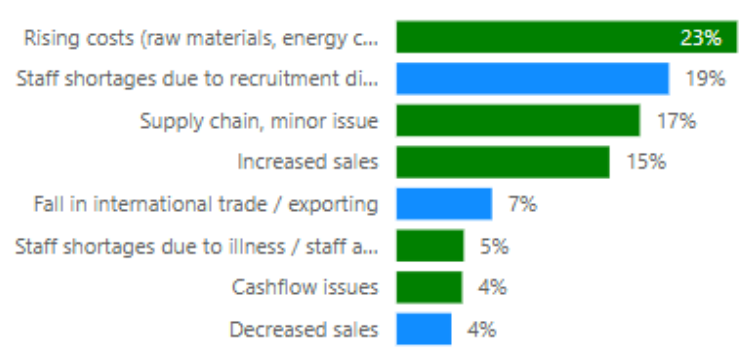
Submitted Date

02/01/2025

01/04/2025

HOME

## Economic Impact



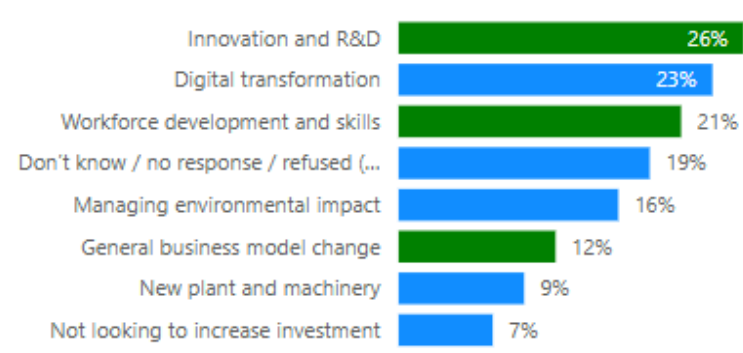
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



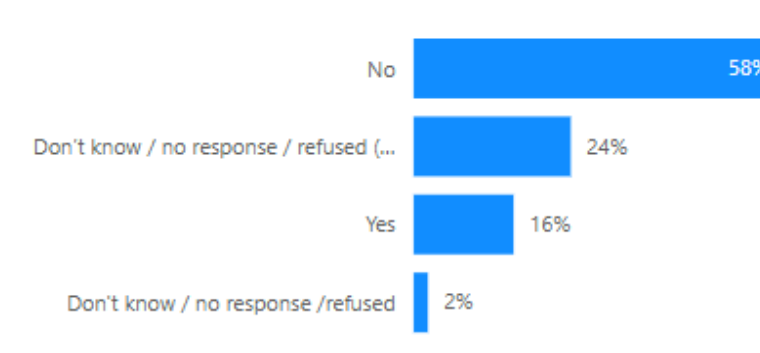
## Future support needs (%)



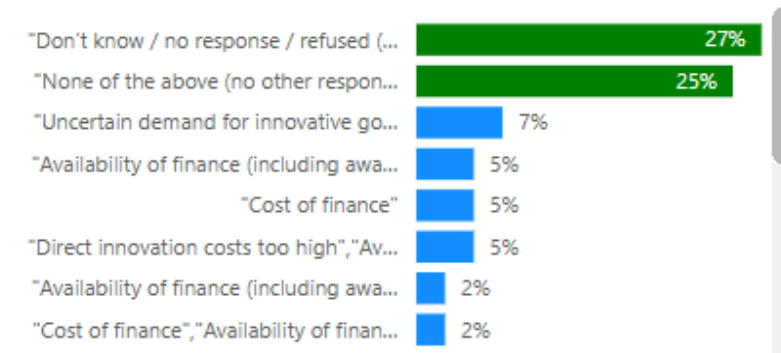
## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - SALFORD

Responses

83

Respondents

68

Local Authority

Salford

Sector

All

Size Band

All

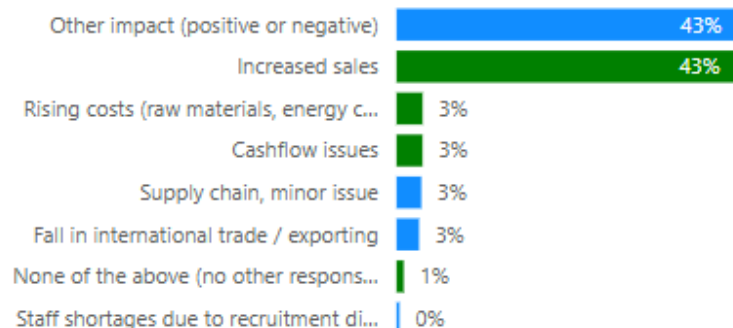
Submitted Date

02/01/2025

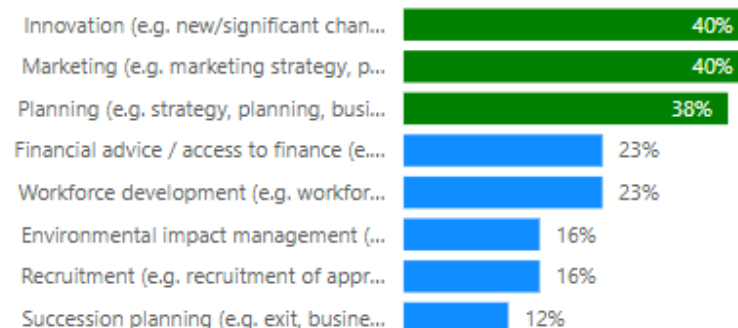
01/04/2025

HOME

## Economic Impact



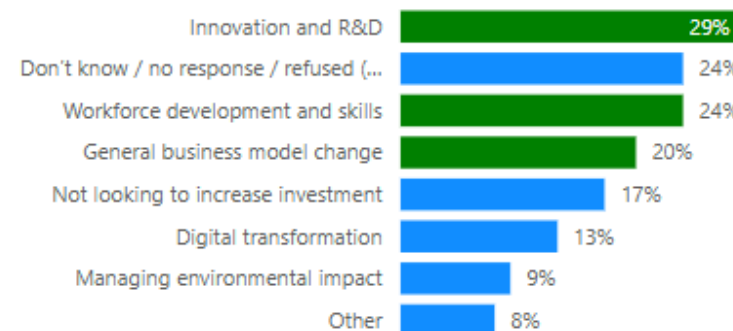
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



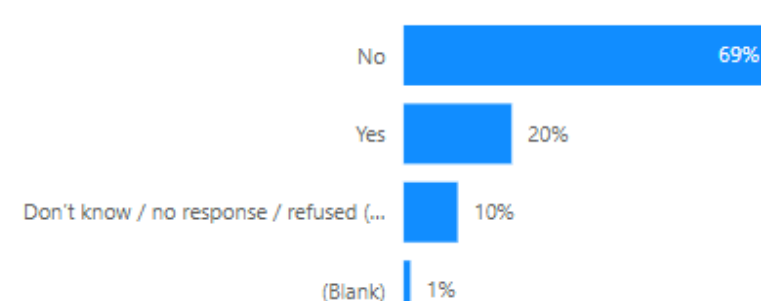
## Future support needs (%)



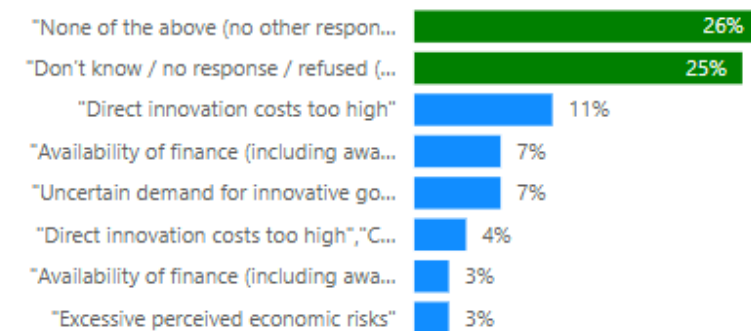
## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - STOCKPORT

Responses

87

Respondents

81

Local Authority

Stockport

Sector

All

Size Band

All

Submitted Date

02/01/2025

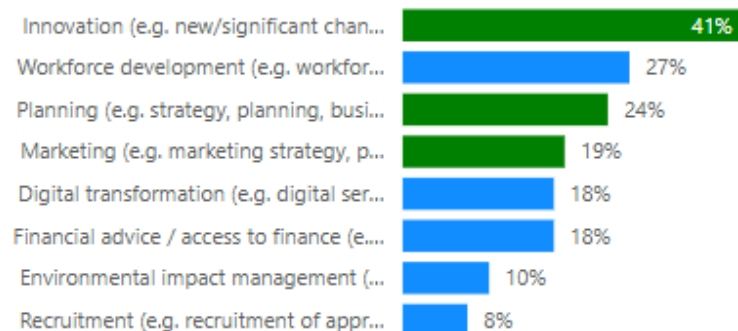
02/04/2025

HOME

## Economic Impact



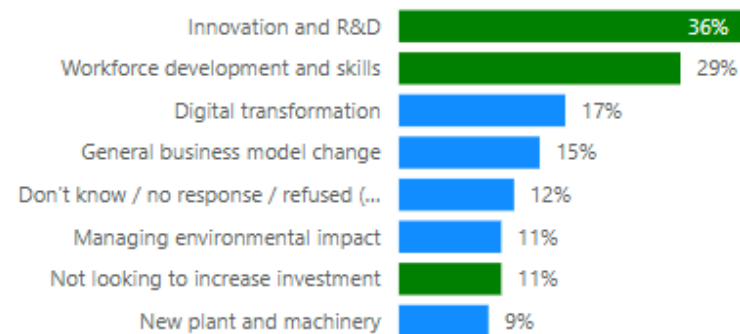
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



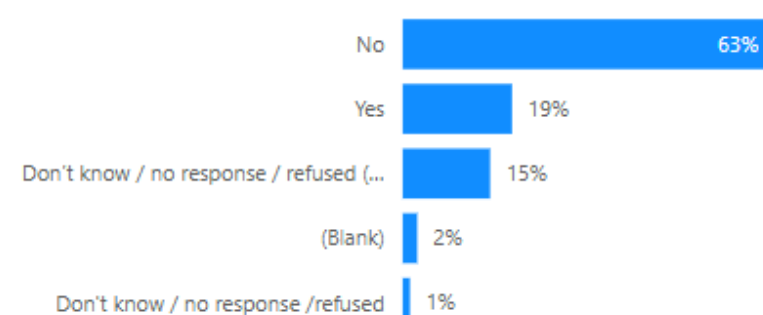
## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)





# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - TAMESIDE

Responses

41

Respondents

38

HOME

Local Authority

Tameside



Sector

All



Size Band

All



Submitted Date

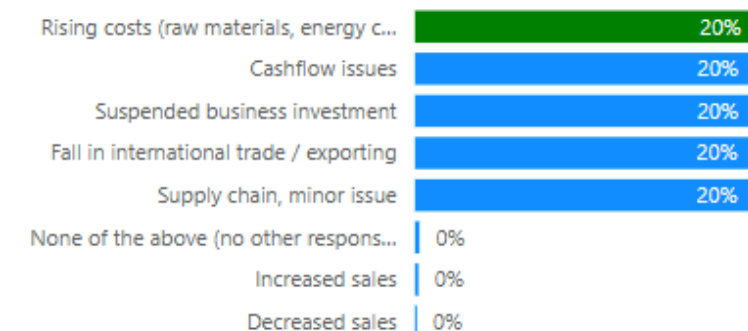
02/01/2025



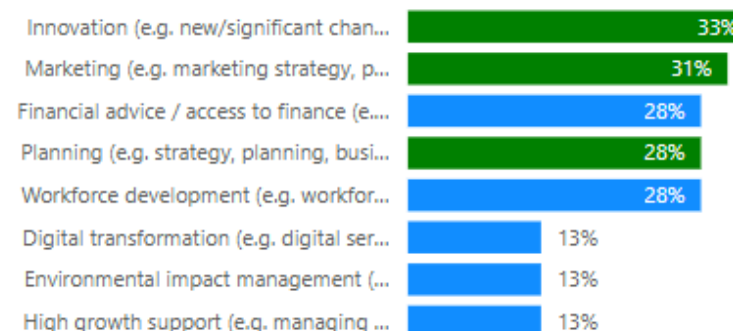
02/04/2025



## Economic Impact



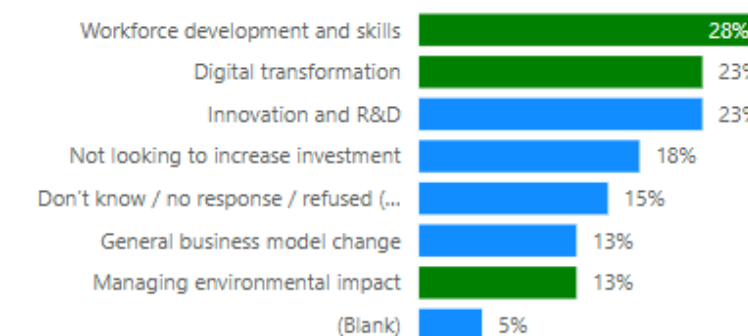
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



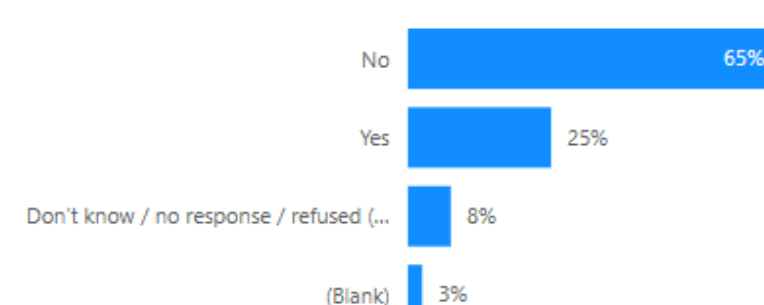
## Future support needs (%)



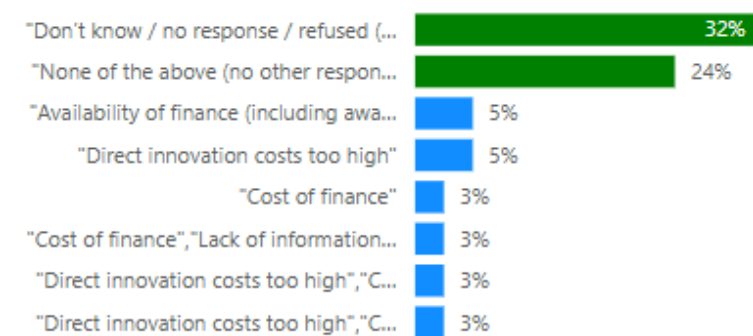
## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)





# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - TRAFFORD

Responses

64

Respondents

56

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Trafford

All

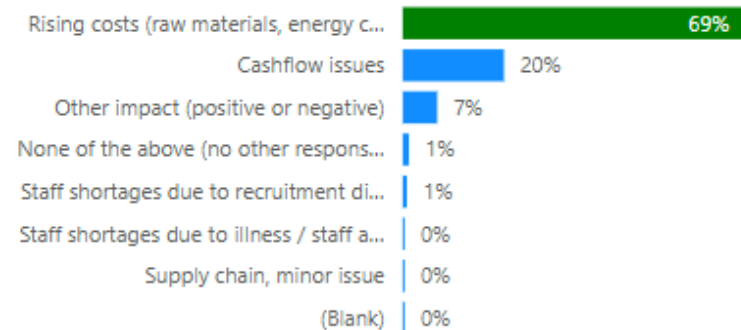
All

02/01/2025

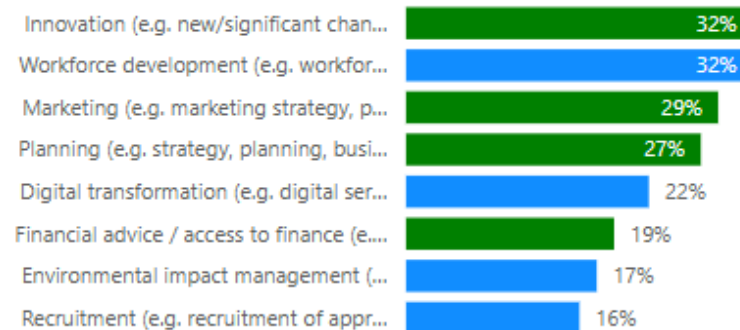
31/03/2025

HOME

## Economic Impact



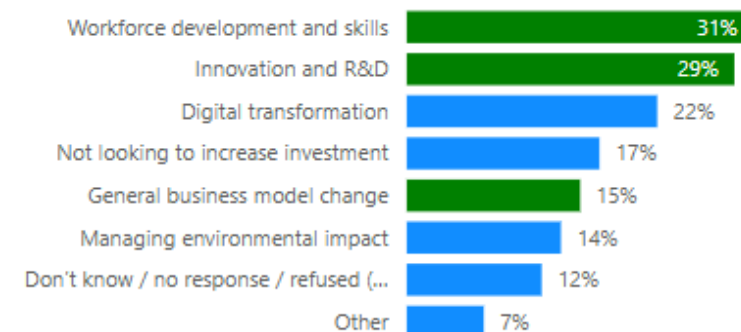
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



## Future support needs (%)



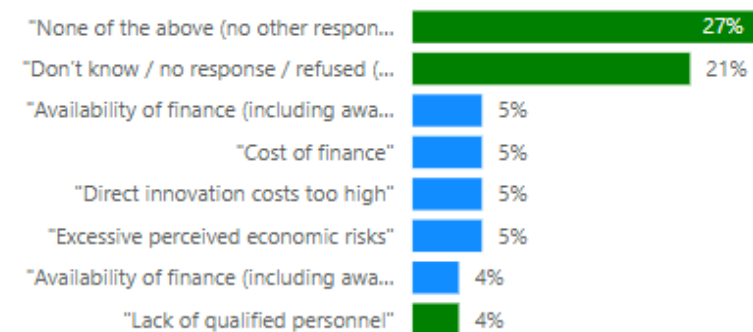
## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)



# OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - WIGAN

Responses

59

Respondents

55

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Wigan

All

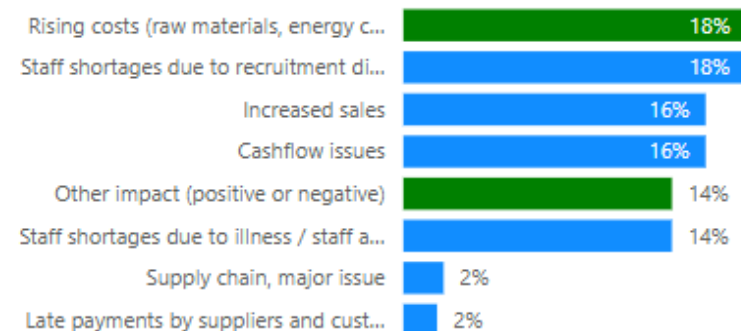
All

02/01/2025

02/04/2025

HOME

## Economic Impact



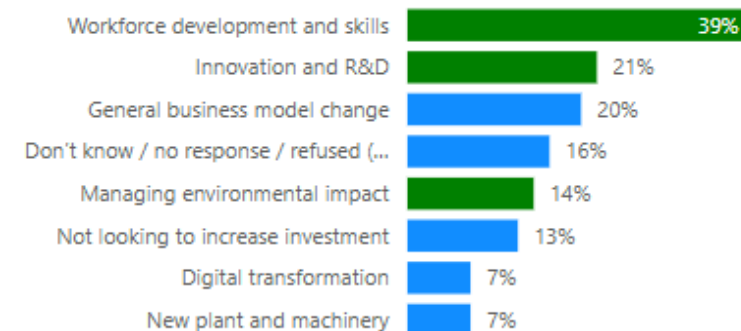
## Current challenges facing firms (%)



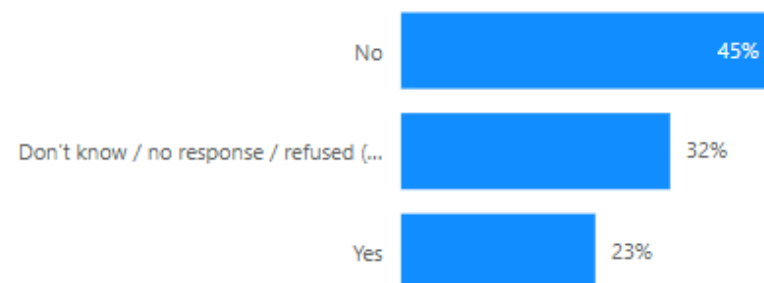
## Future support needs (%)



## Main area for investment (%)



## Innovation activity (%)



## Barriers to innovation (%)

