



The
Growth
Company

GC SITUATION REPORT AND QUARTERLY BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS

DECEMBER 2024

WITH QUARTERLY DATA FOR 2ND OCTOBER 2024 TO 2ND JANUARY 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 775 surveys completed between 2nd October 2024 and 2nd January 2025 by GC clients from the Business Growth Hub and MIDAS. Comparisons have been made with last quarter's 844 responses completed between September and November 2024. 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 – largely reflecting the Business Growth Hub and MIDAS client profile.

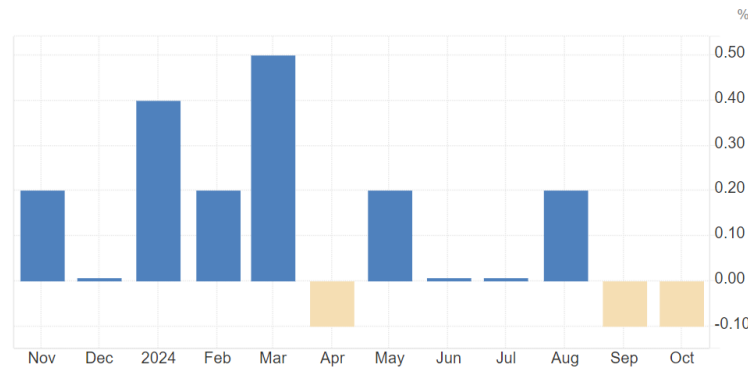
Economic context

- **Economic Growth Projections:** The UK economy is expected to experience modest growth, with forecasts indicating a GDP increase of 1.2% to 1.5% in 2025. This growth is anticipated to be driven by higher public spending and potential interest rate cuts, despite ongoing global uncertainties.
- **Inflation Outlook:** Inflation is projected to rise above 3% by mid-2025 due to elevated energy costs and global trade frictions, before gradually declining in the latter half of the year.
- **Interest Rate Reductions Anticipated:** The Bank of England is expected to implement at least four interest rate cuts in 2025, reducing the base rate from 4.75% to 3.75%, aiming to stimulate economic growth amid persistent inflationary pressures.
- **National Business Confidence:** According to the Institute of directors, UK business confidence has reached its lowest point since late 2022, influenced by £40 billion in tax increases. Only 49% of surveyed companies anticipate revenue growth in the next 12 months, reflecting concerns over the new tax burdens. In 2024, UK business confidence saw fluctuations, starting strong but declining by year-end.
- Separately, the Lloyds Bank Business Barometer fell to 39% in December, its lowest for the year, amid rising costs, reduced demand, tax hikes, and job cuts. Despite challenges, confidence remained above long-term averages.

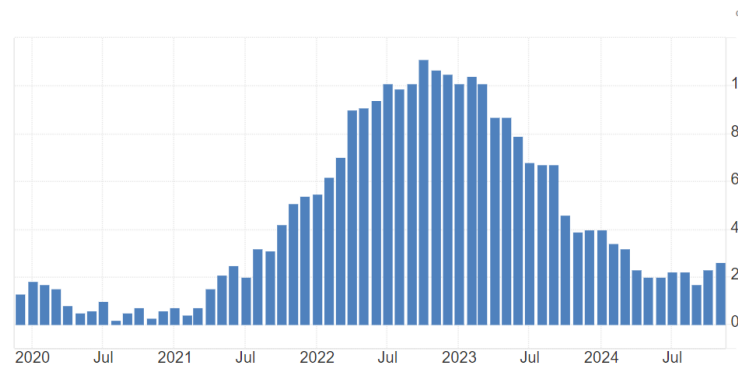
Organisation Growth Survey - business headlines, more detail in main report

- **Business Confidence and performance.** The GC Confidence Index remains at 7.2, unchanged to previous quarter. Sectors with highest confidence were Engineering & Manufacturing, Retail & Wholesale, Manufacturing and lowest in Hospitality & Tourism. The proportion of firms stating that profits increased, went up to 61% (vs 59%) on last month's figures. The main sectors expecting increased profits in future are DCTs, Manufacturing, Business, Financial & Professional Services.
- **Economic Impacts.** Key impacts of the current economy include rising costs 29% (vs 29%), increased sales 15% (vs 16%), cashflow issues 16% (vs 15%), and decreased sales 11% (unchanged).
- **The main current and pressing challenges** facing business include getting access to domestic market 51%, developing new products / services 36% (vs 36%), developing business models 29% (vs 28%), managing business finances 28% (vs 26%), and workforce development / skills 21% (vs 22%).
- **The main areas of future support.** Remain largely unchanged from last few quarters, and include innovation 35% (vs 32%), business planning 34% (unchanged), marketing 33% (vs 35%), workforce development & skills 21% (vs 22%), and financial advice.

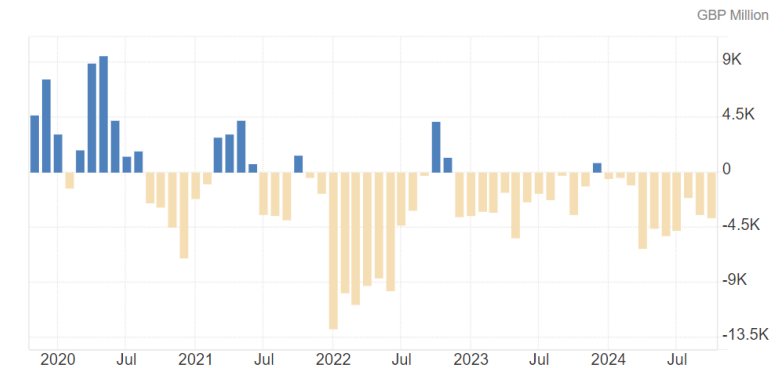
UK GDP contracts in October 2024 (Latest)



UK CPI - Inflation rises to 2.6% in November 2024



UK Balance of Trade widens to £3.72bn in October 2024



- GDP contracted by 0.1% in October 2024, following a similar decline in September and falling short of a market forecast of a 0.1% expansion.
- Production was the largest downward contribution with a 0.6% decline due to manufacturing (-0.6%), machinery & equipment (-2.8%), and chemicals (-3.7%). Mining and quarrying dropped 3.1%, sewerage & waste management edged 0.2% growth, while utilities grew 1.4%.
- Construction fell by 0.4%. Services showed no growth, as positive contribution from the information and communication subsector (0.9%), mainly telecommunications (2.8%) and others was offset by falls in support service activities (0.8%), employment activities (-2.3%) and others.

- Annual inflation increased to 2.6% in November 2024, from 2.3% in October, matching forecasts. It is the highest inflation rate in eight months.
- Prices are rising at a faster pace for recreation & culture (3.6% vs 3%), mostly due to admission fees to live music events & theatres and computer games; housing & utilities (3% vs 2.9%), particularly actual rents for housing; and food & non-alcoholic beverages (2% vs 1.9%).
- Transport prices fell much less (-0.9% vs 1.9%) as upward effects from motor fuels and second-hand cars were partially offset by a downward effect from air fares. Services inflation was steady at 5%. CPI edged by 0.1%, less than 0.6% in October, matching forecasts. Core CPI rose 3.5%, but below forecasts of 3.6%.

- The UK's trade deficit grew to £3.72bn in October, increasing from September's £3.46bn. Imports fell by 3.7%. Imports rose 1.3% & exports rose 1%.
- Goods imports rose by 5.8%, due to a £0.5bn increase in imports of machinery and transport equipment from the EU, boosted by increased imports of aircraft from Germany and cars from Spain. Imports from non-EU countries rose by 6.9%. Services imports shrank by 6.3%.
- Goods exports edged down by 0.1%, due to a £0.4bn decline in both material manufacturing and fuel to non-EU. Exports to EU countries increased by £0.6bn, largely due to a £0.1bn rise in miscellaneous manufactures, chemicals, fuels & machinery, and transport equipment. Services exports grew by 1.8%.

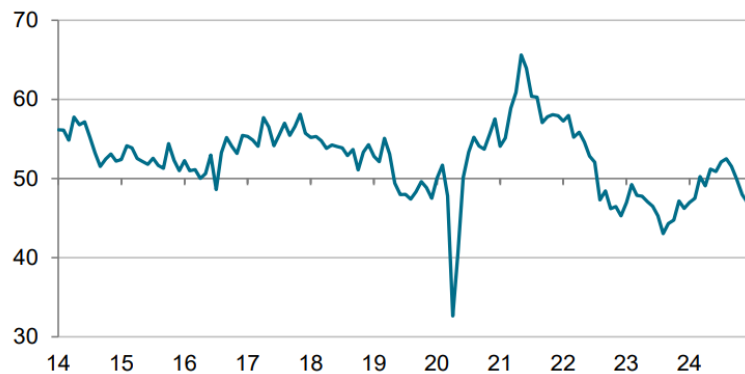
2. SECTOR INSIGHT AND PURCHASING MANAGER INDICES

- **Retail sales** rose by 0.2% in November 2024, following a fall of 0.7% in October 2024, but below forecasts of 0.5%. Non-food stores rose 0.2% with a strong positive contribution from other retail sales. Online sales fell by 4.3%, the largest drop since March 2022. Year-on-year, online sales fell by 3.1%. Year-on-year, retail sales rose 0.5%, below 2% in October and forecasts of 0.8%.
- **The GfK Consumer Confidence Indicator** rose to -17 in December 2024, from -18 in November, marking the second consecutive month of improvement. Confidence levels remain subdued, reflecting ongoing concerns about the UK's economic outlook. Neil Bellamy, Consumer Insights Director at GfK, commented: "Overall, 2024 has seen some fluctuations in consumer confidence, but these have been far less pronounced compared to recent years".
- **The S&P Global UK Composite Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI)** slipped to 50.4 in December 2024, the lowest since October 2023 and below preliminary estimates of 50.5. This still indicates an expansion (i.e. values above 50) and marks the fourth consecutive month of slowing growth. New orders fell slightly, breaking a year-long expansion streak, as subdued demand and rising costs weighed on business activity. Private sector employment saw its steepest decline since January 2021, driven by weak demand and higher payroll expenses. Cost pressures hit their highest level since April, prompting companies to raise prices significantly to offset rising expenses.
- **Company Insolvencies.** In November 2024, there was 1,966 company insolvencies in England and Wales, 13% higher than in October 2024 and 12% lower than in November 2023. Company insolvencies in November 2024 consisted of 254 compulsory liquidations, 1,565 creditors' voluntary liquidations (CVLs), 132 administrations, 14 company voluntary arrangements (CVAs), and one receivership appointment. All types of company insolvency except for receivership appointment (which are rare) were higher than in October 2024. The number of company insolvencies remained much higher than those seen both during the COVID-19 pandemic and between 2014 and 2019. Between 1 December 2024 and 30 November 2024, 52.9 per 10,000 companies entered insolvency, this was a decrease from the 57.3 per 10,000 companies that entered insolvency in the 12-month period. The rolling rate, looking at longer term trends, shows a reduction in the volatility associated with estimates based on single months. While the insolvency rate has increased since the lows seen in 2020 and 2021, it remains much lower than the peak of 113.1 per 10,000 companies seen during the 2008-09 recession. This is because the number of the effective business register has more than doubled in size over this period.

The S&P Global – UK Manufacturing PMI

S&P Global UK Manufacturing PMI

Index, sa, >50 = improvement m/m

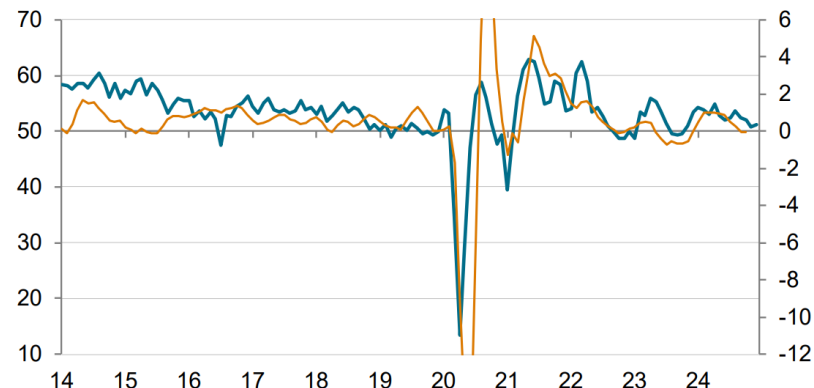


- **The S&P Global UK Manufacturing PMI** decreased to 47 in December 2024, revised lower than the preliminary of 47.3 and below market expectations of 48.2, indicating a contraction (i.e. values below 50).
- The result confirmed the first contraction in UK manufacturing in 11 months, pressured by a second consecutive period of lower output by factories and an accelerated decline in new orders.
- Goods producers noted customer destocking and the impact of weaker demand from European clients, which led to the fastest reduction in overall export sales since October 2023. Backlogs declined and manufacturers recorded the steepest rise in purchasing prices since January 2023. Optimism fell to a two-year low amid sentiment declines among all sub-sectors and company sizes.

The S&P Global – UK Services PMI

Services PMI Business Activity

Index, sa, >50 = growth m/m

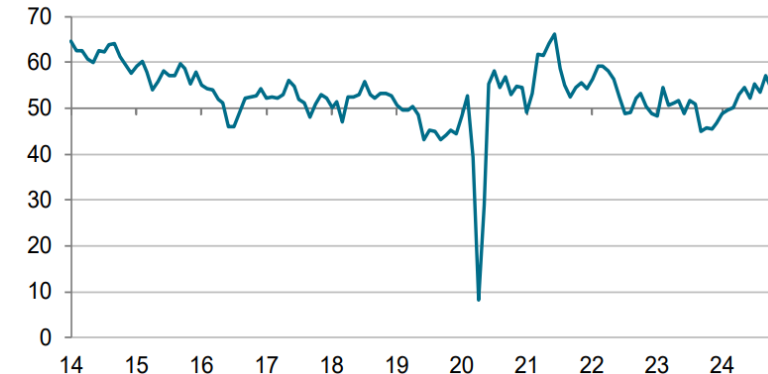


- **The S&P Global UK Services PMI** decreased to 51.1 in December 2024 from 50.8 in November, indicating an expansion (i.e. values above 50). This is the 14th consecutive month of expansion in the service sector. However, growth is barely faster than the prior month, making it one of the weakest this year.
- The new orders index, indicated only a marginal increase, reflecting ongoing weak demand post-Autumn Budget, particularly due to concerns over upcoming National Insurance hikes for employers.
- Export sales declined for the first time since September 2023, with lower orders from EU clients due to strong demand from US markets. Employment declined for the 3rd month at the sharpest rate since January 2021. Input price inflation rose to an eight-month high, from rising wages and raw material costs. Output inflation reached a six-month high, still above pre-pandemic levels.

The S&P Global – UK Construction PMI

S&P Global UK Construction PMI Total Activity

Index, sa, >50 = growth m/m



- **The S&P Global UK Construction PMI** fell to 53.3 in December 2024, from 55.2 in November, indicating an expansion (i.e. above 50). The slowdown reflects weaker demand, higher borrowing costs, and subdued consumer confidence.
- Commercial construction led growth (index 55.0), followed by civil engineering (52.9), while residential construction saw its third consecutive monthly decline, contracting at the fastest rate since June 2024 (47.6). New orders also expanded at a reduced pace, with rising tender opportunities in commercial projects offset by cutbacks in residential and infrastructure work.
- Input buying fell for the first time in eight months, and sub-contractor usage declined amid supply chain challenges and cost pressures. Despite rising costs and cautious hiring, optimism for 2025 improved, though tempered by concerns over the UK's economic outlook and budget constraints.

3. ORGANISATION GROWTH SURVEY RESULTS

Previous survey results shown in brackets

GROWTH, BUSINESS CONFIDENCE AND INVESTMENT

- **GC Business Confidence Index (GC-BCI)** is a ranking of how confident businesses are on their growth prospects for the year ahead. Currently, the GC-BCI remains at 7.2 out of 10, the same from last quarter's 7.2, indicating no overall change. Confidence levels are above average for organisations within Manufacturing and Engineering, Retail & Wholesale, and Construction. The lowest confidence was reported in Hospitality & Tourism; and the latest survey responses show increasing uncertainty, especially in BFPS.
- **Sales and profits.** 15% of firms reported an increase in sales, slightly down from last quarter (16%). 61% expect profits to increase in the year ahead, up from the previous report (59%). 3% expect profits to decrease, remaining consistent with previous levels (3%). The sectors most optimistic about future profitability are DCTs, Manufacturing, and Business, Financial & Professional Services, Education and Life Sciences; and lower expectations in Hospitality & Tourism, Health & Social Care, Logistics.
- **Investment.** 33% of firms expect to increase capital expenditure in the year ahead, down from 34% previously. DCTs, Manufacturing, Business & Financial Services, Green tech sectors are most likely to increase cap-ex spending overall.
- 24% (vs 25%) of firms plan to increase investment in workforce development. The sectors most likely to mention WfD investment include DCTs, Manufacturing, Business, Financial & Professional Services, and Construction.

MAIN IMPACTS AND FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

- **Main impacts.** Rising costs were reported by 29% of firms (unchanged), followed by cashflow issues at 16% (vs 15%), decreased sales at 11% (unchanged), and minor supply chain issues at 8% (vs 8%).
- **Cash reserves.** 60% of firms (vs 63%) report having cash reserves to last over 6 months with 78% of SMEs (0–49 employees) similarly reporting cash reserves for this duration. Reserves were highest in the Retail and wholesale, Manufacturing, Education.
- **Cashflow.** 16% (vs 15%) of firms reported cashflow problems. Micro-sized firms (<10 employees) were more likely to face cashflow challenges than larger SMEs (50–249+ FTEs), with higher cashflow risks in DCT, Manufacturing, Retail & Wholesale, and Hospitality. Additionally, 3% of firms reported late payments from suppliers and customers, unchanged from the previous period.
- **Analysis of insolvency risk for December 2024** shows increase in the total number of firms (10+ employees) in GM with 1-3 insolvency risk red flags. Data for GM: 1092 (up from 967 last month) firms in have 1 flag - some insolvency risk; 112 (up from 107) have 2 flags - medium risk; 60 (up from 35) 3 flags - insolvency imminent. The proportion of firms with a flag, within the business population increased, 1% month-on-month, but is 7 percentage points lower than 12 months ago. In comparison, the UK rate increased 0.9% month-on-month, 10 percentage points lower in December than a year ago.

FUTURE BUSINESS CHALLENGES AND SUPPORT NEEDS

- **The primary challenges for businesses** in the near term are access to new domestic sales opportunities, with 51% (vs 51%) citing this as a concern. This need is most pronounced in Manufacturing, DCTs, Retail and Wholesale, Business, Financial & Professional Services, Health and Social Care sectors.
- **The next most common challenges** include developing new products and services at 36% (vs 36%), developing business models at 29% (vs 28%), managing business finances at 28% (vs 26%), and workforce development and skills 21% (vs 22%).
- **International trade.** 18% of firms (vs 20%) currently export goods or services, and 16% (vs 14%) are expanding into new markets, a trend particularly notable in the DCTs and Manufacturing sectors. Additionally, 10% of firms engaged in overseas trade are looking to expand in their current markets which is unchanged from previous figures.
- **Key areas where businesses seek support** include business planning 34% (unchanged), innovation 35% (vs 32%), marketing 33% (vs 35%), workforce development and skills 21% (vs 22%), and financial advice 23% (vs 22%).
- **16% (vs 15%) require assistance with managing their environmental impact.** 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.

RECRUITMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

- **Recruitment:** 21% of firms (vs 22%) are currently recruiting new staff. Recruitment rates higher among SMEs and Large firms than other businesses. By sector, recruitment is more active in DCTs, Business, Financial & Professional Services, and Education. Retail, Green tech and Engineering sectors are least likely to be recruiting.
- **Workforce skill gaps.** 44% of firms (vs 35%) reported that their existing workforce skills are fully aligned with their business plan objectives. 44% (vs 42%) indicated that skills are only partially at the required level, and 1% (vs 2%) stated that their workforce skills are not at the needed level. Small SMEs, particularly with 10–49 employees, were most likely to identify skill gaps.
- **The main technical skill gaps.** Specialist technical skills 25% (vs 28%), advanced specialist IT skills 9% (unchanged), knowledge of products / services 9% (vs 8%), solving complex problems 6% (vs 5%), and knowledge of how the organisation works 4% (unchanged).
- **The main people and practical / personal skill gaps.** Sales and selling 17% (unchanged), motivating staff 11% (vs 10%), and customer handling skills 10% (vs 11%).

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

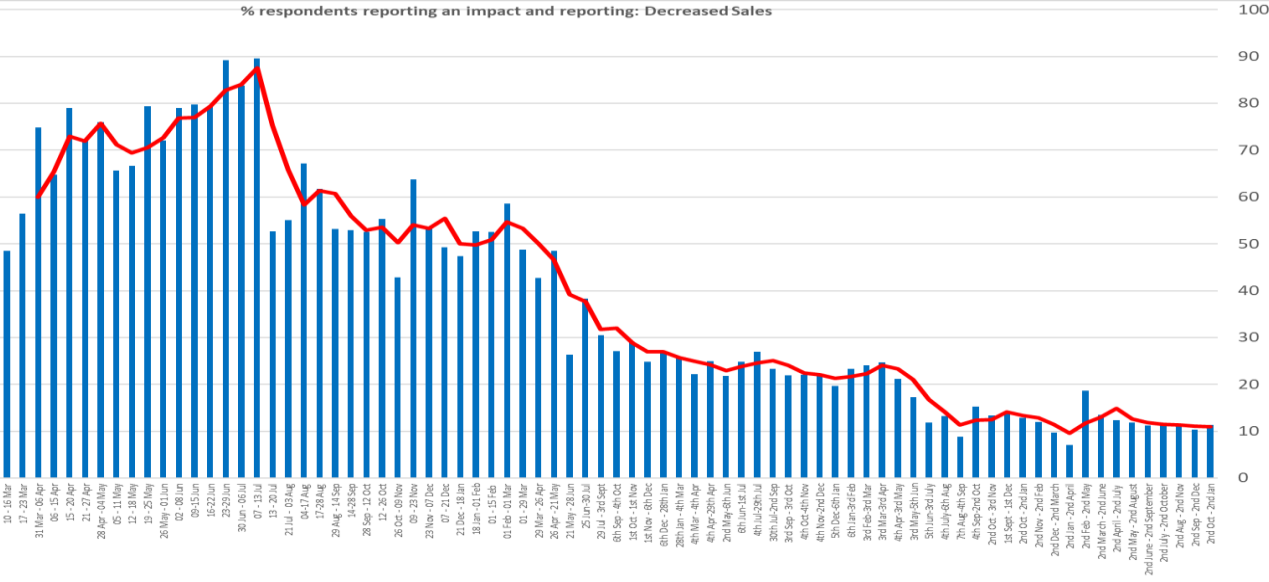
- **Innovation activity.** 39% (vs 42%) have invested in new / significantly improved services, 26% (unchanged) in R&D, 19% (vs 21%) introduced new / significantly improved goods, 18% (vs 19%) new business practices, and 12% (vs 12%) have invested in new production methods.
- **Digital innovation.** 11% (vs 8%) have invested in acquisition of digital products, and 4% (unchanged) made investments in the acquisition of advanced machinery or equipment - specifically for DCTs, Engineering & Manufacturing.
- **The main barriers to growing innovation.** 8% (vs 9%) said that market is dominated by established businesses, 6% (vs 5%) availability of finance, 6% (vs 7%) cost of finance, and 7% said direct innovation costs are too high (unchanged).
- **Future innovation.** 38% (vs 35%) of firms are most likely to look to increase investment and R&D in future, in particular, DCTs, Manufacturing, Life-Sciences Business, Financial & Professional Services. 24% (vs 25%) said that they were likely to invest in workforce development and skills. Highest in Business, Financial & Professional Services, DCTs and Manufacturing sectors.
- **Digital Transformation.** 17% (vs 17%) firms are looking to invest in Digital Transformation, highest in DCTs, Professional Services, and Manufacturing.

SOCIAL VALUE AND GOOD EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

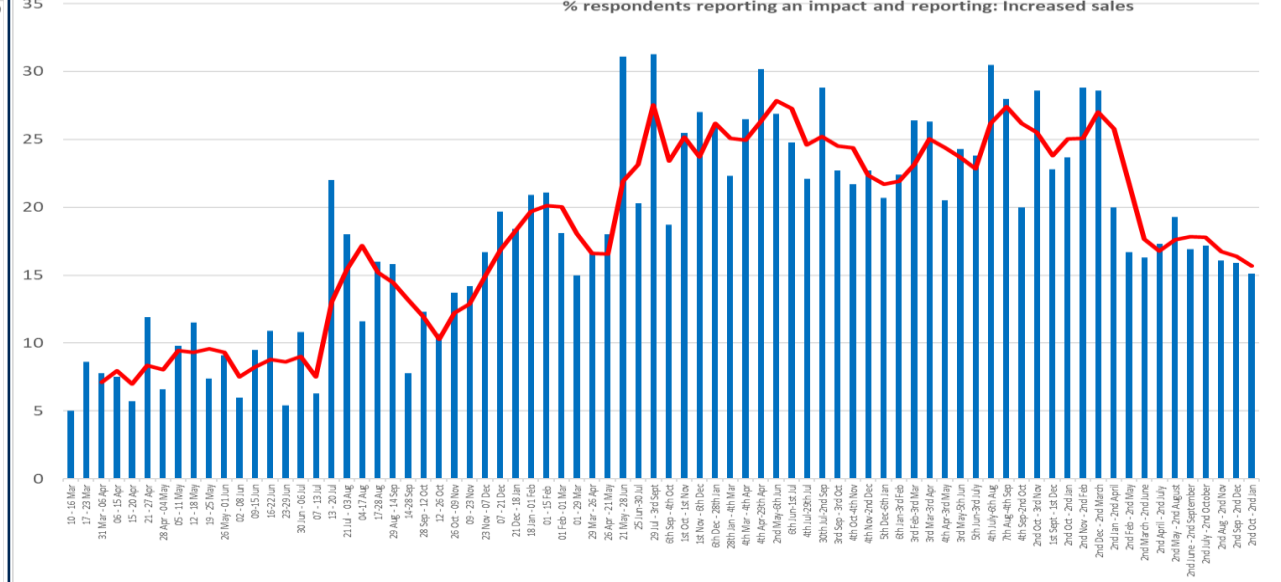
- **Businesses were asked if they did the following:**
- **Guarantee at least 16 hours of work per week.** 87% (vs 58%) said this currently applies, 22% (vs 16%) likely to consider in future.
- **Paying the Real Living Wage.** 49% of firms (vs 47%) paid the RLW, while 27% (vs 28%) indicated they are likely to implement it in the future.
- **Offer flexible working options to employees.** 42% (vs 40%) said this currently applies, and 32% (vs 31%) said likely to include in future.
- **Involve employees in the overall direction of the business.** 36% (vs 34%) said this currently applies. 34% (vs 32%) said likely to do so in future.
- **Looking to increase the diversity of the workforce.** 40% of firms said this currently applies (vs 40%), while 34% indicated they are likely to include this in the future (vs 31%).
- **Promoting healthy work practices.** 43% of firms (vs 43%) said this currently applies, while 31% (vs 28%) indicated likely to do so in future.
- **Invest in leadership.** 40% of firms (vs 39%) said, they are investing in leadership, while 38% (vs 35%) indicated likely to do so in future.

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

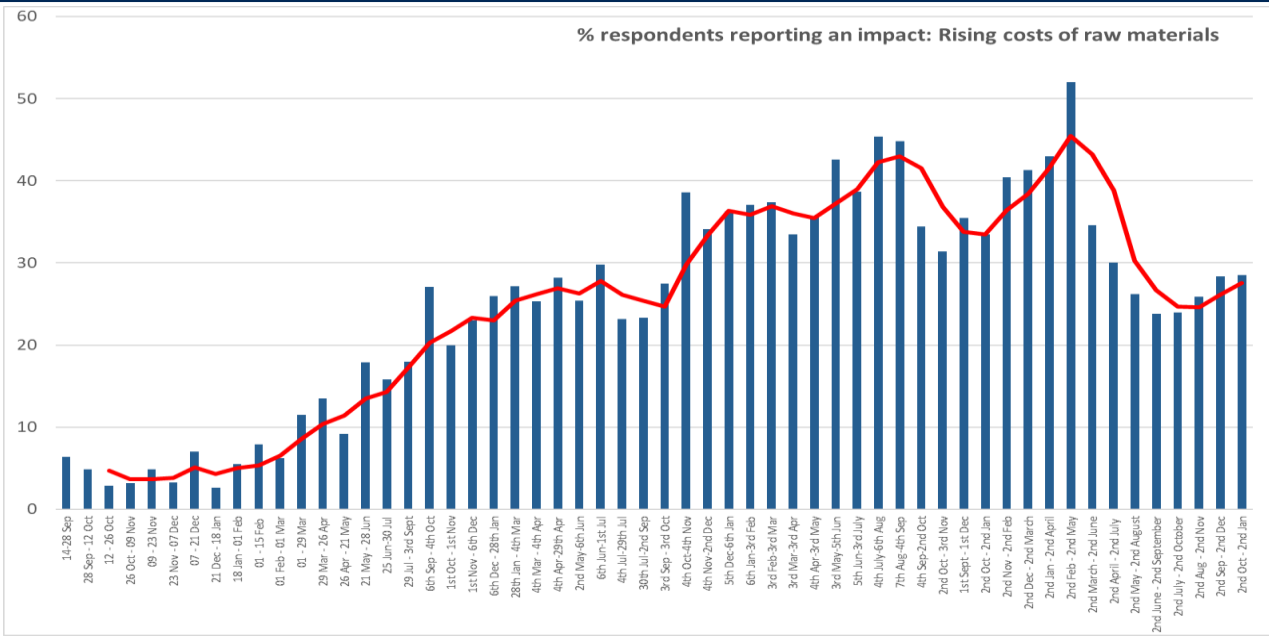
Percentage stating decreased sales (Red line = moving average)



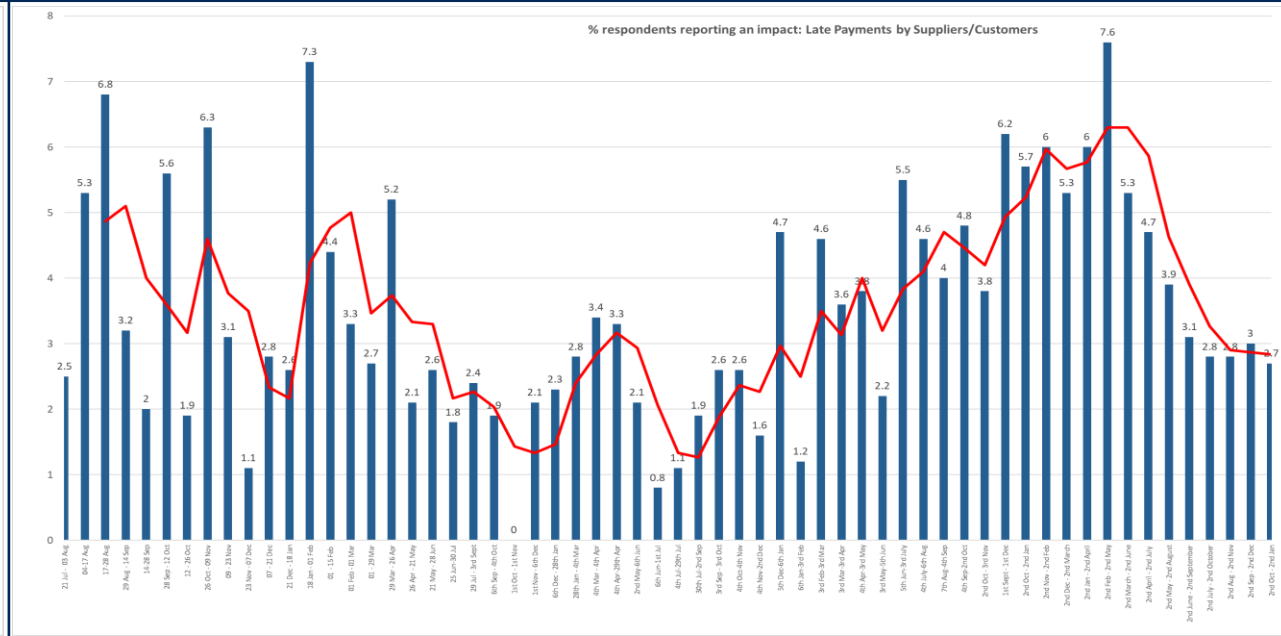
Percentage stating increased sales



Percentage stating rising costs

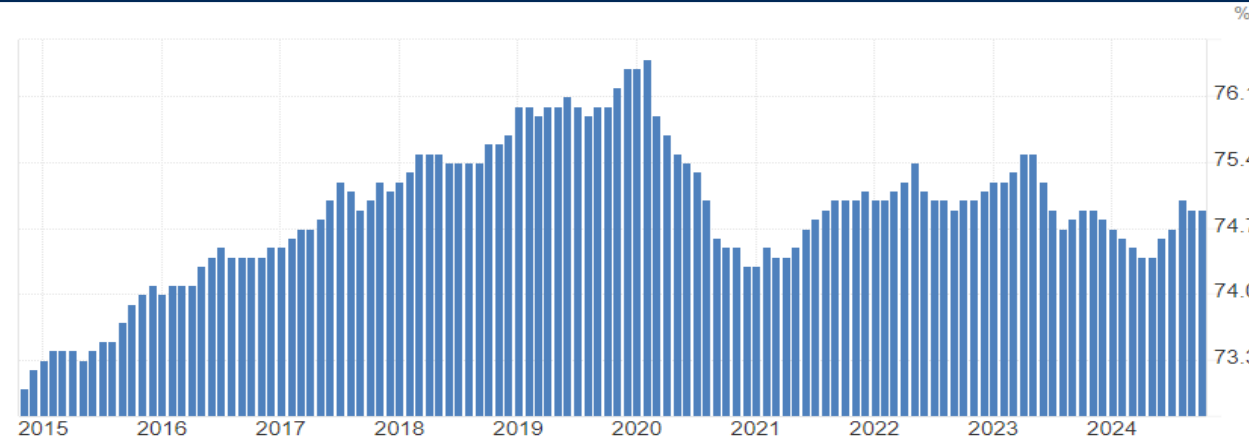


Percentage stating late payments



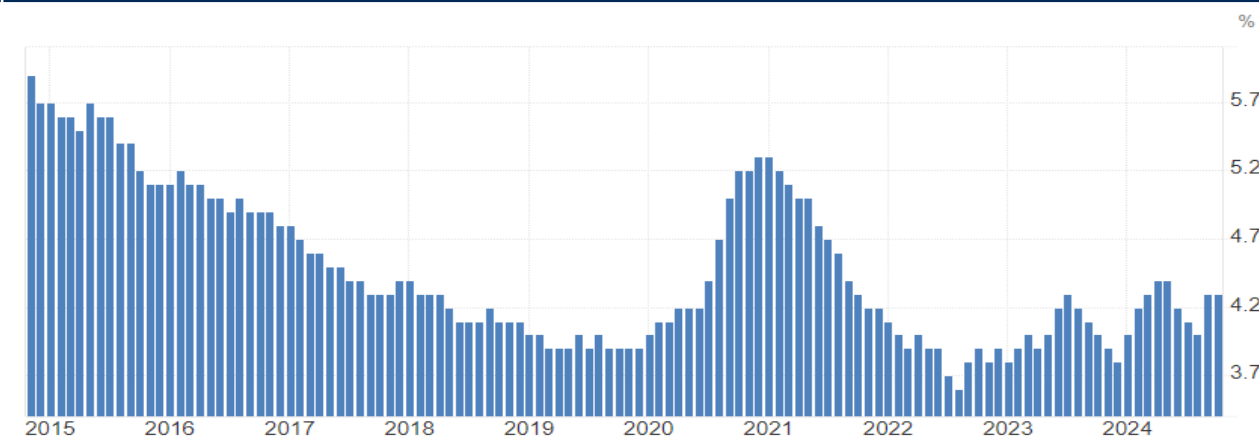
4. LABOUR MARKET HEADLINES – ONS QUARTERLY LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

United Kingdom - Employment Rate 75%



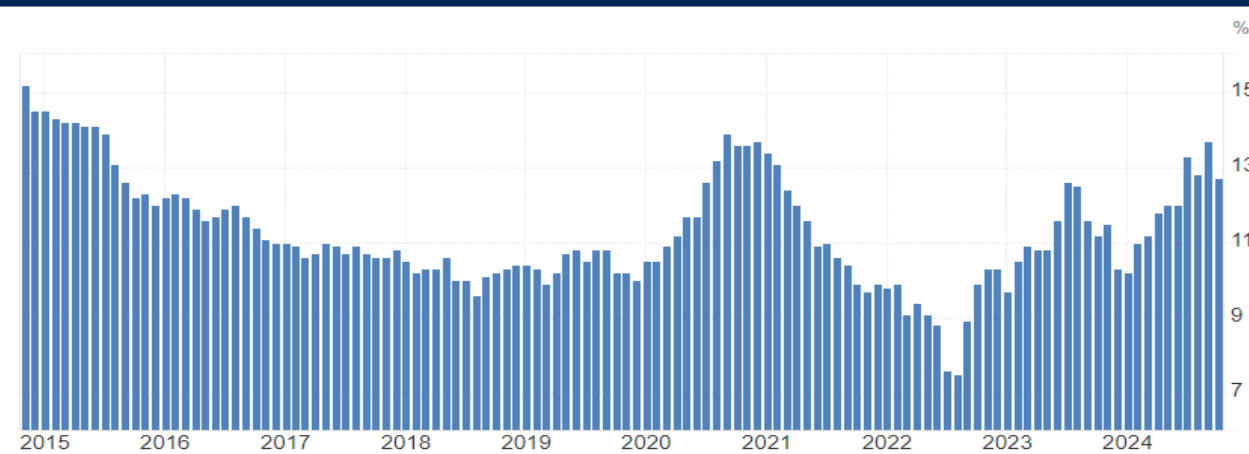
- Employment Rate in the United Kingdom remained unchanged at 74.9 percent in October.
- Employment Rate in the United Kingdom averaged 71.7 percent from 1971 until 2024, reaching an all time high of 76.5 percent in February of 2020 and a record low of 65.6 percent in April of 1983.

United Kingdom - Unemployment Rate 4%



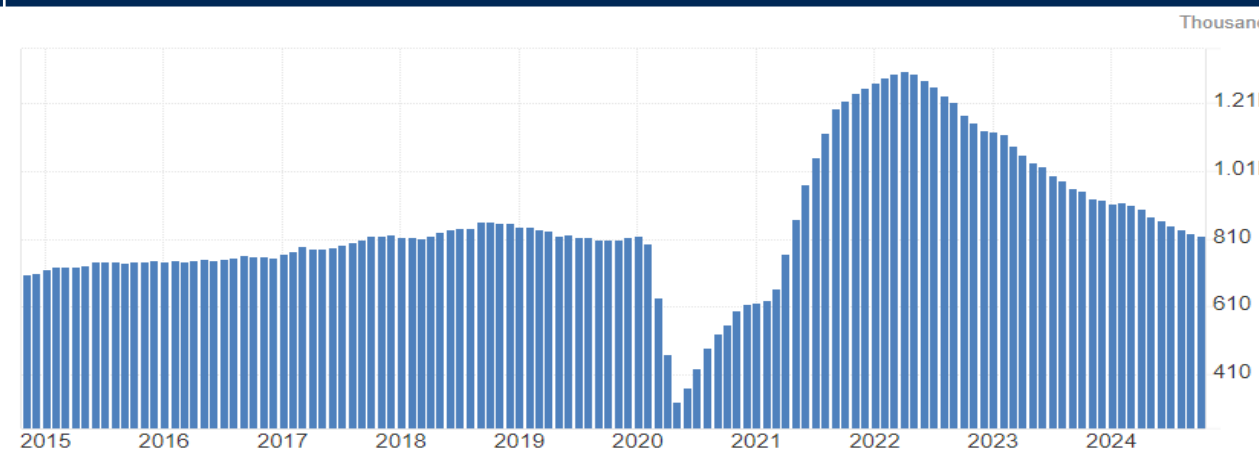
- The United Kingdom's unemployment rate was 4.3% from August to October 2024, unchanged from the previous period and aligning with expectations. The rate remained at its highest level since the three months ending in May, driven by an over the period increase in individuals unemployed for up to 12 months. Over the year from August to October 2023, the rise in the number of unemployed individuals was due to an increase in those unemployed for over six months.

United Kingdom - Youth Unemployment Rate 13%



- Youth Unemployment Rate in the United Kingdom decreased to 12.7 percent in October from 13.7 percent in September of 2024. Youth Unemployment Rate in the United Kingdom averaged 13.2 percent from 1992 until 2024, 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 818k



- The stock of Job Vacancies reported in the United Kingdom decreased to 818k in October from 828k in September of 2024. Job Vacancies in the United Kingdom averaged 695k from 2001 until 2024, reaching an all time high of 1,304k in April of 2022, and a record low of 328k in May of 2020.

5. HOSPITALITY, LEISURE, TOURISM - IMPACTS AND SUPPORT

VisitBritain - Domestic Consumer Sentiment Tracker (Fieldwork 2nd – 8th December 2024)

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 findings are:

- Perception of the 'worst still to come' regarding cost-of-living crisis is at 51% which is up 3% from November 2024.
- Proportion intending a UK overnight trip in the next 12 months is 80%, up 2% from November 2024.
- Proportion intending an overseas overnight trip in the next 12 months 64%, down 1% on November 2024.
- UK weather, rising cost of living and personal finances remain the top 3 barriers to an overnight stay in the UK. UK weather has jumped to top spot since November 2024.
- Top 3 areas for an overnight stay January 2025 – March 2025 is London, South West and Scotland. North West is in 4th spot.
- Top 3 areas for overnight stays April 2025 – June 2025 is South West, Scotland, Yorkshire and Humber. North West is in 4th spot.
- Top 3 destinations January 2025 – March 2025 are city or large town, countryside or village, coastal/seaside town.
- Top 3 destination April 2025 – Jun 2025 are coastal/seaside town, countryside or village, city or large town.
- Hotels remain the top accommodation choice for both January to March 2025 and April to June 2025.

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

Marketing Manchester Campaigns Impact:

Reach: 109.9 million across all channels

Hotel Performance monitor – November 2024 (Source MM)

The occupancy rates in November for Greater Manchester (85%) and Manchester city centre (85%) were above 2023 (83% and 84% respectively) for both geographies.

The average daily rates for Greater Manchester (£102) and Manchester city centre (£118), were significantly above 2023 levels for their respective geographies (£96 and £107).

The revenue per available room for Greater Manchester (£87) and Manchester city centre (£100) is above the comparable 2023 levels (£79 and £90) due to the combined increase in occupancy and room rates.

	Gtr. Manchester Occupancy %	Gtr. Manchester Average Rate (£)	Gtr. Manchester REVPAR (£)	Mcr City Centre Occupancy %	Mcr City Centre Average Rate (£)	Mcr City Centre REVPAR (£)
2024	85%	£102	£87	85%	£118	£100
2023	83%	£96	£79	84%	£107	£90
Baseline (2019)	84%	£78	£66	87%	£91	£79

6. GOVERNMENT MEASURES, OTHER DATA AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THEME	ANNOUNCEMENT / ISSUE - (HOLD CTRL AND CLICK ON <LINKS> TO ACCESS THE FULL ITEM)
Regional skills projects to bolster UK cyber defences	<p>More than 30 projects across England and Northern Ireland will deliver targeted support to boost the UK's cyber resilience - from new ways to better protect businesses and families from potential cyber-attacks, to providing training to increase the nation's cyber skills - as the government drives forward its Plan for Change to grow the economy and ensure the UK's digital security. The new projects will receive a share of £1.9 million in UK government. <Link></p>
Plan to secure the long-term future of steelmaking	<p>The Government is ramping up its plans to rebuild the UK's steel sector with the launch of a new Steel Council which will bring together leaders from across the industry to advise on the upcoming Steel Strategy. Business Secretary Jonathan Reynolds will chair the first meeting of the Council together with co-chair Jon Bolton, Chairman of the Materials Processing Institute – a globally-recognised non-profit research and innovation centre based in the iconic steel community of Teesside. <Link></p>
UK sports exporters see increased demand in the Gulf	<p>British companies selling everything from specialist gym equipment to fencing for horseracing tracks are on a winning streak of export successes in the Gulf as countries in the region push to get as many people as possible taking part in physical activity. The positive trend comes as the UK continues to make progress on striking a trade deal with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). <Link></p>
Events and grants to help Britain's businesses and researchers	<p>The UK government has announced plans to drive up participation in Horizon Europe by researchers, innovators and businesses from across the country. They can access grants to fund work tackling some of the biggest challenges facing society: from breakthroughs in healthcare, to green energy, to putting productivity-boosting technologies like AI to work in the economy. <Link></p>
Economic growth and jobs for Bradford as 2025 UK City of Culture	<p>An additional £5 million in funding takes the amount of economic support for Bradford's year to £15 million, helping the Bradford Culture Company deliver a programme of events and support a legacy of cultural regeneration. It will also encourage the next generation of creatives with 6,000 training opportunities expected across the district and Bradford expecting to create 6,500 new jobs as a result of being UK City of Culture. <Link></p>
Deal agreed to secure Harland & Wolff's future protecting thousands of UK shipbuilding jobs	<p>Navantia has agreed a commercial deal to purchase all four of Harland & Wolff's shipyards, securing 1,000 UK shipbuilding jobs. The deal will secure the future of Harland & Wolff's shipyards in Northern Ireland (Belfast), Scotland (Arnish and Methil) and Devon (Appledore), and protect workers' existing terms and conditions. <Link></p>
Membership of new Creative Industries Taskforce announced	<p>Leaders of organisations including Creative UK, the British Fashion Council and the Royal Shakespeare Company, plus academics, investors and tech entrepreneurs, have joined a new taskforce to help inform the Government's strategy to unlock growth in the UK's highly valued creative industries, one of the eight growth-driving sectors of the Industrial Strategy. <Link></p>



APPENDIX 1: SURVEY RESPONSE RATES

DECEMBER 2024

WITH QUARTERLY DATA FOR 2ND OCTOBER 2024 TO 2ND JANUARY 2025

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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) <i>C = Confidential, 5 or less responses</i> <i>Percentages rounded to nearest figure</i>	GM ONS IDBR Enterprise Count 2022	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	JUL 2023
Size-band (employees)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
'0' employment to 9 (MICRO)	89%	59%	54%	55%	56%	62%	60%	58%	59%	57%	46%	49%	53%	51%	59%	41%	58%	52%
10 to 49 (SMALL)	9%	20%	24%	25%	26%	24%	23%	24%	24%	26%	27%	22%	13%	20%	16%	24%	16%	21%
50 to 249 (MEDIUM)	2%	15%	15%	13%	12%	9%	11%	6%	7%	9%	9%	7%	14%	16%	13%	19%	13%	15%
250+ (LARGE)	<1%	7%	7%	7%	6%	C	7%	12%	10%	8%	10%	10%	11%	8%	7%	10%	6%	5%
UNKNOWN	-	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	8%	12%	8%	5%	5%	6%	8%	7%
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
BUSINESS, FINANCIAL, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	27%	12%	12%	12%	12%	10%	8%	10%	10%	10%	13%	14%	14%	18%	11%	22%	15%	14%
CONSTRUCTION	12%	6%	6%	5%	C	C	C	C	C	6%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
DIGITAL, CREATIVE, TECHNOLOGY	6%	24%	25%	24%	21%	21%	22%	18%	16%	13%	18%	19%	22%	23%	23%	24%	23%	21%
EDUCATION	2%	8%	9%	8%	6%	C	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	5%
UTILITIES, ENERGY, WATER, WASTE, GREEN TECH	C	C	C	C	6%	6%	6%	7%	8%	10%	6%	7%	C	C	C	C	8%	9%
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE	C	5%	6%	7%	9%	9%	8%	8%	7%	8%	C	C	C	6%	C	6%	C	C
HOSPITALITY, TOURISM, & SPORT	7%	C	C	C	C	6%	7%	6%	7%	C	C	5%	7%	6%	10%	C	8%	6%
LOGISTICS	5%	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	6%	C	C
MANUFACTURING (excluding Engineering)	3%	13%	12%	13%	13%	15%	17%	16%	16%	21%	26%	20%	19%	18%	19%	17%	22%	16%
LIFE SCIENCES	N/A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
RETAIL & WHOLESALE	18%	C	C	C	C	6%	7%	9%	9%	9%	9%	11%	8%	7%	9%	C	6%	7%
OTHER SERVICES (excluding SIC unknown)	4%	6%	C	6%	6%	8%	6%	C	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%	59%	55%	54%	61%	38%	49%	69%	62%	57%	62%	50%
10 to 49 (SMALL)	9%	20%	13%	27%	19%	30%	23%	14%	22%	27%	12%	26%
50 to 249 (MEDIUM)	2%	15%	19%	14%	13%	28%	28%	10%	10%	24%	20%	13%
250+ (LARGE)	<1%	7%	13%	C	8%	C	C	6%	6%	C	6%	11%
UNKNOWN	-	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C



**APPENDIX 2:
GROWTH SURVEY DETAILED RESULTS,
LOCAL AUTHORITY AND EDI DATA**

DECEMBER 2024

WITH QUARTERLY DATA FOR 2ND OCTOBER 2024 TO 2ND JANUARY 2025

www.growthco.uk

OGS: COMBINED BUSINESS CONFIDENCE INDEX (GC-BCI)

HOME

Local Authority

All

Sector

All

Size Band

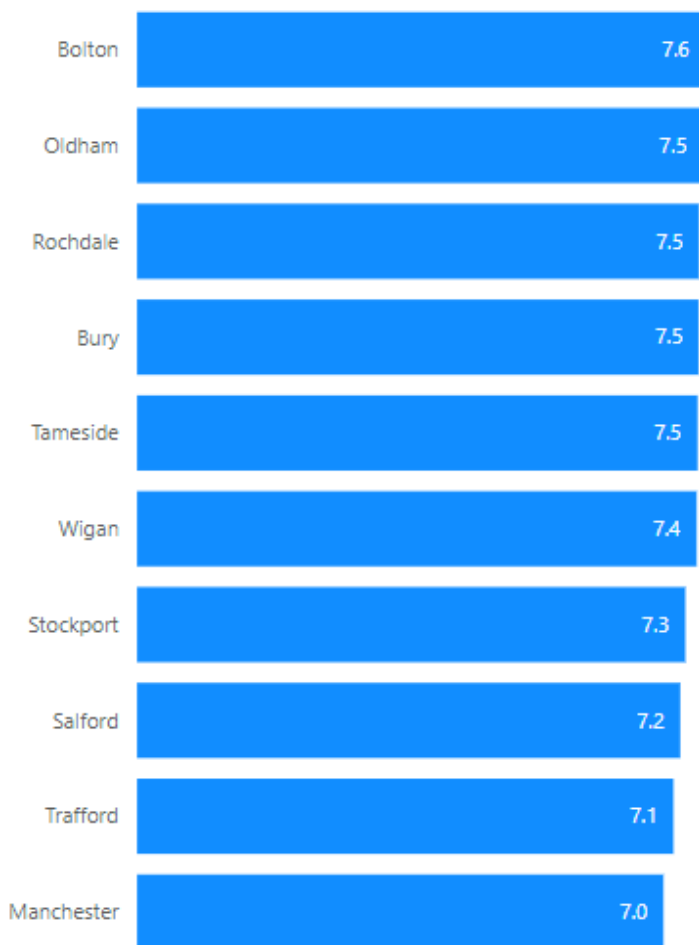
All

Submitted Date

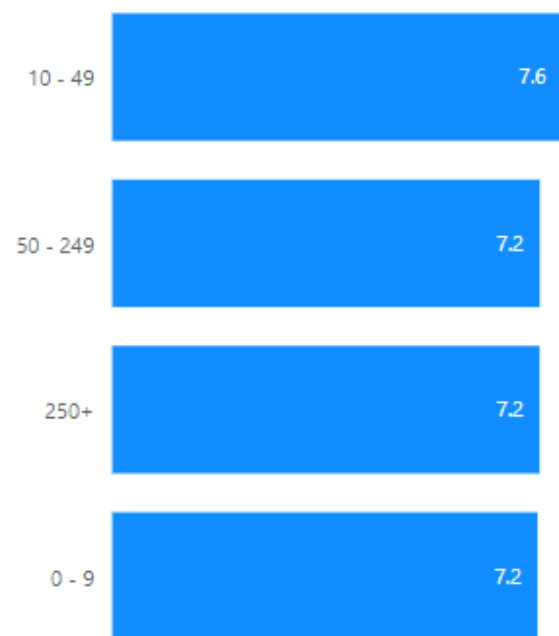
02/10/2024

02/01/2025

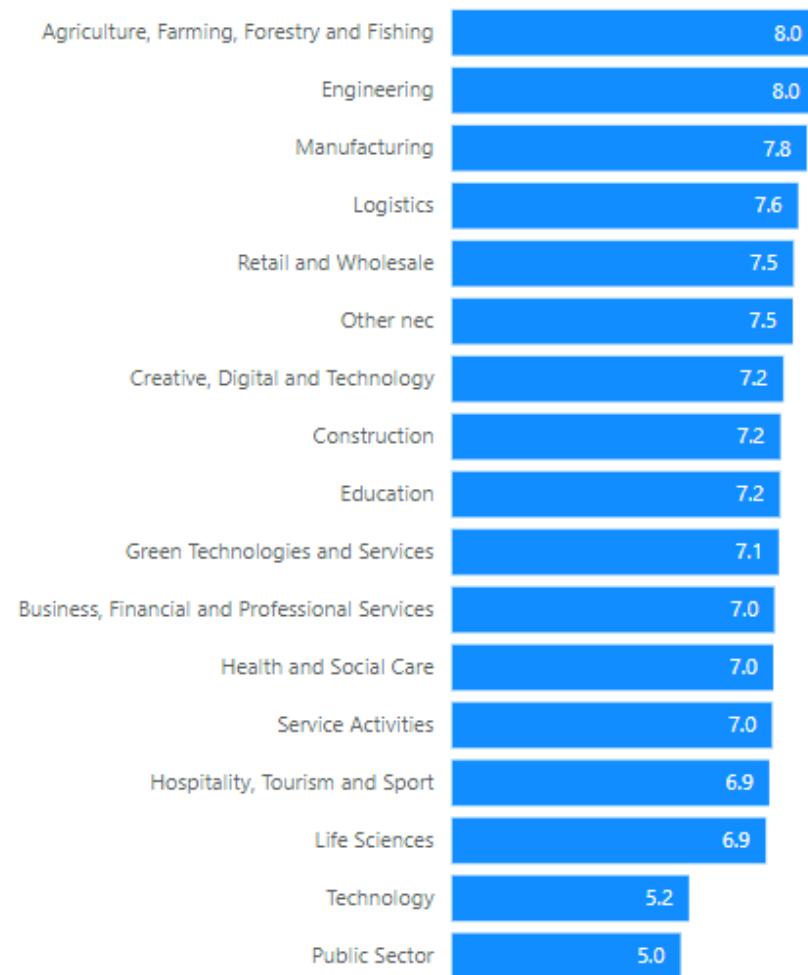
GC-BCI by LA# (1 low - 10 high)



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



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



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

7.2

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

Responses

775

Respondents

677

Local Authority

All

Sector

All

Size Band

All

Submitted Date

02/10/2024

02/01/2025

HOME

Expectations for profitability increase (%)

Expectations for turnover increase (%)

Expectations for cap-ex spending increase (%)

Increase

61%

Increase

68%

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

35%

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

25%

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

22%

Increase

33%

Stay the same

13%

Stay the same

1...

Stay the same

30%

Decrease

Decrease

Decrease

OGS: CHALLENGES AND FUTURE SUPPORT NEEDS

Responses **775** Respondents **677**

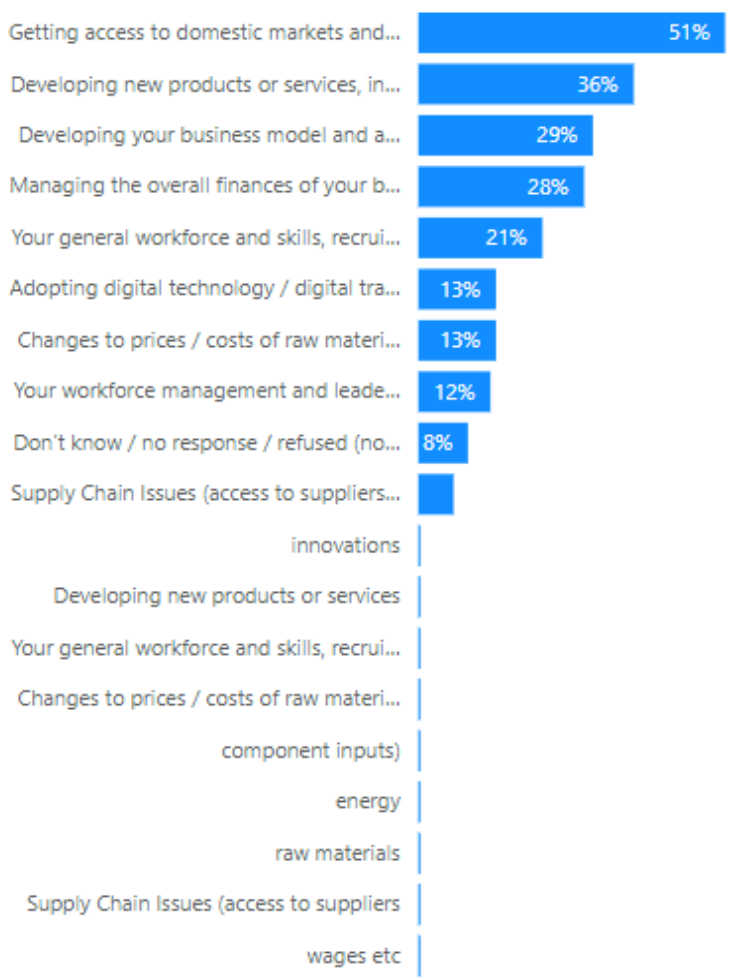
Local Authority: Sector: Size Band: Submitted Date: to

[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 **775**
Respondents **677**

[HOME](#)

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

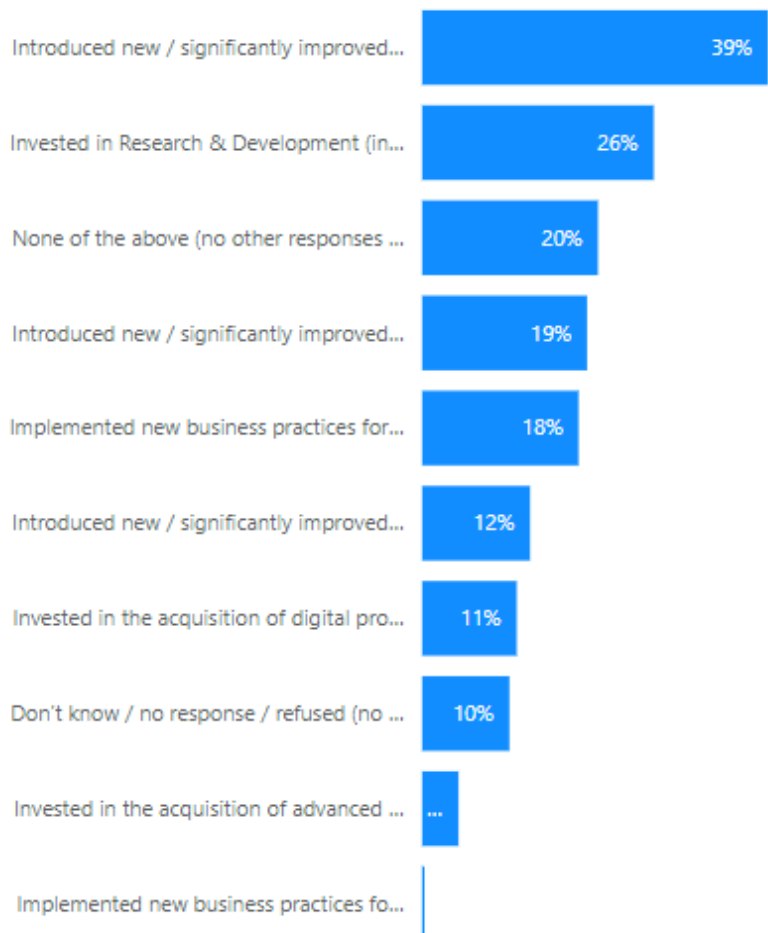
All

02/10/2024

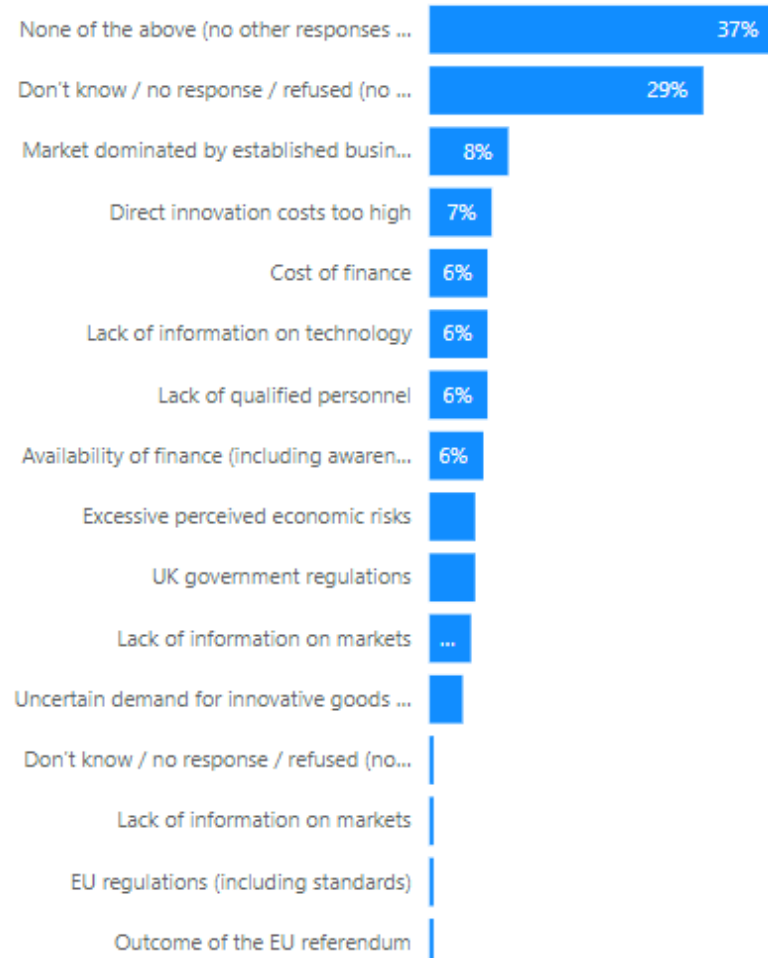
02/01/2025



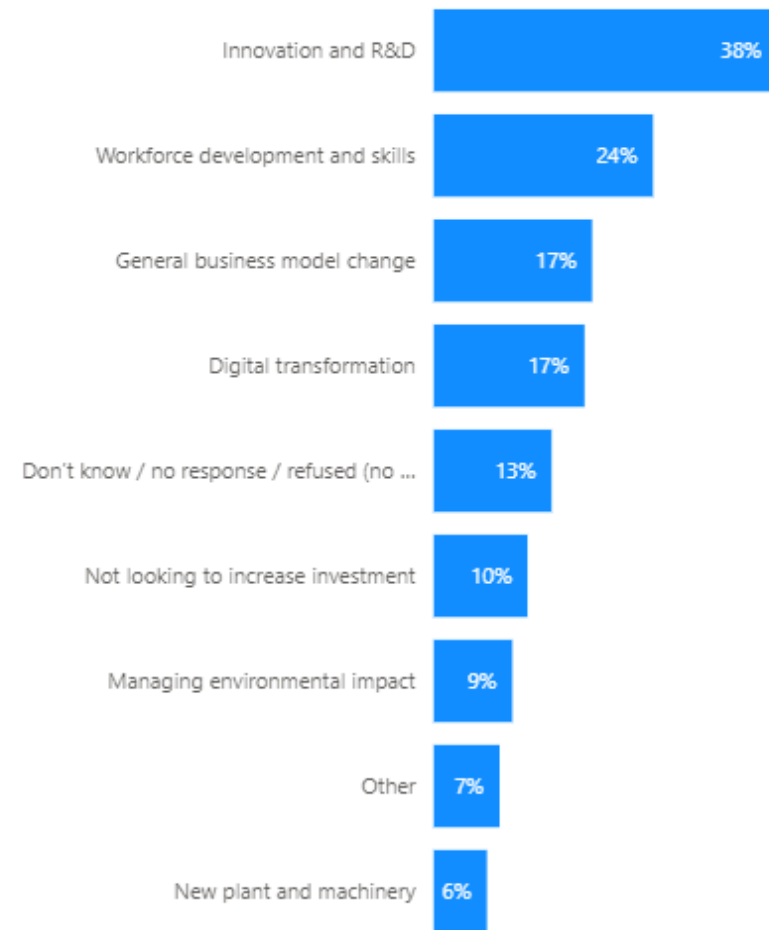
Innovation activities in last year (%)



Main barriers to Innovation (%)



Looking to increase investment in ... (%)



OGS: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - BY TYPE AND BARRIERS TO ADOPTION

Responses **775**
 Respondents **677**

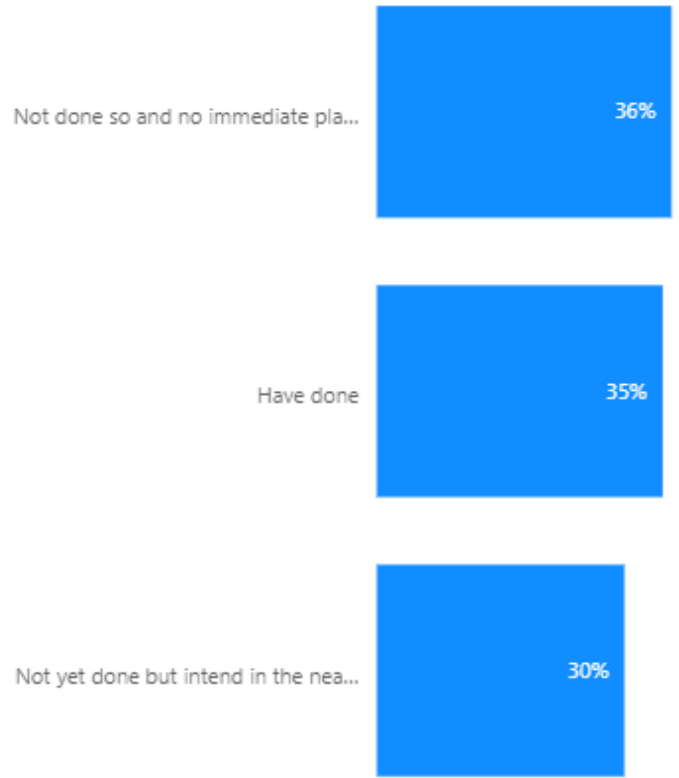
Local Authority **Sector** **Size Band** **Submitted Date**

[HOME](#)

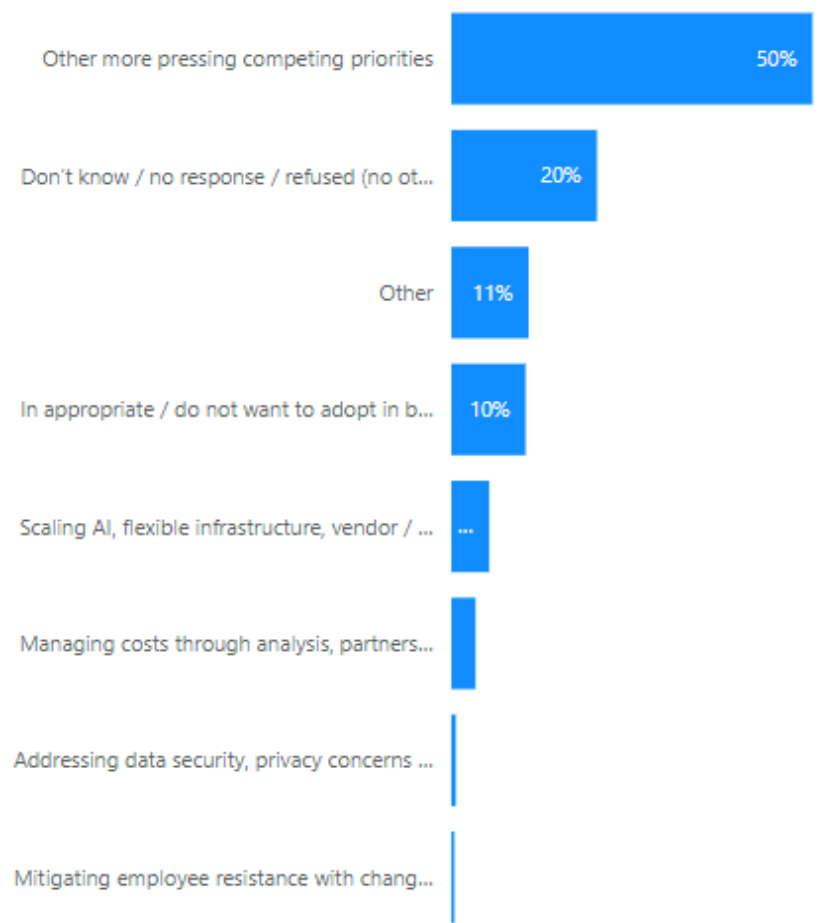
Which areas of AI implemented (%)



Adopted AI into business (%)



AI - What is holding up plans (%)



OGS: SKILLS GAPS

Responses
775

Respondents
677

[HOME](#)

Local Authority

All

Sector

All

Size Band

All

Submitted Date

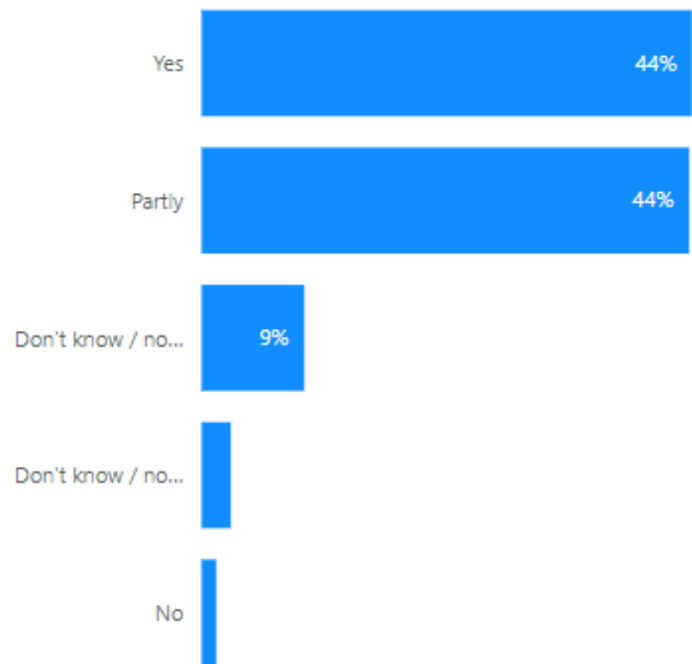
02/10/2024

02/01/2025

Technical and practical skills gaps (%)



Current workforce skills at right level by size (%)



Current workforce skills at right level - average (%)

43.1

People and personal skills gaps (%)



OGS: SOCIAL VALUE

Responses **775**
Respondents **677**

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

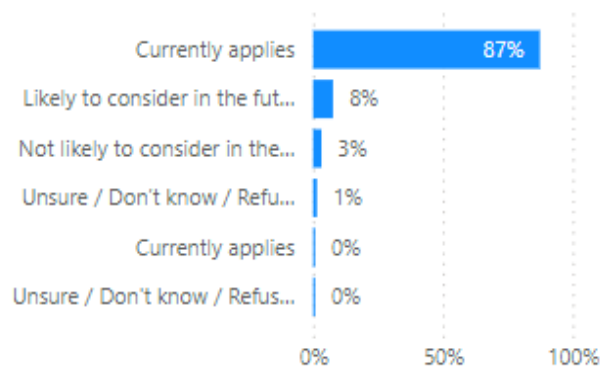
All

02/10/2024

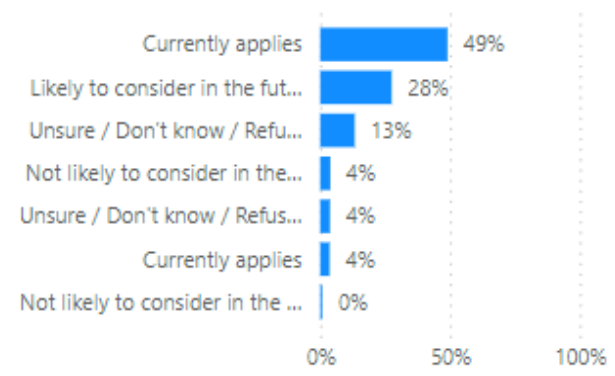
02/01/2025

[HOME](#)

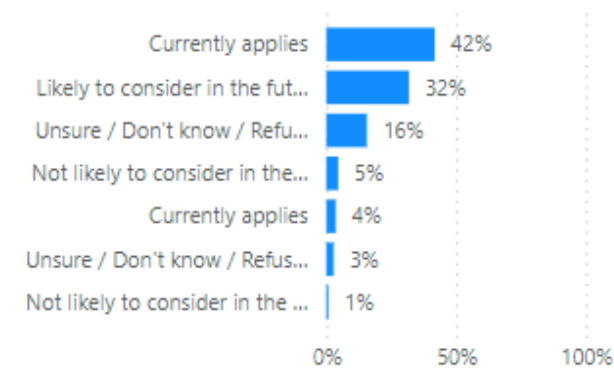
Guarantee at least 16 hours (%)



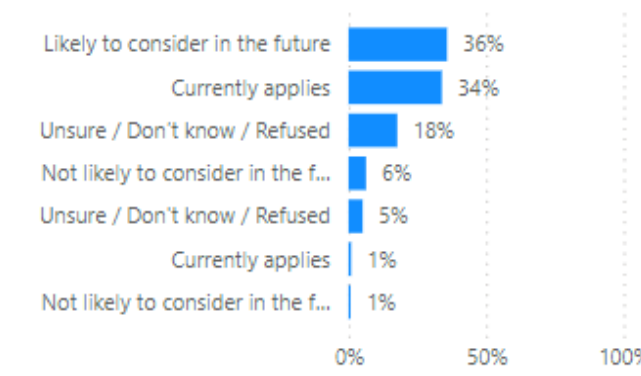
Pay real living wage (%)



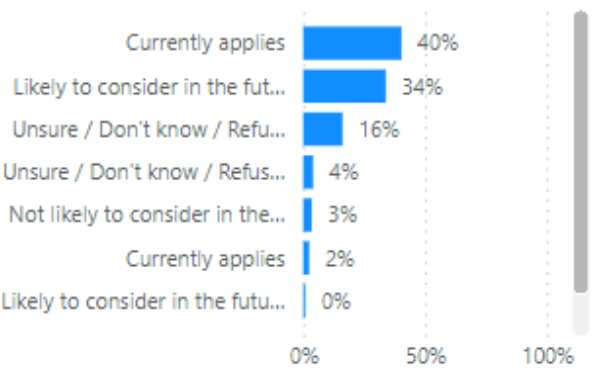
Flexible working options (%)



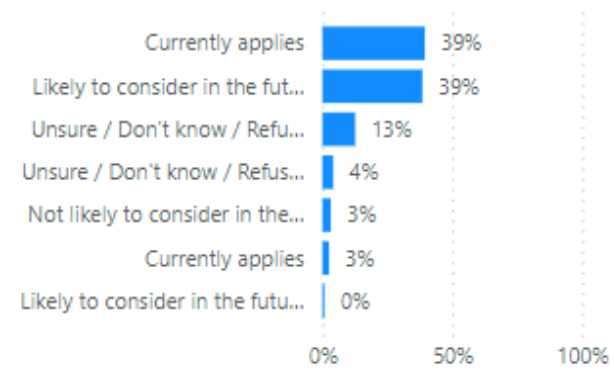
Involve employees in the direction of business (%)



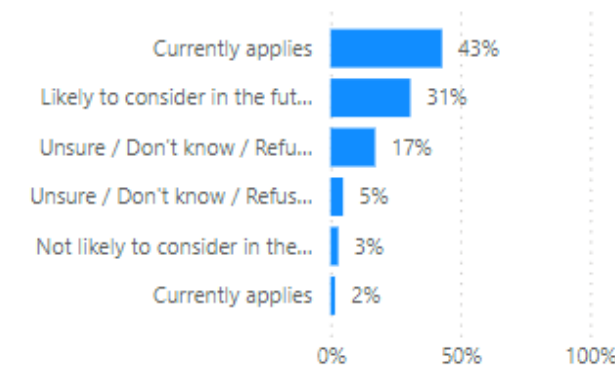
Looking to increase diversity of workforce (%)



Invest in leadership (%)



Promote healthy work practices (%)



Firms with Social Value

498

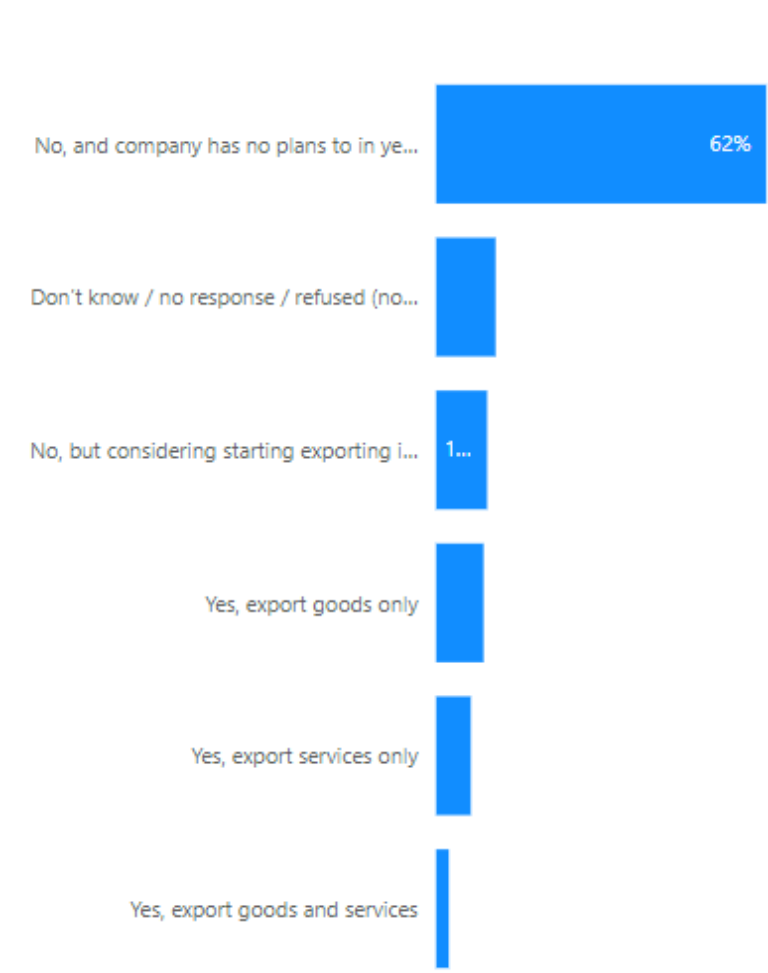
OGS: INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Responses **775**
Respondents **677**

[HOME](#)

Local Authority **Sector** **Size Band** **Submitted Date**

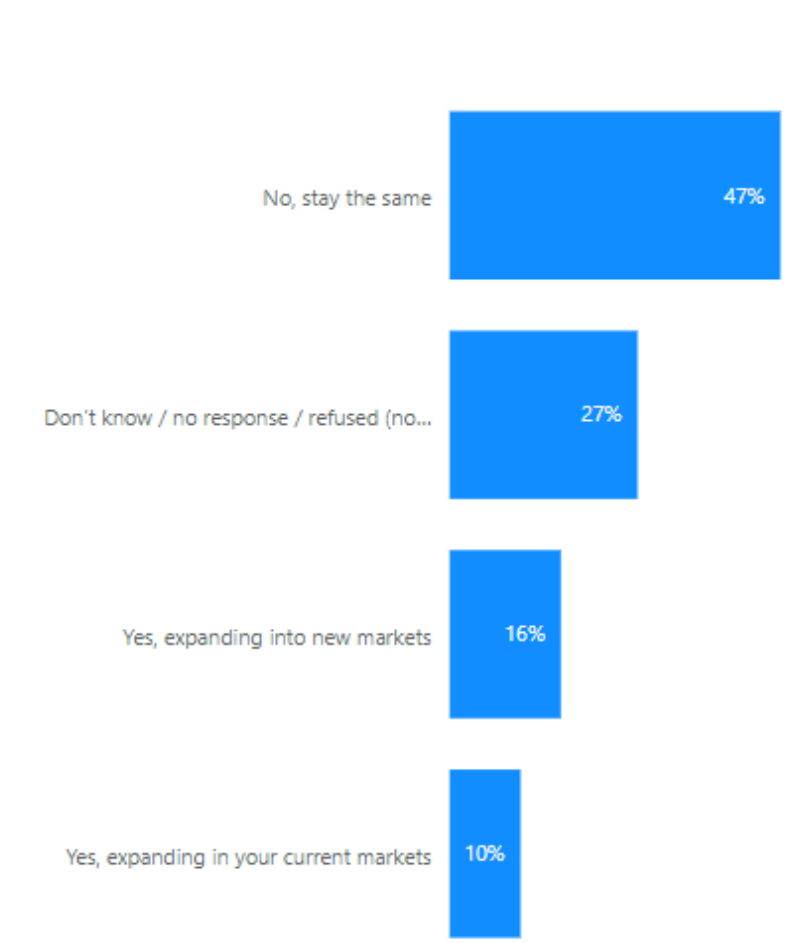
Currently export goods or services (%)



Currently export goods or services by sector (%)



Planning to increase levels of exports next year (%)



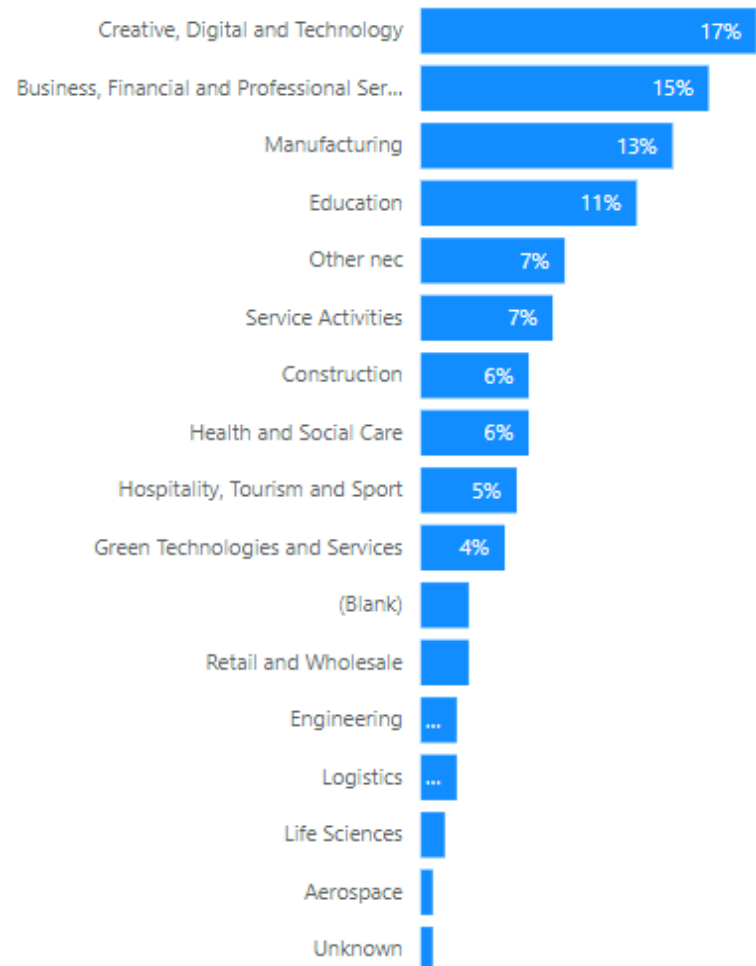
OGS: RECRUITMENT

Responses **775** Respondents **677**

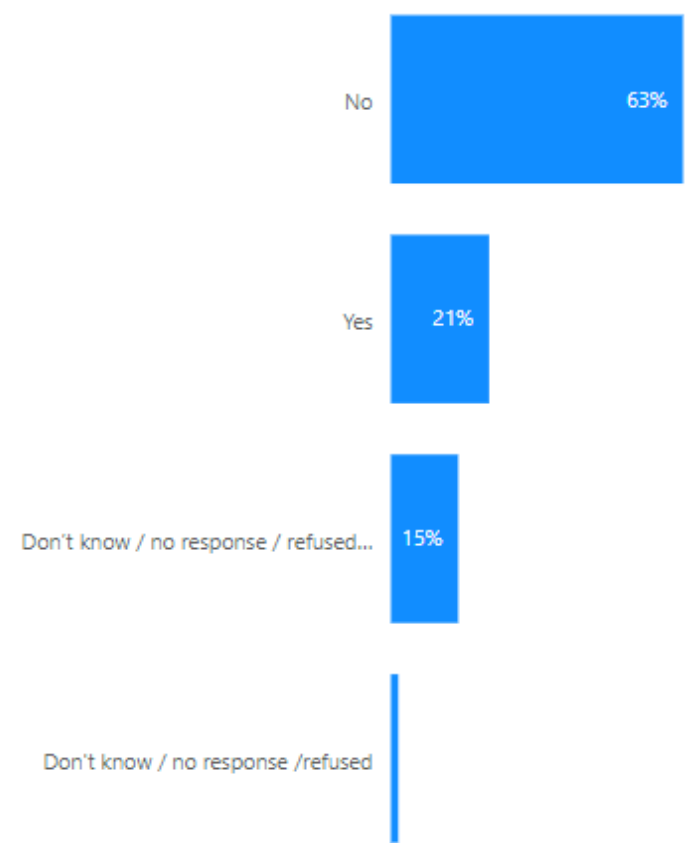
[HOME](#)

Local Authority **Sector** **Size Band** **Submitted Date** -

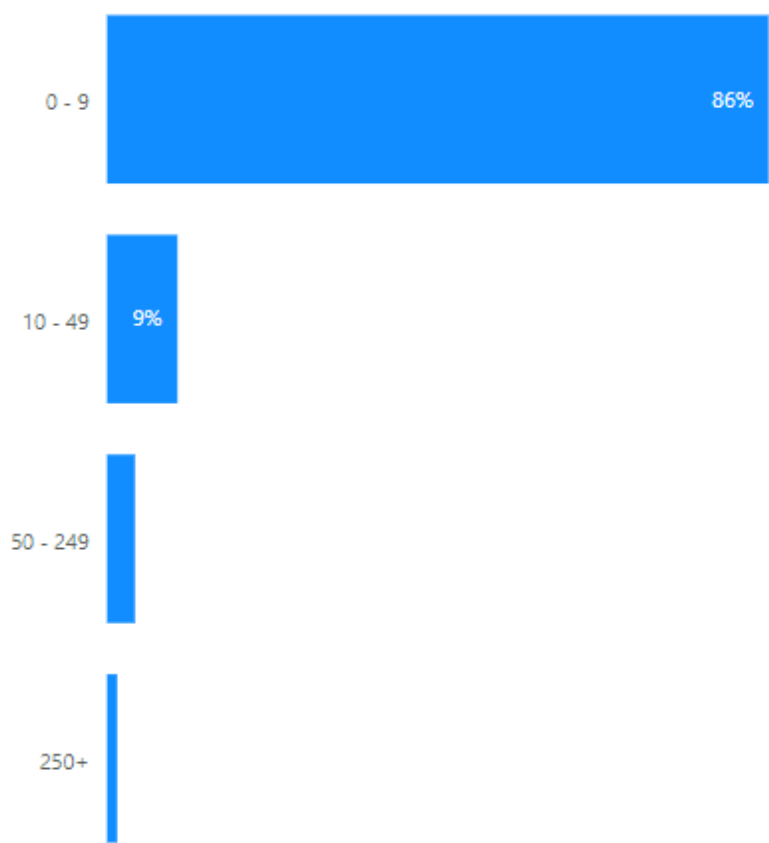
Currently recruiting new staff by Sector (%)



Currently recruiting new staff (%)



Currently recruiting new staff by size band

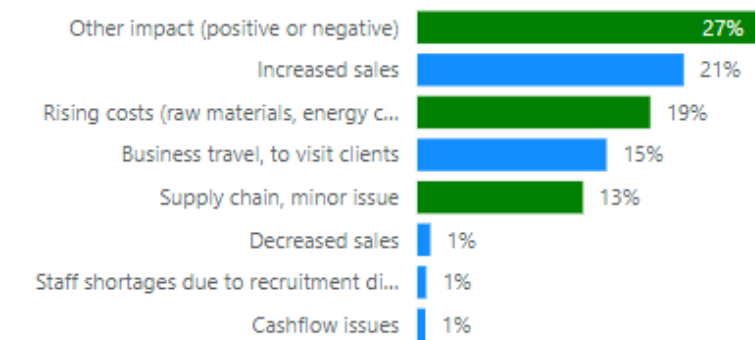


Local Authority **Sector** **Size Band** **Submitted Date**

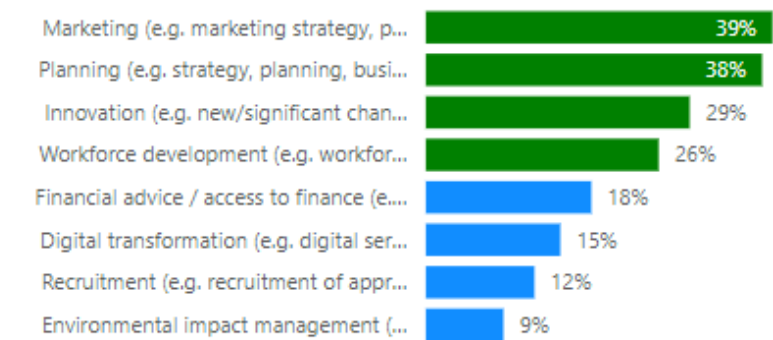
[HOME](#)

BGH clients only for Female Led

Economic Impact



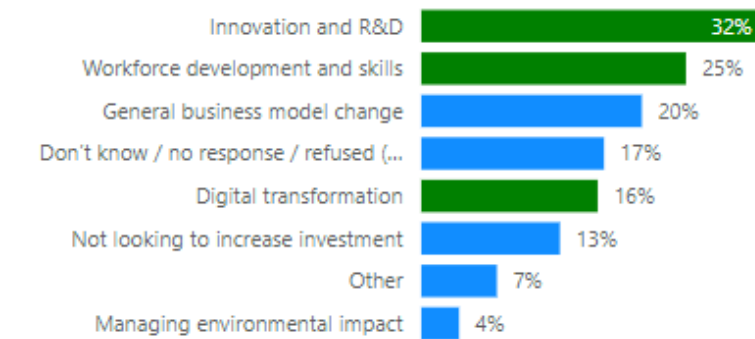
Current challenges facing firms (%)



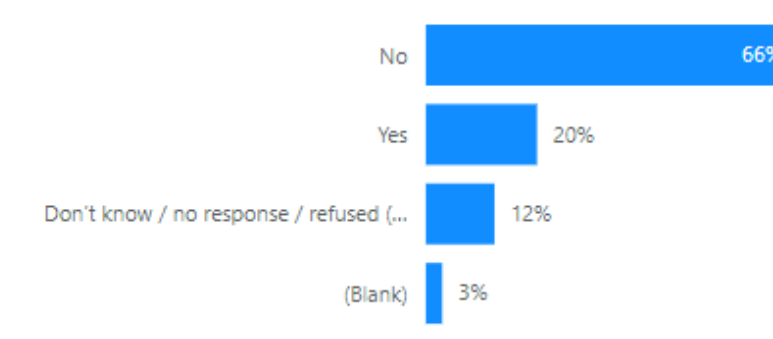
Future support needs (%)



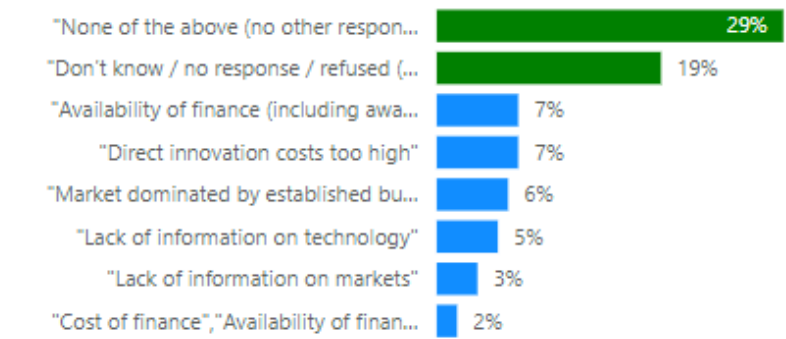
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - ETHNIC MINORITY GROUP

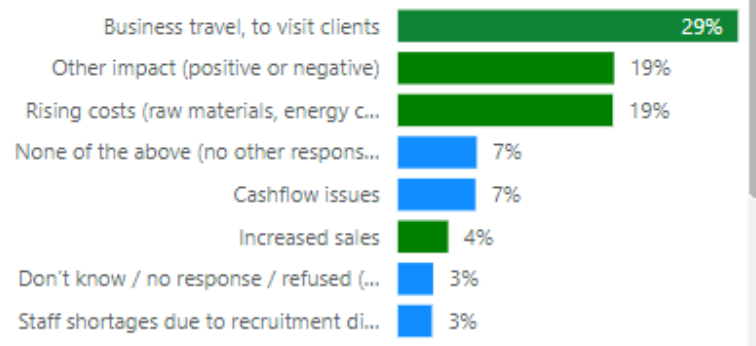
Responses 7.33	Responses 102	Respondents 89
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Local Authority **Sector** **Size Band** **Submitted Date**

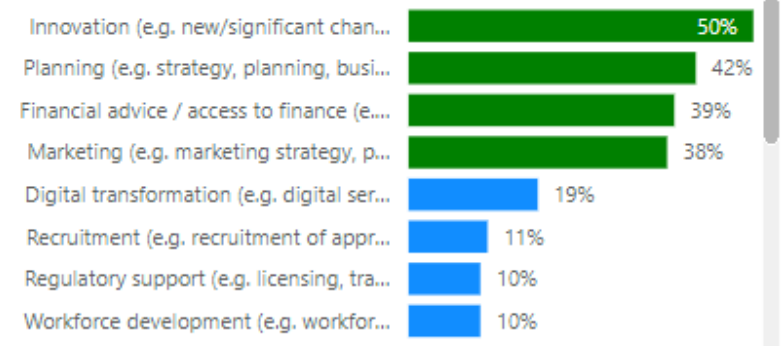
[HOME](#)

BGH clients only for Ethnic Minority Group

Economic Impact



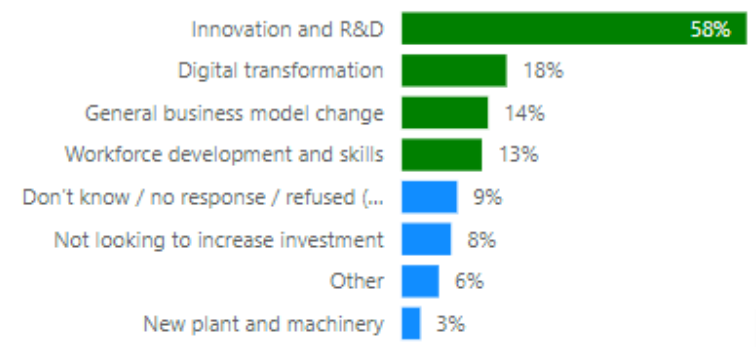
Current challenges facing firms (%)



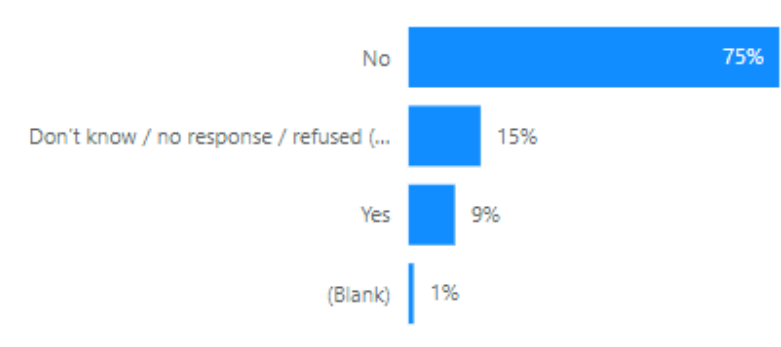
Future support needs (%)



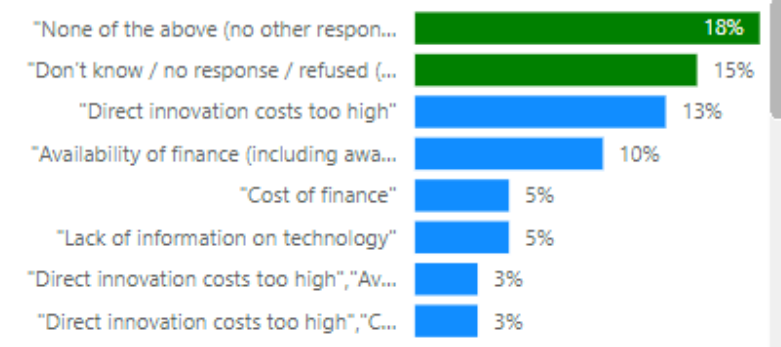
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - OVER 50s LED INSIGHTS

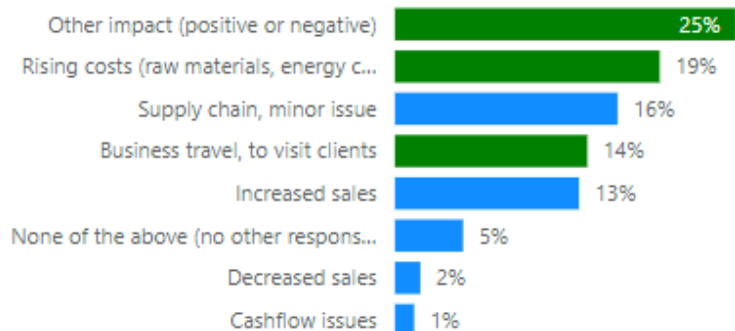
Responses 7.81	Responses 154	Respondents 145
--------------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------

Local Authority **Sector** **Size Band** **Submitted Date**

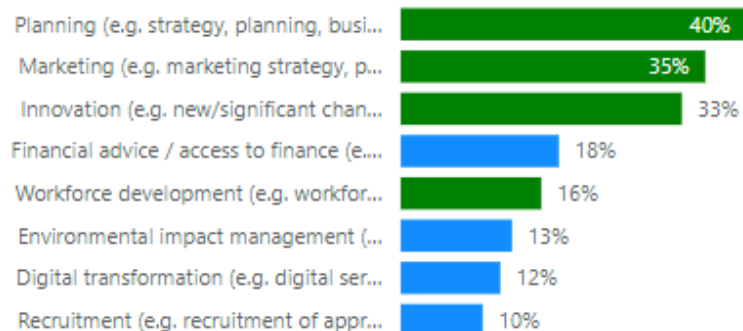
[HOME](#)

BGH clients only for Over 50s

Economic Impact



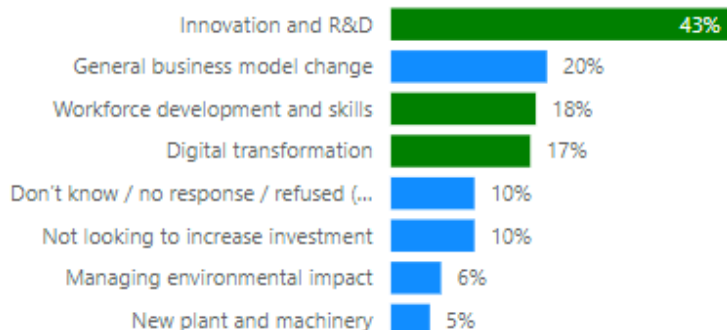
Current challenges facing firms (%)



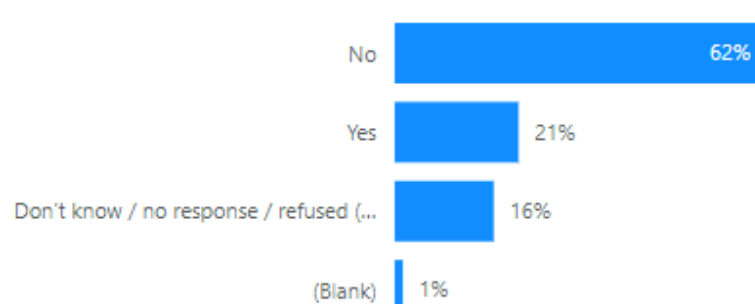
Future support needs (%)



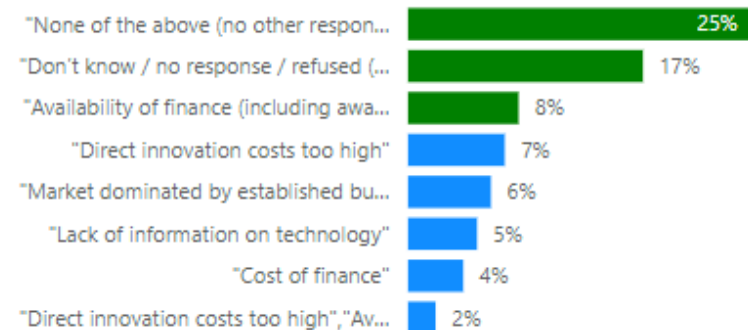
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - DISABILITY LED INSIGHTS

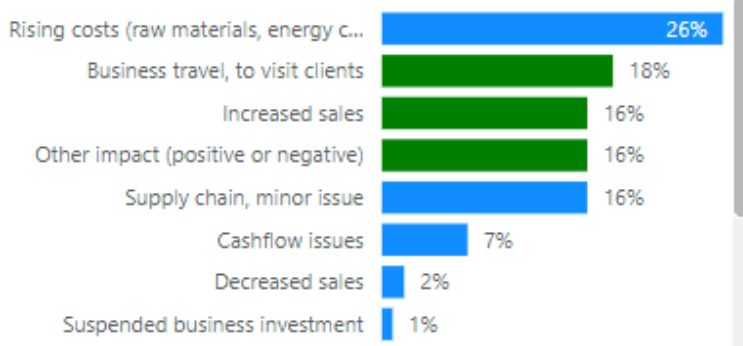
Responses	Responses	Respondents
8.04	22	22

Local Authority
Sector
Size Band
Submitted Date -

[HOME](#)

BGH clients only for Disability led

Economic Impact



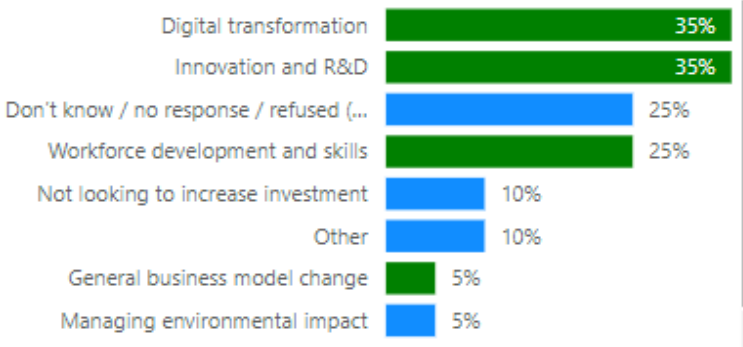
Current challenges facing firms (%)



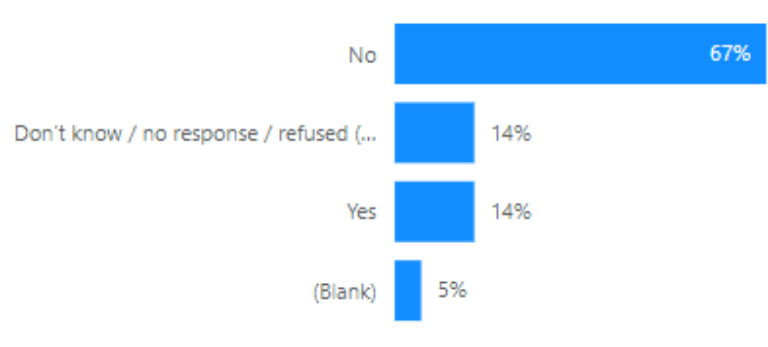
Future support needs (%)



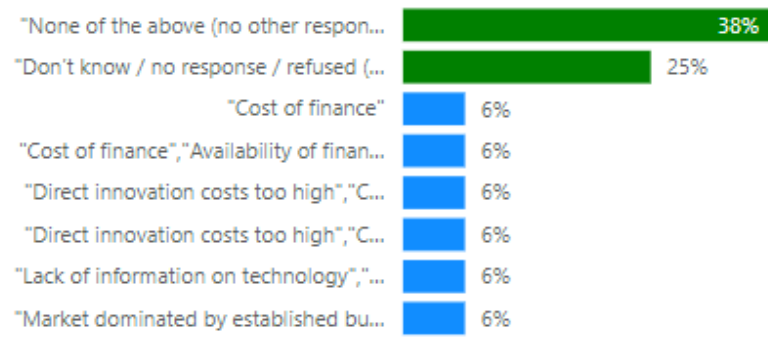
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - GREATER MANCHESTER SUMMARY

Responses
8.69

Responses
775

Respondents
677

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

All

All

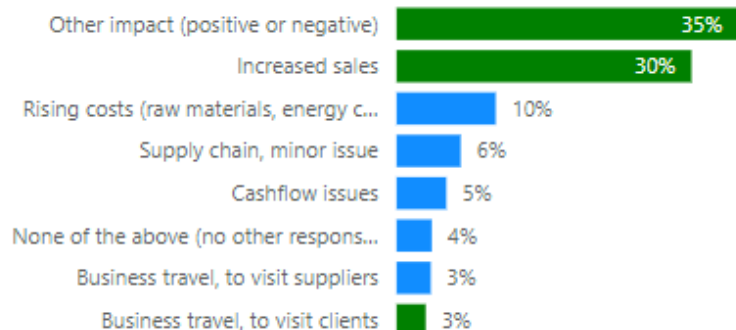
All

02/10/2024

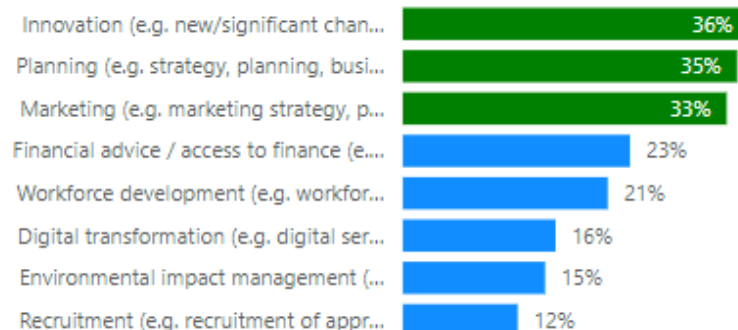
02/01/2025

HOME

Economic Impact



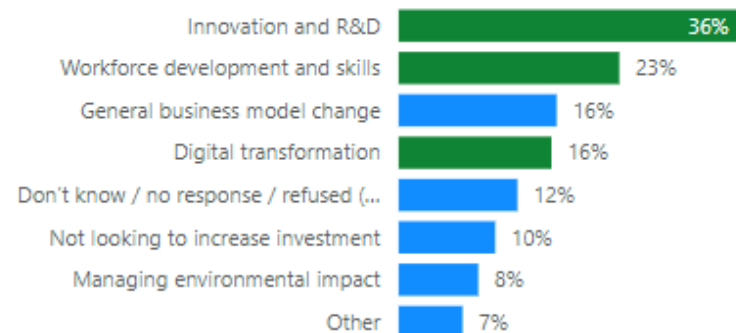
Current challenges facing firms (%)



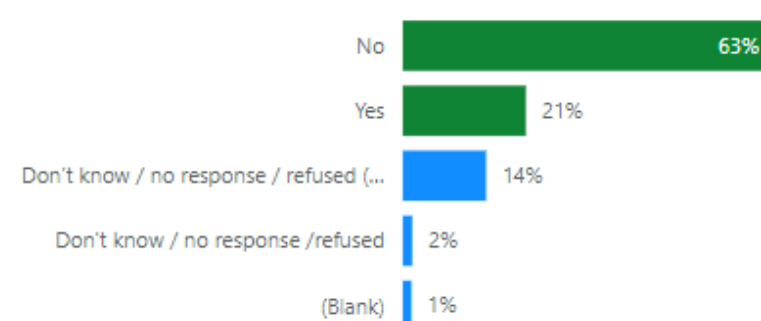
Future support needs (%)



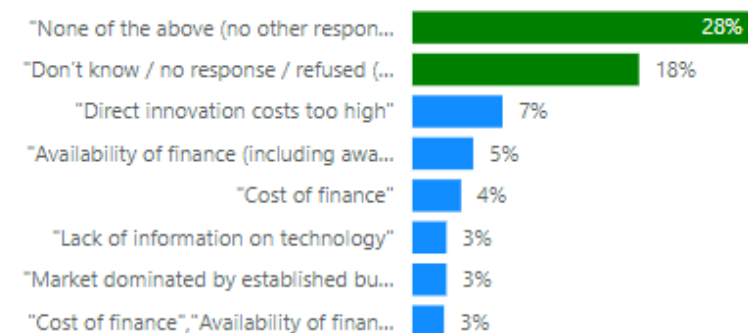
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - MANCHESTER

Responses
8.86

Responses
238

Respondents
199

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Manchester

All

All

02/10/2024

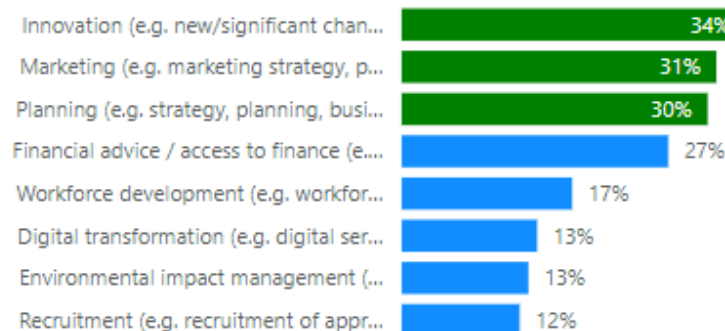
02/01/2025

HOME

Economic Impact



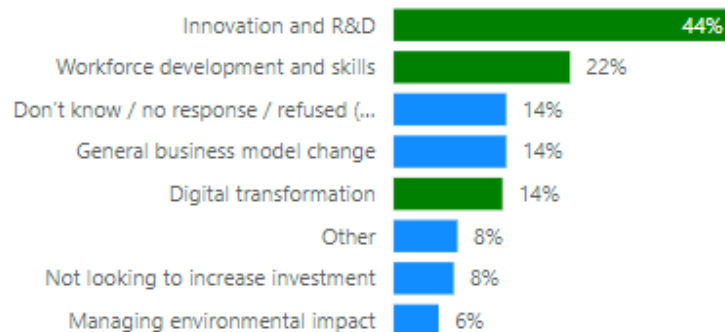
Current challenges facing firms (%)



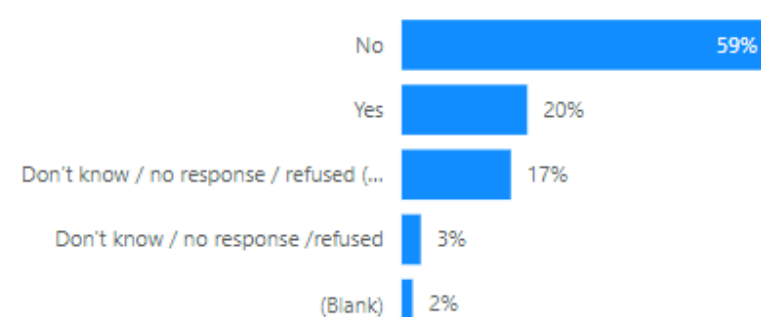
Future support needs (%)



Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - OLDHAM

Responses	Responses	Respondents
7.60	39	33

Local Authority **Sector** **Size Band** **Submitted Date**

[HOME](#)



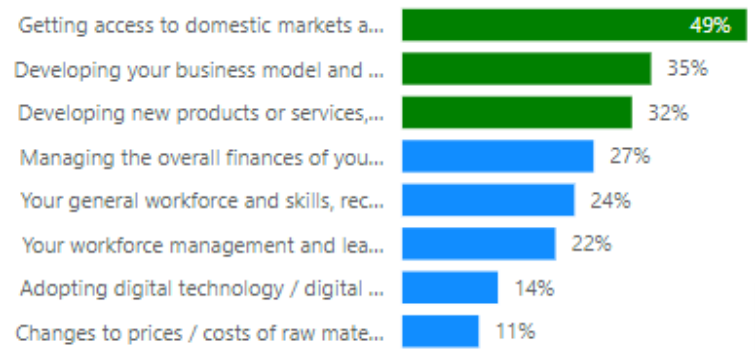
Economic Impact



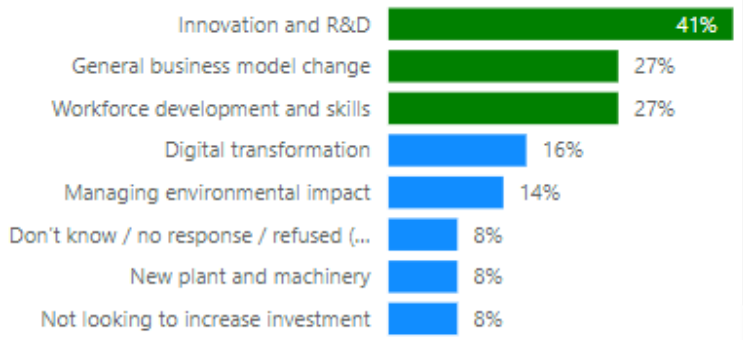
Current challenges facing firms (%)



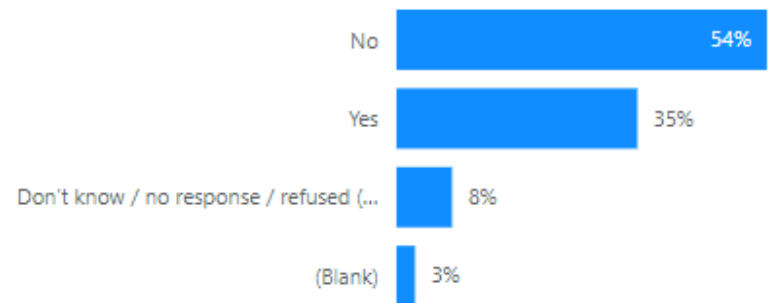
Future support needs (%)



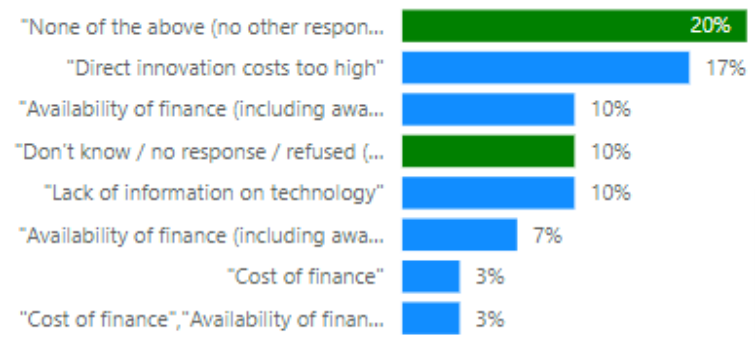
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - ROCHDALE

Responses
7.08

Responses
43

Respondents
40

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Rochdale

All

All

02/10/2024

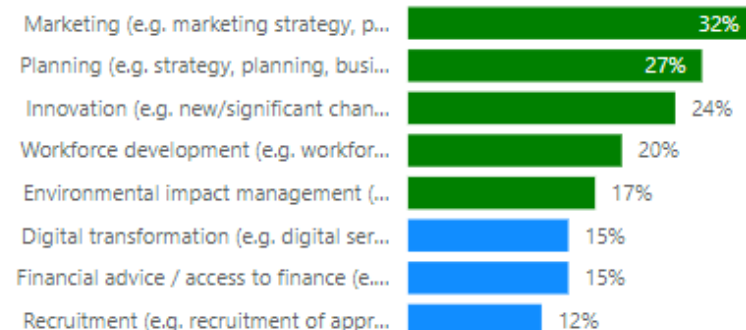
31/12/2024

HOME

Economic Impact



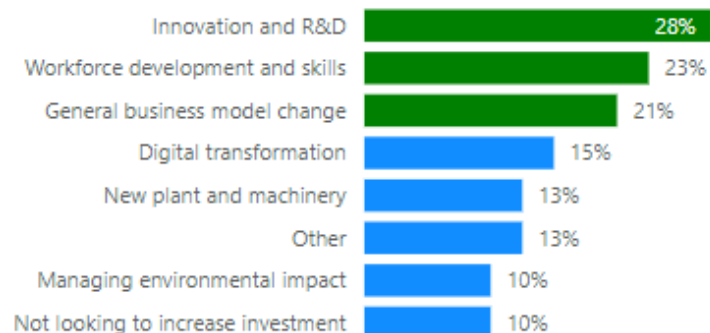
Current challenges facing firms (%)



Future support needs (%)



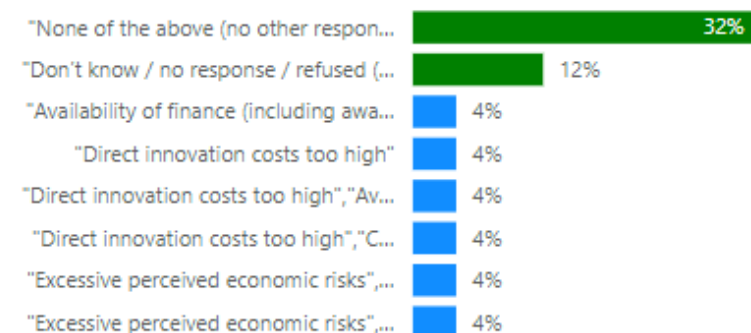
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - SALFORD

Responses
8.85

Responses
98

Respondents
85

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Salford

All

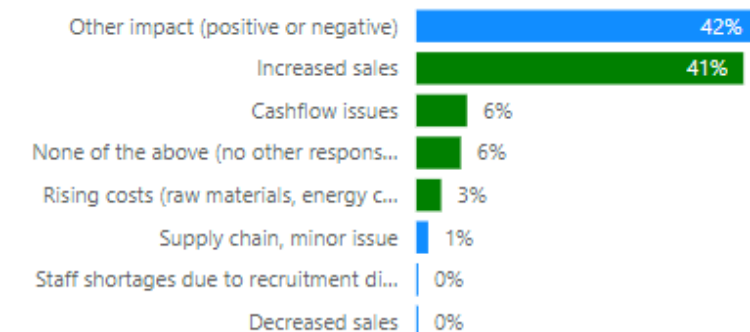
All

02/10/2024

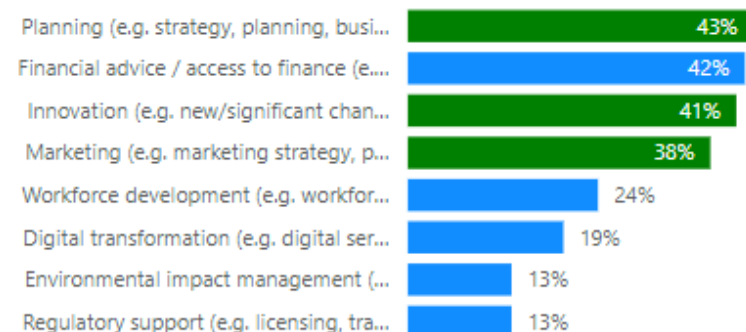
02/01/2025

HOME

Economic Impact



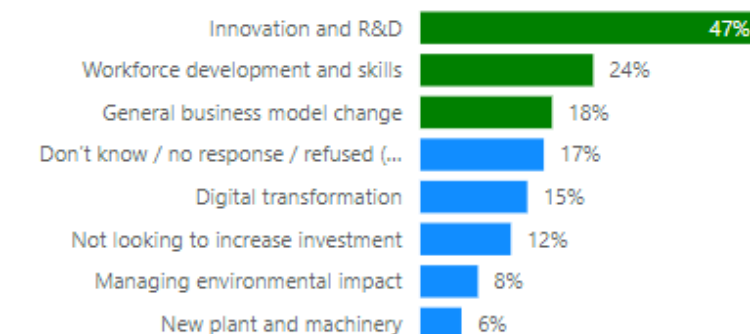
Current challenges facing firms (%)



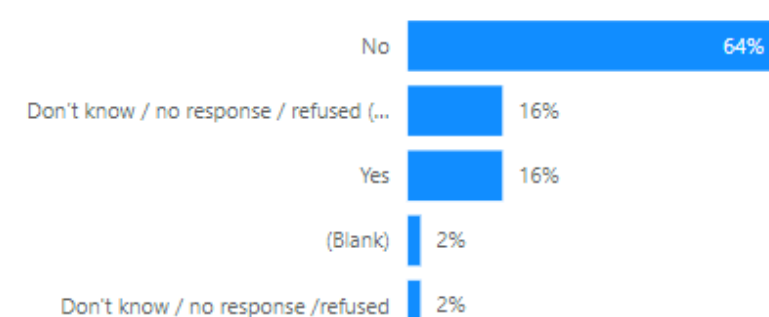
Future support needs (%)



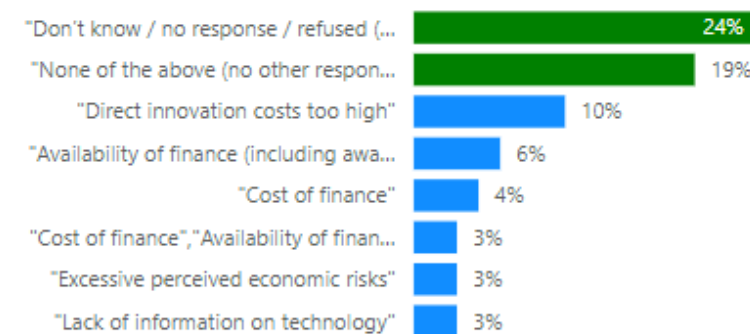
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - STOCKPORT

Responses	Responses	Respondents
8.19	101	91

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Stockport

All

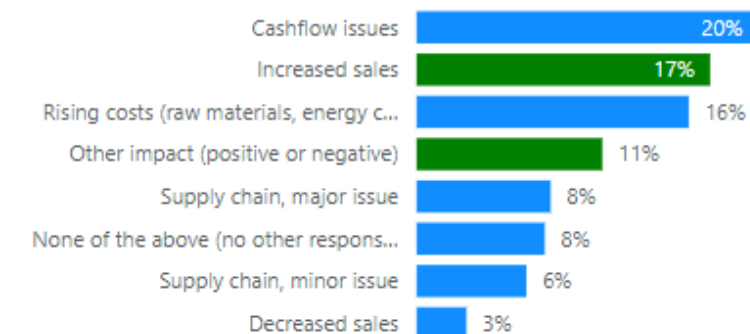
All

02/10/2024

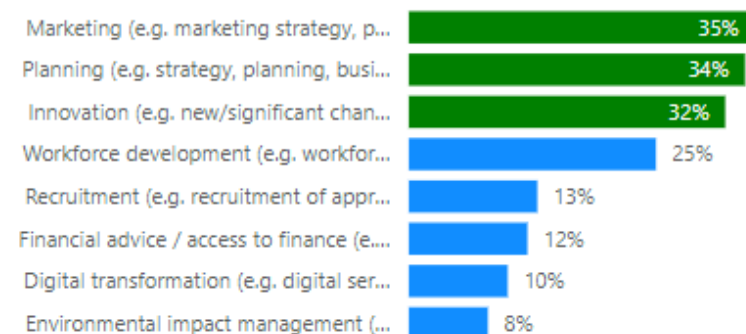
02/01/2025

HOME

Economic Impact



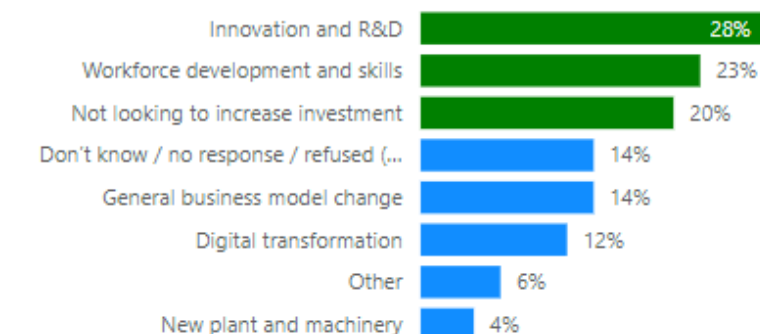
Current challenges facing firms (%)



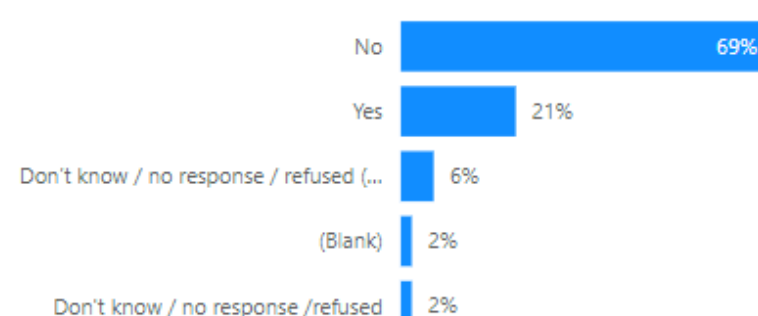
Future support needs (%)



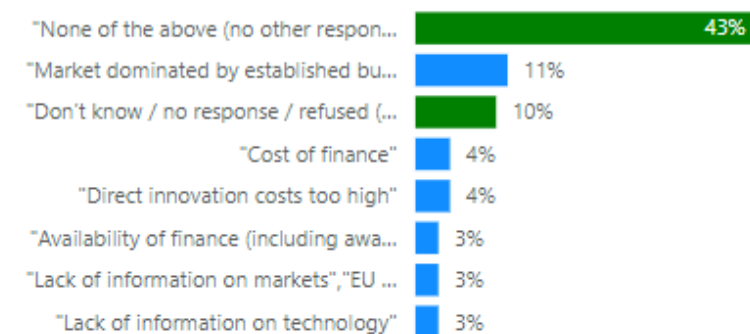
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - TAMESIDE

Responses
7.88

Responses
44

Respondents
40

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Tameside

All

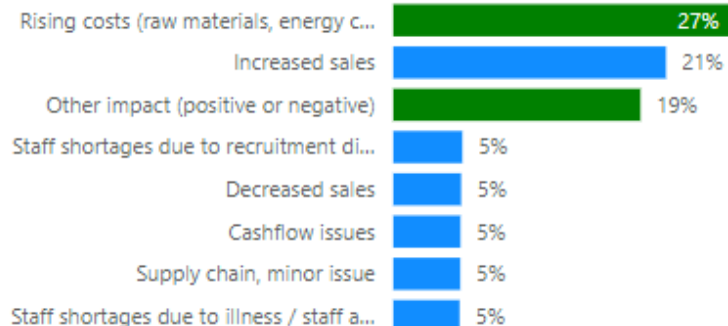
All

02/10/2024

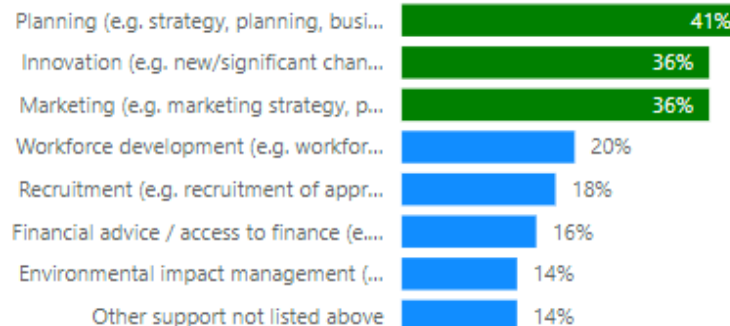
02/01/2025

HOME

Economic Impact



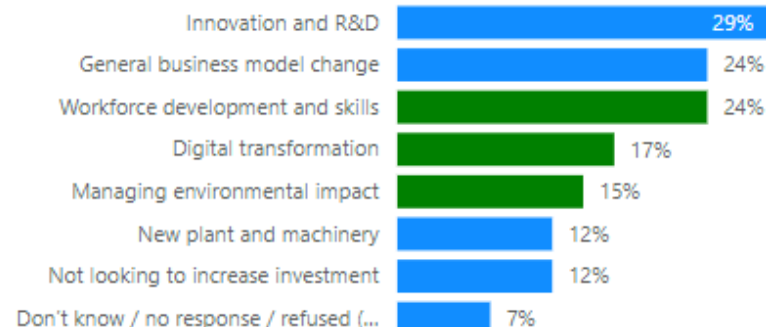
Current challenges facing firms (%)



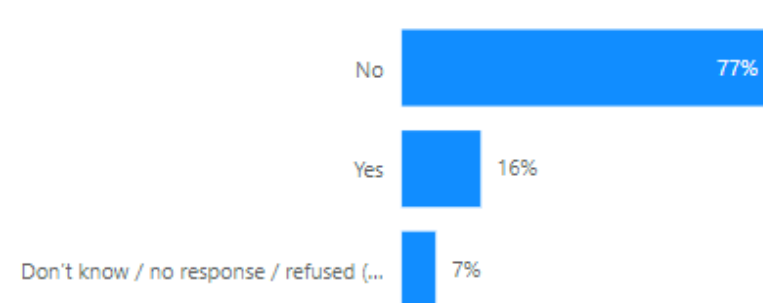
Future support needs (%)



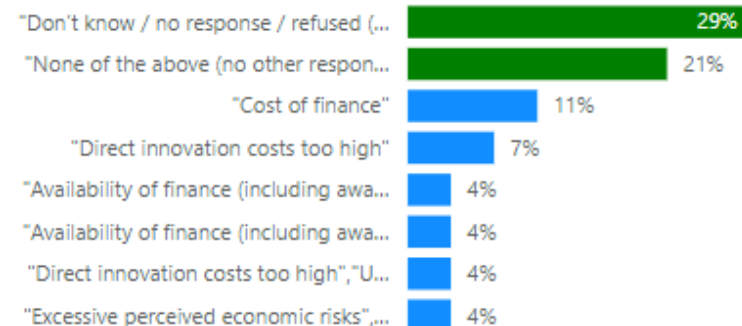
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - TRAFFORD

Responses
7.09

Responses
66

Respondents
54

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Trafford

All

All

02/10/2024

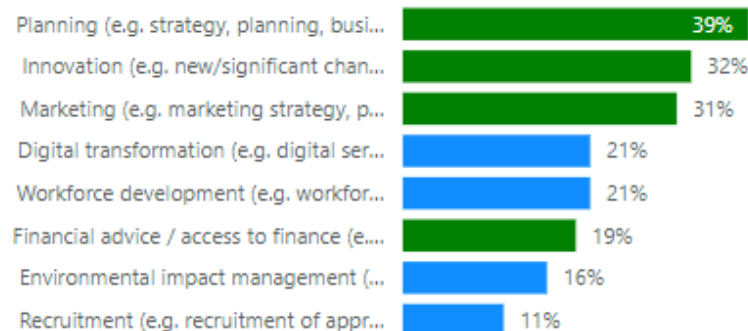
02/01/2025

HOME

Economic Impact



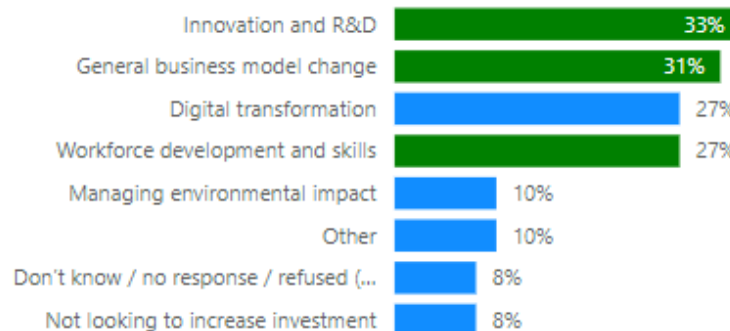
Current challenges facing firms (%)



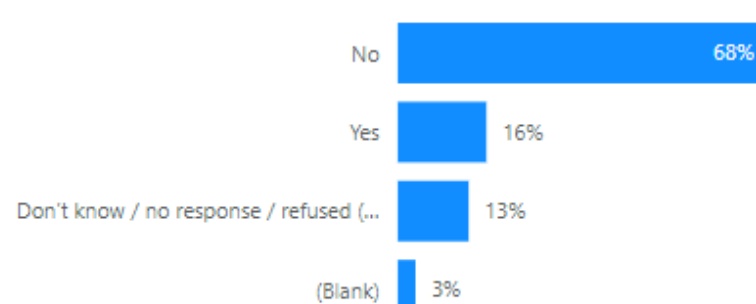
Future support needs (%)



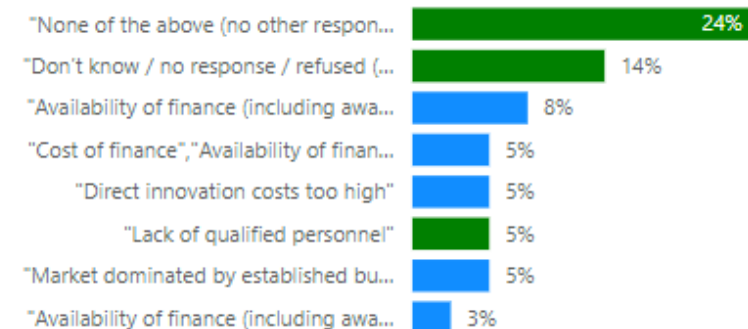
Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)



OGS LOCAL AUTHORITY DATA - WIGAN

Responses
8.92

Responses
54

Respondents
51

Local Authority

Sector

Size Band

Submitted Date

Wigan

All

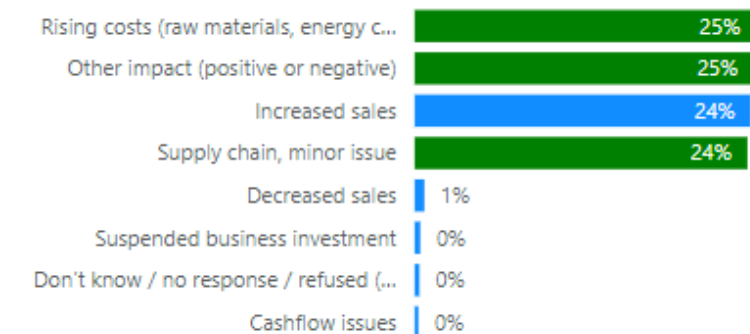
All

02/10/2024

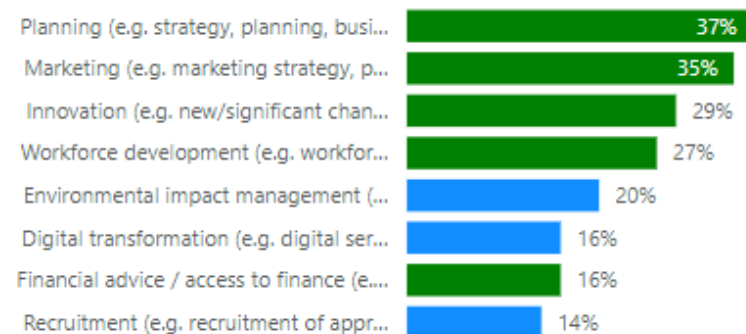
02/01/2025

HOME

Economic Impact



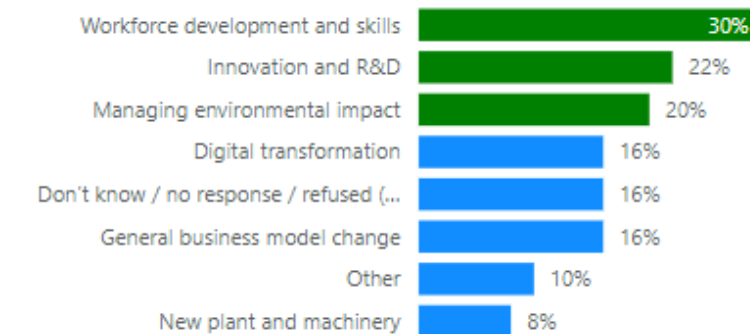
Current challenges facing firms (%)



Future support needs (%)



Main area for investment (%)



Innovation activity (%)



Barriers to innovation (%)

