

English Business Survey

Questionnaire (CORE QUESTIONS ONLY)

## CONTACT

### INT1 [ASK ALL]

Good morning, my name is .....calling from TNS-BMRB, an independent research agency. We are conducting the English Business survey for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. This survey will build up a better picture of business and economic conditions across the country to help promote business growth. May I ask you a few questions?

You will **NOT** need any detailed business information to hand as we will only be asking for a simple indication of how your business is faring.

1. Proceed with interview

## CHARACTERISTICS

### REFRL [ASK ALL]

INTERVIEWER CODE WHETHER THIS IS A REFERRAL

1. YES (REFERRED TO ANOTHER SITE)
2. NO (ORIGINAL SITE)

### TCONF [ASK ALL]

I would just like to explain that the full data from the survey, including company demographic information, will be available only to researchers and analysts within BIS, the National Institute for Economic and Social Research, TNS-BMRB and the ONS data lab and will be used for research purposes only. Anonymised survey data (where no individual company can be identified) will be available in the public domain.

Your name and company name will not be included on any data files and no individual firm will be identifiable in published findings.

IF NECESSARY SAY: NIESR are our partners in the research and will be reporting on the business and economic conditions based on the survey results and other relevant data.

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT ASK – SIMPLY CODE CONTINUE UNLESS THE RESPONDENT HAS GIVEN A SPONTANEOUS REFUSAL

1. Continue
2. Refused to continue further [TERMINATE]

## **EBS**

### **QPOST [ASK IF NOT REFERRED]**

Can I just check is the postcode of this workplace xxxx xxx?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

### **QPOSTB [ASK IF QPOST=2/3]**

Can you tell me the correct postcode?

WRITE IN

Refuse

### **QPOSTC [ASK IF REFERRED]**

INSERT COMPANY NAME AND ADDRESS AT TOP OF SCREEN

Can I just check that the postcode we have for NAME OF BUSINESS] at [ADDRESS, TOWN] is correct?

The postcode we have is [insert postcode], is that correct?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

### **QPOSD2 [ASK IF QPOSTC=2]**

Can you tell me the correct postcode?

### **QSITE [ASK ALL]**

Firstly can I check, is this workplace the only one in your organisation or does your organisation have other sites, either in the UK or abroad?

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: IF THERE ARE TWO BUSINESSES AT ONE SITE PLEASE ASK RESPONDENT TO ANSWER FOR ONLY THE SAMPLED BUSINESS (NAMED ON THE INTERVIEW SCREEN)

SINGLE CODE

1. Single workplace
2. Other workplaces
3. Don't know

## EBS

### TSITE [ASK IF QSITE=2 OR QSITE=3]

For all the questions that follow please give your answers for **this** workplace only.

IF REFERRAL: For all the questions that follow please give your answers for the [NAME OF BUSINESS] at [ADDRESS, TOWN].

### QTRADE [ASK IF (IDBR Legal status = 'Public corporation or nationalised body OR IDBR legal status = non profit body) OR ((IDBR legal status=company OR sole proprietor OR partnership) AND QSITE=2 OR 3)]

Does this workplace sell goods or services? By that I mean directly to the general public or other organisations?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

## SECTION – OUTPUT [ASK ALL]

I'd now like to ask you about the level of business activity recently and how you expect this to change in the future. Firstly, I'm going to ask you to consider performance **last month** compared with three months before that, that would be [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] compared with [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)], and to say whether the performance was higher, the same or lower.

### QOUTPUT [ASK ALL]

Would you say that the level of business activity or volume of output [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace'] in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] was higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: IF PUBLIC SECTOR ADD IF NECESSARY – by volume of output we mean volume of work or expenditure. We are interested in all activity at this workplace/ site, not just trading activity.

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

### QOUTPCb [ASK IF QOUTPUT NOT DK OR 2]

How much [higher/lower] was it?

Would you say, it was

1. Less than 5% [higher/lower]
2. 5-9% [higher/lower]
3. 10-24% [higher/lower]
4. 25-49% [higher/lower]
5. 50% or more [higher/lower]
6. Don't know

## EBS

### TOUT [ASK ALL]

Now I'd like you to think forward and consider what your performance is likely to be in three months time, that is [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH)].

### QFUTOUT [ASK ALL]

Do you expect the level of business activity or volume of output [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace'] in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH) ] to be higher, the same or lower than it was in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

### QFUTotPCb [ASK IF QFUTOUT NOT DK OR 2]

Do you expect it to be]?

1. Less than 5% [higher/lower]
2. 5-9% [higher/lower]
3. 10-24% [higher/lower]
4. 25-49% [higher/lower]
5. 50% or more [higher/lower]
6. Don't know

## SECTION - EXPORTS

I'd now like to ask you about exports

### QEXPT [ASK IF (QTRADE = 1) OR ((IDBR legal status code = 'company'/'sole proprietor'/'partnership') AND (QSITE=1))]

Does [this business/ [IF QSITE=2 'this workplace']] currently produce or sell goods or services for export directly overseas?

IF NECESSARY: By this I mean sales made directly to businesses or people based overseas (that is outside the uk)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

### QEXPTb [ASK QEXPT =1]

Would you say the volume of exports [IF QSITE=2 'from this workplace'] in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] was higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

SINGLE CODE

## EBS

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

### QEXPTFT [ASK QEXPT =1]

And do you expect the volume of exports [IF QSITE=2 'from this workplace] in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH) ] to be higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

## SECTION - DOMESTIC OUTPUT

### QDOM [ASK QEXPT =1]

Would you say the volume of **domestic** output or business activity [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace] in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] was higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

IF NECESSARY: By domestic output I mean sales to businesses or people within the UK.

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Not applicable (all output is for export)
5. Don't know

### QFTDOM [ASK QEXPT =1]

And do you expect domestic output or business activity [IF QSITE=2 'from this workplace] in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH) ] to be higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

## SECTION - STOCKS

### QSTOCK [ASK IF IDBR INDUSTRY STATUS = A-G, L and M]

## EBS

I'd like you to think about about stocks and inventories. Would you say the volume of stocks or inventories [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace'] in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] was higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: By stocks and inventories we mean both stocks of unsold goods and stocks of raw materials.

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know
5. Do not have any stocks (DO NOT READ OUT)

### QFTSTOCK [ASK IF IDBR INDUSTRY STATUS = A-G, L and M]

And do you expect the volume of stocks or inventories [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace'] in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH) ] to be higher, the same or lower than [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know
5. Do not have any stocks (DO NOT READ OUT)

## SECTION – JOBS AND HOURS

### QEMPS [ASK ALL]

IF REFERRAL ADD Still thinking about the site at INSERT COMPANY NAME AND LOCATION DETAILS FROM SAMPLE]

On average how many people were working at this workplace in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH]?

Please include/ Please can I confirm that that includes:

- Yourself [SUPPRESS IF REFERRAL]
- All full and part time employees
- All employees on permanent, temporary and fixed term contracts
- Any staff currently employed on a temporary basis via an agency
- Any freelance staff or contractors who work at this site
- Work experience placements

ENTER NUMBER

RANGE 1-99999

Don't know

### QEMPSB [ASK IF QEMPS NOT DK]

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CODE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE

1. 1
2. 2 to 4
3. 5 to 9
4. 10 to 49

## EBS

5. 50 to 99
6. 100 to 249
7. 250 to 499
8. 500 to 999
9. 1000 to 4999
10. 5000 or more people
11. Don't know

CHECK THAT QEMPS=QEMPS2 – HARD CHECK

### **QEMPSEST [ASK IF QEMPS = DK]**

Can you estimate whether the average number of people working at this workplace in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH] was ...  
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

1. 1
2. 2 to 4
3. 5 to 9
4. 10 to 49
5. 50 to 99
6. 100 to 249
7. 250 to 499
8. 500 to 999
9. 1000 to 4999 or
10. 5000 or more people
11. Don't know

### **QPPL [ASK ALL]**

Would you say the average number of people working [IF QSITE=2 'at the workplace'] in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] was higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

### **QFTPPL [ASK ALL]**

And do you expect the average number of people working [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace'] in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH) ] to be higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

### **QHRS [ASK ALL]**

## EBS

Would you say the total number of hours worked [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace'] in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] was higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

PROMPT: We are interested in the total number of hours worked including extra shifts and paid or un paid overtime, and excluding any hours not worked because people were on holiday or sick or not working for any other reason.

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

### QCPT [ASK ALL]

Would you say that in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH] your workforce were:

SINGLE CODE

1. Underutilised
2. Used at a satisfactory level, or
3. Overstretched
4. Don't know

### QCPTb [ASK ALL]

And would you say that in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH] your capital, by which I mean things such as buildings, plant and machinery, equipment, vehicles and computer hardware, was:

SINGLE CODE

1. Underutilised
2. Used at a satisfactory level, or
3. Overstretched
4. Don't know

## SECTION – PRICES

### TPRCBK [ASK ALL]

I am now going to ask you about the prices you pay for your inputs. For each of the following please tell me whether the average price you pay was higher, the same or lower in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

IF NECESSARY SAY: I am talking about the average price per unit rather than the total price which would fluctuate depending on quantity

### QPRCBKa [ASK ALL]

Average wages and other labour costs

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: Were they higher, the same or lower per person in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)]?

1. Higher



## EBS

2. The same
3. Lower
4. Don't know
5. Not applicable (DO NOT READ OUT)

ADD SOFT CHECK IF QEMPS >1 AND QEMPS NOT DK AND **QPRCBKa = N/A**

Can I just check that there are [INSERT ANSWER FROM QEMPS] working at the site and no wage/other labour costs – is that correct? If no recheck whether wage and other labour costs have changed.

## EBS

**TPRCFT** [ASK ALL]

Now thinking about the future.

**QPRCFT** [ASK IF PRCBKa NOT "Not Applicable"]

Do you expect average wages and other labour costs to be higher, the same or lower in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH) ] than in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ]?

1. Higher
2. The same
3. Lower
4. Don't know
5. Not applicable (DO NOT READ OUT)

**QPCHRD** ASK IF (QTRADE = 1) OR ((IDBR legal status code = 'company'/'sole proprietor'/'partnership') AND (QSITE=1))

I'd now like you to think about output prices or prices charged.

Would you say the average prices you charged in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] were higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH) ]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

**QPCHRDFT** ASK IF (QTRADE = 1) OR ((IDBR legal status code = 'company'/'sole proprietor'/'partnership') AND (QSITE=1))

And do you expect the average prices you charge in [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH) ] to be higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

## EBS

### SECTION – INVESTMENT

#### TINEVST [ASK ALL]

I now want to ask you about spending on capital investments, by which I mean things such as buildings, plant and machinery, equipment, vehicles and computer hardware and software that you might have bought or leased.

#### QINVEST [ASK ALL]

Did you make any new capital investments between the 1<sup>st</sup> of [INSERT MONTH (2 MONTHS PRIOR TO REF MONTH)] and the end of [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH]?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: Please include any capital investments which you have started to use or taken ownership of in this period. Please do not include those you have placed orders for but not started to use.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

#### QIVSTINC [ASK IF QINVEST=1]

Has this investment increased the potential level of output or business activity of [this business / [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace']] or has it simply maintained the existing potential?

1. Increased potential
2. Maintained potential
3. Don't know

### SECTION – CAPITAL INVESTMENT

#### QFTINVEST [ASK ALL]

And have you made or do you expect to make any new capital investment between the 1<sup>st</sup> of [INSERT MONTH (1 MONTH AFTER REF MONTH)] and the end of [INSERT MONTH (3 MONTHS AFTER REF MONTH)]?

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE PROBE WHETHER THEY BELIEVE THEY ARE VERY LIKELY TO MAKE THE INVESTMENT. IF NOT CODE AS NO OR DON'T KNOW AS APPROPRIATE.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

#### QFTIVSTINC [ASK IF QFTINVEST=1]

Will this investment increase the potential level of output or business activity at [this business/ [IF QSITE2= 'at this workplace']] or simply maintain the existing potential?

1. Increase potential
2. Maintain potential

## EBS

3. Don't know

## TANUAL [ASK ALL]

I would now like to ask you briefly about how your business performance compares with the same time last year.

## QOUTYR [ASK ALL]

Would you say the level of business activity or volume of output [IF QSITE=2 'at this workplace'] in [INSERT REFERENCE MONTH ] was higher, the same or lower than in [INSERT MONTH (1 YEAR PRIOR TO REFERENCE MONTH) ]?

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: If public sector add if necessary – by volume of output we mean volume of work or expenditure. We are interested in all activity at this workplace/ site, not just trading activity.

## SINGLE CODE

1. Higher
2. The same or
3. Lower
4. Don't know

## QCONS [ASK ALL]

That is all the questions we have for you.

As I explained at the start of the survey, the full data from the survey, including company demographic information, will be available only to researchers and analysts within BIS, the National Institute for Economic and Social Research, TNS-BMRB and the ONS data lab and will be used for research purposes only. Anonymised survey data (where no individual company can be identified) will be available in the public domain.

BIS would like to link your responses to this survey to other information that your organisation has provided to Government. By this data linkage BIS can reduce the burden of surveys on your business and can improve the evidence that is used.

Do you give your consent for us to do this?

## SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

## QPANEL [ASK ALL]

BIS may be conducting some further research on this topic in the future. Would you be happy for someone from TNS-BMRB to re-contact you using the information you have provided today and invite you to participate in this research?

1. Yes
2. No

**EBS**

**QNAME [ASK IF IF QPANEL=1]**

So that we can get in touch with you can I just take your contact details.

INTERVIEWER: ENTER THE NAME OF THE RESPONDENT  
(4 SCREENS, JOB TITLE, TITLE, FIRST NAME, SURNAME) (INCLUDE REFUSAL CODES FOR ALL)

**QTEL [ASK IF QPANEL=2]**

And can I check is your telephone number [INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER]?

YES IF NO COLLECT NEW NUMBER

**QEMAIL [ASK IF QPANEL=2]**

And can I take your e mail address? **READ BACK E MAIL ADDRESS TO CONFIRM**

THANK AND CLOSE

Thank you for taking part in this survey today. The findings from the survey will be published on the website

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/enterprise-and-business-support/analytical-unit/statistics>

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