



Department for
Business & Trade

Business Questionnaire: Summary of Responses

Unlocking Business: Reform Driven By You

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Business Questionnaire: Summary of Responses

Introduction

The *Unlocking Business: Reform Driven by You* questionnaire ran from 21 October to 16 December 2025 to gather detailed feedback on UK regulations that businesses believe are outdated, inconsistent, or unnecessarily restricting growth, innovation, and investment. Businesses were asked to identify specific regulatory problems, as well as examples of good practice, to support collaborative reform with regulators and other stakeholders. This document summarises the main themes emerging from responses, reflecting a broad range of views, though it is not representative of all businesses (for representative data please refer to the [Business Perception Survey](#)).

Executive Summary

The Business Questionnaire had 271 unique respondents, including businesses, trade associations, business representative organisations and individuals. 179 responses were received through the online platform, Qualtrics, and a further 92 responses were received via email. Demographic information on respondents can be found in Annex 1 to this report. The questionnaire included 16 multiple choice questions where respondents could answer yes or no, and 30 free-text questions. 196 out of 220 of respondents (89%) said that regulations are imposing unreasonable costs on their business; 115 out of 126 respondents (91%) said that regulators do not adequately support economic growth in their sectors; 27 out of 107 respondents (25%) said that regulators were sufficiently transparent about delivery times; and 64 out of 95 respondents (67%) said they have not brought a product to market because of regulatory issues.

Across responses, several consistent themes emerged, underscoring that the UK regulatory system is often complex, inconsistent, slow and burdensome, with disproportionate impacts on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):

Administrative complexity and duplication were widely cited, with businesses reporting excessive paperwork, repeated data submissions and fragmented systems. This diverts resources from productive activity and growth. To address this, the Government has set an ambitious target to reduce the administrative burden of regulation by 25% by the end of this parliament, equivalent to £5.6bn. Government has so far delivered or identified an estimated £2bn in net annual admin savings. This is made up of £1.5bn estimated net annual admin savings from delivered measures and further £0.6bn estimated net annual admin savings from

in progress measures¹. This includes initiatives such as [accelerating housing and infrastructure](#) delivery by streamlining the UK planning system, removing extensive compliance and reporting requirements on energy suppliers by ending obligations associated with the Energy Company Obligation, and modernising corporate reporting.

Regulatory delays and unpredictability were a dominant concern. Slow approvals, unclear timelines and limited transparency create uncertainty and hinder investment. To address this, the Government has committed to exploring reforms such as digitisation and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to speed up regulatory approvals. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the top 16 regulators regarding regulatory approvals, authorisations and licenses are currently published on the [Regulation Dashboard](#) to increase transparency and accountability. Using the dashboard data, the Government is committed to reducing regulatory delays, such as reforms to the drones sector to improve licensing and approvals, improved targets for responding to environmental permits and digitisation across a number of areas to speed up approvals.

Inconsistent interpretation and enforcement also drives burden, with unclear or outdated guidance and varying decisions across regulators leading to inefficiency and risk-averse behaviour. To address this, the Government is working with regulators to ensure that guidance is updated and improved as part of its drive to reduce regulatory burdens. Various regulators, such as the Environment Agency (EA), offer pre-screening or pre-application services to help improve applications. Furthermore, the Government remains committed to improving regulator performance and to create a more predictable responsive and proportionate regulatory environment.

Disproportionate impacts on SMEs were a strong cross-cutting issue, with fixed compliance costs, one-size-fits-all requirements and regimes designed for larger or higher-risk entities widely viewed as bearing disproportionately on SMEs and micro-businesses. To address this, building on the small business strategy, the Government has launched a new joint [Small Business Taskforce](#) with industry, co-chaired by Tina McKenzie MBE of the Federation for Small Business, alongside targeted reviews which aim to reduce these burdens and support growth.

Fragmentation and poor coordination across the regulatory landscape was frequently cited, with overlapping remits, poor coordination and limited data sharing between regulators further increasing complexity. To address this the Government is also undertaking a number of initiatives to supercharge digital delivery of regulation, including improvements to digital regulatory content, upgrades to digital license application services, and the development of a platform enabling a single, joined-up user journey for businesses interacting with Government.

¹ Delivered measures are those that are in force, and in progress measures are those that HMG is currently in the process of implementing (i.e. legislation going through Parliament, or measures currently under consultation). Numbers do not sum due to rounding. [See technical annex](#) for further detail.

Additionally, the Government is piloting initiatives such as the [Lead Environmental Regulator \(LER\)](#) model for complex major projects involving multiple regulators. It aims to reduce the time required for major projects to progress through planning, permitting, and licensing, and improve the developer experience by offering clearer, more proportionate advice on managing environmental impacts.

Lack of focus on growth and support for innovation is frequently cited by respondents. To address this, leading regulators have published Growth Goals, and the Government has announced plans to bring forward a [Regulating for Growth Bill](#) to support economic growth and innovation while maintaining strong protections. This will include powers to strengthen the Growth Duty so that regulators are required to actively promote economic growth alongside their core responsibilities, and powers to enable sandboxing to test new technologies and innovations in real market settings and speed up approval times. These measures will help regulation to keep pace with technological change and support growth.

Topical analysis

Responses to the Business Questionnaire came from a wide range of businesses across a number of sectors, resulting in significant variation in issues raised, including many highly specific regulatory concerns. While this limited the scope for broad thematic analysis, several common topics emerged: environmental permitting; chemicals; UK/EU divergence; planning; health and safety; food, farming and agri-tech; medicines and medical devices; packaging and Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR); and IR35 (off-payroll working rules) amongst others.

On environmental permitting, the EA has several commitments outlined in the Regulation Action Plan (RAP) to improve its performance. Through its growth goals the EA has committed to accelerating processing of permits and to improving the customer experience, and is undergoing a programme to modernise permitting through digital transformation and process improvement. It has, over the last year, improved systems & processes, developed new AI capability and launched better online services for customers for applications and payments. The EA's Priority Tracked Service (PTS) has been launched and allows developers to work with a dedicated team for their permits and track progress. The service is currently supporting 56 major developments across sectors including housing, energy, infrastructure, mining and technology with bespoke advice. Further to this, the EA has launched a Nature Permitting Coordination Service (NPC) to support smarter landscape and nature recovery projects. Whilst some challenges remain, the EA demonstrated improved permitting timeliness performance in 2025/26 across all permit categories and ended the year meeting its ambitious targets for Category 1 and 4 permits. Reforms will continue to improve performance across all categories in 2026/27, and higher targets have been set. The EA's ambition is to meet 95% of all decisions issued in target timeframes across all permit categories by 2028-29.

Concerns were raised about the costs and complexity arising from UK-EU regulatory divergence, for example in chemicals with UK REACH vs EU REACH. The Government has committed, through the Environment Improvement Plan 2025, to reform UK REACH by December 2028 to improve efficiency and alignment with key trading partners where appropriate. The Government will continue to take a pragmatic, sector-by-sector approach, with alignment considered where it is in our national interest and supports growth, investment, stability, and resilience.

More broadly on chemicals regulation, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has introduced legislation to reform Great Britain's chemicals regulatory framework, amending three HSE-led regimes in Great Britain covering biocides, classification and labelling, and the export/import of hazardous chemicals. These changes are intended to support a more agile and proportionate chemicals regulatory system by: reducing delivery times for mandatory classifications by 6 months by 2027; putting in place provisions ensuring the continued availability of biocidal substances essential for public health, animal health, and environmental protection by 2027; and streamlining the UK's international obligations on the import and export of chemicals, including removal of unnecessary regulatory burdens by 2027.

In medicines and medical devices, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is increasing capacity and modernising processes to speed up and improve predictability of approvals. In partnership with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), it has introduced an integrated scientific advice service and parallel approvals for suitable products, reducing timelines by three to six months. A seamless end-to-end regulatory NHS uptake pathway is a unique strength of the UK system and supports faster patient access to innovations in medicines and medical technologies, strengthens the UK's position as a launch market for innovative products, and supports high-value jobs and exports.

In food regulation, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) is developing a more consistent national approach in England for the regulations of large food businesses through its [Future of Food Regulation Programme](#), alongside proposals to better support local delivery. To support [innovation](#), the FSA and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) have invested in research and regulatory sandboxes (e.g. precision fermentation and cultivated products), alongside business support services and clearer regulatory guidance.

On packaging, the pEPR scheme aims to deliver environmental benefits by increasing recycling rates and reducing waste, requiring producers to cover the full costs of managing household packaging waste. A revised scheme was introduced in April 2025, with Defra taking steps to address stakeholder concerns. In March 2026, UK Packaging PRO was appointed as the Producer Responsibility Organisation, strengthening collaboration between government and industry and embedding producer expertise in scheme delivery. A consultation on reforming the Packaging Recovery Note (PRN) system to tackle fraud and improve transparency has recently closed, with Defra now reviewing responses and considering next

steps. From 2026, fees will be modulated using PackUK's Recyclability Assessment Methodology and Modulation Policy, with more recyclable (green-rated) packaging, including glass, incurring lower fees, and less recyclable (red-rated) packaging incurring higher charges. Defra recognises concerns that some non-household (dual-use) packaging falls within the definition of household packaging and is subject to disposal costs. Work is underway to test interim solutions while developing a longer-term approach.

Concerns about IR35 off-payroll working rules were also raised. While primarily a tax issue, the Government recognises the administrative burden. The rules, in place for over 20 years and aligned with established [Tax Policy Making Principles](#), aim to ensure fairness between employees and contractors. Reforms introduced in 2017 and 2021 shifted responsibility for determining whether the off-payroll working rules apply to the clients engaging with the individual's company and are estimated to have raised an additional £4.2 billion in revenue. There are no plans to repeal these reforms, though HMRC continues efforts to improve administration.

More broadly, insights from the questionnaire are informing targeted regulatory deep dives and taskforces in areas such as licensing, agriculture, health and safety, and local government. Initial work is identifying opportunities to streamline approvals, simplify guidance, and boost productivity. Further deep dives and taskforces will focus on high-growth sectors, including the Small Business Regulatory Taskforce.

Further detail on these and other reforms is set out in the [Regulation Update Paper](#) and the [Administrative Burden Reduction Programme: Technical Annex](#). The Government will continue to use the evidence gathered to drive reforms and reduce regulatory burdens across the remainder of the Parliament.

Methodology

The Business Questionnaire consisted of a combination of 16 multiple choice questions and 30 free text questions. For the free text questions, a number of approaches were utilised to get an in-depth understanding of responses. For several of the questions with sufficient response rates we conducted a thematic analysis using Natural Language Processing (NLP) with topic modelling methodology. Manual analysis was carried out where response rates were too low to utilise NLP. However, as the number of topics raised by respondents was so varied with low frequency, further analysis was needed. The responses were manually categorised by topic area through review of individual responses. All relevant topics and themes were quality assured to ensure robustness. Microsoft Copilot was used to enhance the quality and efficiency of analysis, providing insights to support manual analysis by policy teams. Response rates were too low for us to utilise other large language models. This document presents the

summary of responses by section and question as outlined in the questionnaire. Annex 2 provides a full list of response rates to quantitative and qualitative questions.

Section One: Identifying Regulatory Burdens to Business Growth and Innovation

Businesses were asked to highlight regulations that unnecessarily hinder operations, growth, and innovation, and to suggest ways to reduce administrative burdens. The aim is not deregulation, but a more practical, efficient, and proportionate system, including the use of digital and AI-driven solutions.

Respondents expressed widespread concern about the scale, complexity, and unpredictability of regulation. Businesses cited inconsistent communication, slow decision-making, and fragmented responsibilities across regulators, often compounded by poor data-sharing and coordination.

The financial cost of complying with regulations is a pronounced concern, particularly how unpredictable these are and how quickly these costs can escalate. 196 of 220 respondents (89%) said that regulations are imposing unreasonable cost on their business. Responses suggest that costs vary by sector and can stem from a wide range of regulatory activities, including reporting requirements, approval fees, permitting costs, assessments, third party advice and more.

206 of 219 respondents (94%) said that there are regulations that limit their ability to grow their business and innovate for the future; 210 of 219 respondents (96%) said that regulations in their sector are disproportionately creating unnecessary problems across different types of businesses.

Duplication is a key problem, with businesses frequently submitting the same information to multiple regulators. This is compounded by fragmented responsibilities, inconsistent guidance, and divergence between UK and international (especially EU) standards. Some examples where these trends are most evident include environmental permitting, pEPR, chemicals regulation and financial reporting. These issues increase costs, create uncertainty, and divert resources from productive activity, particularly for SMEs.

Across many sectors, respondents report that cumulative administrative burdens, frequent regulatory changes, unpredictable or escalating costs, and one-size-fits-all approaches were seen as undermining investment and innovation. SMEs are disproportionately affected due to fixed compliance costs and limited capacity. Respondents consistently called for modernisation, harmonisation, and more proportionate, risk-based approaches.

There was strong support for clearer guidance, streamlined processes, improved coordination, and digital solutions such as single portals, pre-populated data, and shared systems. Sector-specific suggestions included faster, risk-based environmental permitting, a “Single Trade Window” for customs declarations and border paperwork, and simplified, consolidated pEPR requirements.

Section Two: Direct Costs of Regulation

We asked about the direct costs imposed on business by regulation. These are costs businesses must meet when laws require them to take specific actions, with little or no flexibility in how they comply. The focus is on information requirements; investigations, inspections and enforcement; other regulatory activities; and regulatory structures and strategic prioritisation.

Information requirements

Reporting obligations impose significant burdens, driven by duplication, inconsistent guidance, and frequent changes. SMEs face similar requirements as large businesses but lack dedicated resources, while larger businesses incur high absolute costs with some reporting expenditure of millions of pounds annually. One manufacturer noted that regulatory paperwork burden can be identical whether you produce 200 units or 200,000 units.

There were several primary burden areas which emerged consistently across sectors throughout responses. pEPR was cited as among the most resource-intensive requirements, with respondents reporting significant annual costs and resources. The IR35 regime was the most frequently cited topic requiring reform, however this is a tax issue rather than one of regulation.

Respondents highlighted the opportunity cost of compliance, with resources diverted from core activities. Key proposals included consolidating reporting, introducing a single digital portal with shared data, enabling automation, and adopting proportionate, risk-based requirements. Many also called for a period of regulatory stability to support longer-term planning. Notably, proposals were not calls for deregulation but rather evidence-based recommendations for achieving regulatory objectives more efficiently.

Investigations, inspections and enforcement

Respondents reported duplication, unclear expectations, and inconsistent interpretation across regulators. Disproportionate evidence requirements for low-risk activities and short-notice inspections and audits disrupt operations, particularly for SMEs. Respondents also highlight sector-specific issues such as repeated evidence cycles in planning and permitting,

inconsistent local authority practices, and digital health providers being assessed against in-person clinical standards. Biological crop protection companies, retailers, and funeral sector operators, among others, note that they are often subject to regimes or data requests designed for entirely different risk profiles or business models.

Further regulatory activities

Respondents noted additional, often informal demands that sit outside formal information, inspection, or enforcement requirements, including bespoke documentation and repeated data requests. These create uncertainty, drive over-compliance, and contribute to delays, especially in planning, environmental permitting, and product approvals, which are repeatedly identified as significant barriers to investment and innovation.

Economic growth

115 out of 126 respondents (91%) do not believe regulators sufficiently support growth. The key issue is implementation: slow processes, duplication, and complexity hinder investment, innovation, and operational efficiency. The responses draw on recurring themes across sectors, highlighting systemic issues such as uncertainty, delay, inconsistency, and fragmented processes, and set out how businesses believe a stronger legal Growth Duty could improve outcomes. Respondents called for clearer service standards, better coordination, earlier guidance, and more transparent, predictable decision-making.

Regulatory structures and strategic direction

Respondents again highlighted overlapping responsibilities, fragmented oversight, and inconsistent processes across regulators. While consolidation is supported, maintaining specialist expertise is considered important. Stronger Government direction, clearer growth objectives, and improved alignment across regulators were widely recommended.

Section Three: Indirect Costs of Regulation

This section sought evidence on the indirect costs of regulation, those sometimes less visible but still significant burdens that arise from how regulators implement and enforce rules, and how businesses must adapt to regulatory procedures.

Regulator delays and timeliness

Responses highlight pervasive concerns about regulatory delays, slow decision-making and unclear or inconsistent timelines across multiple regulators. Respondents repeatedly describe lengthy regulatory approval processes, unpredictable turnaround times on granting of licenses

and authorisations, and limited transparency on progress. These issues create business uncertainty, delay product launches, impact business planning, inhibit investment and lead to significant operational and financial impacts, particularly affecting SMEs and innovation-led sectors.

Many regulators lack meaningful, end-to-end Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), focusing instead on internal processes. Many regulators provide limited updates once applications or submissions are made, leaving businesses uncertain about likely completion dates or application process. Delays range from weeks to years and can incur substantial costs, including lost sales, missed opportunities, and stalled investment. Many respondents emphasise that delays are often caused by outdated processes and systems, lack of proportionality, capacity constraints, inconsistent application of guidance, and multiple uncoordinated clarification cycles.

Regulators' operational processes and behaviours

Respondents report that regulatory processes are outdated, fragmented, and poorly aligned with modern digital business needs. Common issues include duplicative reporting, overlapping regulatory interventions, unclear or inconsistent guidance, repeated evidence requests, manual submissions, and fragmented systems, all contributing to slow and unpredictable timelines. Poor cross-regulator coordination and inconsistent officer-level behaviours increase compliance risk and drive unnecessary over-documentation. These burdens disproportionately affect SMEs, and lead to significant time and cost impacts, including lost staff hours, consultancy spend, delayed product launches, and missed opportunities. Duplication across regulators, often requesting similar information in different formats and timelines, results in repeated data collection, parallel audits, and inefficiencies, compounded by legacy systems.

Inconsistent rules and bespoke templates across authorities create uncertainty and drive businesses to over-compliance, including commissioning unnecessary audits, conducting destructive testing, or retrieving extensive historic documentation to mitigate perceived risk. Challenges are further amplified for businesses operating across multiple jurisdictions (e.g. UK and EU), where diverging regulatory frameworks require duplicate processes. Delays of months or years in approvals and reviews continue to hinder investment, innovation, and market entry, particularly in fast-moving sectors such as digital health, MedTech, chemicals and technology.

Challenging regulators' decisions

Responses indicate that regulatory appeal mechanisms are widely viewed as fragmented, costly, and inaccessible, particularly for SMEs. Many have chosen not to challenge decisions due to prohibitive financial and administrative burdens. Processes differ across regulators, creating inconsistency, uncertainty, and delays. Businesses often divert significant resources

into navigating opaque systems that may deter legitimate challenge even when decisions appear incorrect or unfair. Respondents report consistently that appeal processes are prohibitively expensive and resource-intensive. The costs associated frequently outweigh the penalty or disputed value, deterring legitimate challenge.

Section Four: Opportunity Costs of Regulation

This section focuses on the impact of regulation on business' potential future activities.

Challenges to bringing new products to market

Respondents identify regulatory opacity, inconsistent interpretation, and lengthy approvals as key barriers to innovation. Small businesses report cancelling or delaying products due to high compliance costs, repeated documentation, and conflicting guidance impacts that are particularly acute for micro-producers with the potential of niche products. In sectors such as chemicals and agri-tech, long approval timelines, duplication, and unclear requirements make early commercialisation unviable, with some products abandoned altogether. Similar challenges arise in food and consumer goods, where restrictions, labelling rules, and compliance costs deter launches or push activity abroad.

Across sectors, planning delays, permitting backlogs, and regulatory uncertainty, including post-EU divergence, disrupt investment, delay market entry, and shift activity to other jurisdictions. Digital businesses also cite regulatory burdens limiting services or innovation. Respondents cite examples of wider strategic impacts, for example hospitality businesses selling sites and reducing jobs due to a lack of regulatory predictability; energy-related projects delayed by customs and permitting; and companies halting entry into low-return but societally valuable markets because regulatory complexity erodes any potential business case.

Challenges to adopting new technology and working practices

Many respondents highlight that while innovation is desirable, the UK regulatory environment creates practical, financial, and legal risks that can make technological upgrades unattractive or unfeasible. Some businesses retain inefficient or manual processes to avoid breaching unclear or inconsistently applied rules. Barriers stem less from regulation itself and more from lack of clarity, consistency, predictability, and proportionality in how rules apply to new technologies. Examples include unclear guidance on digital documentation, uncertainty around data compliance for AI, and inconsistent UK-EU standards. Legal uncertainty around enforcement further amplifies risk, discouraging adoption of automation, AI, and integrated digital systems. Responses indicate that regulatory uncertainty inhibits technological innovation, affecting investment decisions and slowing modernisation. Respondents report the

UK is losing activity to jurisdictions with clearer regulatory frameworks, leading to offshoring of innovation, trials, and product development.

Regulatory support for new products, services, and technology

We asked for suggestions on how the regulatory environment could better support businesses to bring new products or services to market, or to adopt new technology or working practices. Respondents across different sectors consistently call for simplification and streamlining of regulatory processes; predictable, timely, and transparent decision-making; clear, consistent regulatory guidance; digitisation, including single portals, acceptance of digital records, and interoperability between bodies; proportionate and risk-based regulation, particularly for SMEs; reform of specific regimes, for example in local planning, chemicals, biologicals, and environmental permitting; and regulatory sandboxes and innovation-friendly pathways, notably in space, digital health, chemicals, and financial services.

International best practice

Respondents highlighted examples from abroad where regulation is faster, more coordinated, and digitally enabled. Common features include single reporting systems, risk-based oversight, and integrated support, demonstrating that efficiency can be achieved without weakening protections. Overall, businesses are not calling for deregulation, but for smarter, more consistent and better-coordinated regulation that reduces friction, supports innovation, and strengthens the UK's competitiveness.

Next steps

The Government is committed to continued reform of the UK's regulatory landscape to support economic growth and enable businesses to thrive. Responses to the Business Questionnaire have provided a rich evidence base that is already informing departmental plans and the development of initiatives to reduce administrative burdens. This insight is also supporting sector-specific regulatory deep dives and taskforces aimed at modernising outdated processes and removing barriers to growth.

The Government is introducing reforms to how regulators operate, placing greater emphasis on supporting growth and innovation alongside essential protections. Feedback from the questionnaire has helped shape improvements to the KPI dashboard for major regulators, enhancing transparency and accountability through better tracking of speed, consistency, and decision quality. It is also informing work to strengthen the Growth Duty and to advance longer-term reforms, including digitisation of processes, development of single submission portals, and the expansion of regulatory sandboxes to support innovation.

Annex 1: Demographic Information on Respondents to the Business Questionnaire

1. Type of organisation

152 respondents provided information of the type of organisation.

Type of Organisation	Count
Business	111
Trade Association	25
Industry Body	4
Trade Body	3
Trade Union	2
Industry Association	1
Consumer	1
Academic / Think Tank	1
Freelance Contractor	1
Regulated Facility	1
Other (unspecified)	2

2. Number of employees

63 respondents gave information on the number of employees.

Number of Employees	Count
1 – 9	13
10 – 49	12
50 – 99	4
100 – 499	20
500+	15

3. Region where headquarters are located

141 respondents provided the region where of their headquarters are located.

Region	Count
East Midlands	10
East of England	8
International	2
London	32
North East	2
North West	13
Northern Ireland	2
Scotland	3
South East	41
South West	6

Wales	5
West Midlands	13
Yorkshire and the Humber	4

4. Sector information

97 SIC codes were offered from 107 unique respondents (some respondents provided more than one SIC code as they operate in more than one sector).

SIC Code	Description	Count
62020	Information technology consultancy activities	13
70229	Management consultancy activities other than financial management	10
62012	Business and domestic software development	8
20420	Manufacture of perfumes and toilet preparations	4
17220	Manufacture of household and sanitary goods and of toilet requisites	3
20411	Manufacture of soap and detergents	3
32990	Other manufacturing n.e.c.	3
47110	Retail sale in non-specialised stores with food, beverages or tobacco predominating	3
94110	Activities of business and employers membership organisations	3
71122	Engineering related scientific and technical consulting activities	3
56302	Public houses and bars	3
35130	Distribution of electricity	2
20412	Manufacture of cleaning and polishing preparations	2
11050	Manufacture of beer	2
94120	Activities of professional membership organisations	2
32500	Manufacture of medical and dental instruments and supplies	2
46460	Wholesale of pharmaceutical goods	2
1110	Growing of cereals (except rice), leguminous crops and oil seeds	1
1450	Raising of sheep and goats	1
1500	Mixed farming	1
1610	Support activities for crop production	1
10410	Manufacture of oils and fats	1
10612	Manufacture of breakfast cereals and cereals-based food	1
10710	Manufacture of bread; manufacture of fresh pastry goods and cakes	1
10821	Manufacture of cocoa and chocolate confectionery	1
10860	Manufacture of homogenized food preparations and dietetic food	1

10890	Manufacture of other food products n.e.c.	1
11010	Distilling, rectifying and blending of spirits	1
11040	Manufacture of other non-distilled fermented beverages	1
13100	Preparation and spinning of textile fibres	1
13990	Manufacture of other textiles n.e.c.	1
17120	Manufacture of paper and paperboard	1
19201	Mineral oil refining	1
19209	Other treatment of petroleum products (excluding petrochemicals manufacture)	1
20130	Manufacture of other inorganic basic chemicals	1
20140	Manufacture of other organic basic chemicals	1
20200	Manufacture of pesticides and other agrochemical products	1
20590	Manufacture of other chemical products n.e.c.	1
21100	Manufacture of basic pharmaceutical products	1
25620	Machining	1
30990	Manufacture of other transport equipment n.e.c.	1
33140	Repair of electrical equipment	1
35110	Production of electricity	1
35140	Trade of electricity	1
35220	Distribution of gaseous fuels through mains	1
35300	Steam and air conditioning supply	1
36000	Water collection, treatment and supply	1
38110	Collection of non-hazardous waste	1
38120	Collection of hazardous waste	1
42210	Construction of utility projects for fluids	1
42220	Construction of utility projects for electricity and telecommunications	1
43220	Plumbing, heat and air-conditioning installation	1
45310	Wholesale trade of motor vehicle parts and accessories	1
46342	Wholesale of wine, beer, spirits and other alcoholic beverages	1
46450	Wholesale of tobacco products	1
46690	Wholesale of other machinery and equipment	1
46711	Wholesale of petroleum and petroleum products	1
47190	Other retail sale in non-specialised stores	1
47220	Retail sale of meat and meat products in specialised stores	1
47240	Retail sale of bread, cakes, flour confectionery and sugar confectionery in specialised stores	1
47250	Retail sale of beverages in specialised stores	1
47290	Other retail sale of food in specialised stores	1
47721	Retail sale of footwear in specialised stores	1
47990	Other retail sale not in stores, stalls or markets	1
55100	Hotels and similar accommodation	1

55209	Other holiday and other collective accommodation	1
58110	Book publishing	1
59200	Sound recording and music publishing activities	1
60200	Television programming and broadcasting activities	1
61100	Wired telecommunications activities	1
61200	Wireless telecommunications activities	1
64209	Activities of other holding companies n.e.c.	1
64999	Financial intermediation not elsewhere classified	1
65120	Non-life insurance	1
69109	Activities of patent and copyright agents; other legal activities n.e.c	1
70100	Activities of head offices	1
70210	Public relations and communications activities	1
71129	Other engineering activities	1
74201	Portrait photographic activities	1
74202	Other specialist photography	1
74209	Photographic activities not elsewhere classified	1
74901	Environmental consulting activities	1
74909	Other professional, scientific and technical activities n.e.c.	1
78109	Other activities of employment placement agencies	1
78200	Temporary employment agency activities	1
79110	Travel agency activities	1
82990	Other business support service activities n.e.c.	1
84120	Regulation of health care, education, cultural and other social services, not incl. social security	1
86900	Other human health activities	1
90030	Operation of historical sites and buildings and similar visitor attractions	1
92000	Gambling and betting activities	1
94910	Activities of religious organisations	1
96030	Funeral and related activities	1

Annex 2: Response rates to quantitative and qualitative questions

- 196 of 220 respondents (89%) said that regulations are imposing unreasonable costs on their business; 206 of 219 respondents (94%) said that there are regulations that limit their ability to grow their business and innovate for the future; 210 of 218 respondents (96%) said that regulations in their sector are disproportionately creating unnecessary problems across different types of businesses. 259 of 271 total respondents (96%) provided detailed responses on regulatory burdens to business growth and innovation, regulations which are limiting business growth, and regulations which are disproportionately applied.
- 193 out of 271 respondents (71%) suggested ways that we can cut down on the paperwork and administrative burdens created by regulation and regulators.
- 154 out of 271 respondents (57%) detailed what information or reporting their business is required to provide, which creates unnecessary burdens. 116 out of 154 respondents (75%) specified the level of resource their organisation dedicates to meeting these reporting requirements. 129 out of 154 respondents (84%) suggested changes to reduce these burdens.
- 97 out of 271 respondents (36%) detailed business requirements for regulatory investigations and inspections which they deemed unnecessarily burdensome. 65 (67%) of those respondents gave detail on the time and capital resource devoted to meet these requirements. 81 (84%) of those respondents provided suggested changes they would make to reduce these burdens.
- 54 out of 119 respondents (45%) reported that regulators make other demands of their business outside information and inspection/investigation/enforcement requirements. 59 out of 119 respondents (50%) provided further information on these other demands and 42 out of 119 respondents (35%) gave detail on the time and capital resource devoted to meet these requirements. 32 of 119 respondents (27%) provided suggested changes to reduce these burdens.
- 115 out of 126 respondents (91%) believe that regulators do not adequately support economic growth in their sectors. 106 out of 126 respondents (85%) answered the follow-up question which requested suggestions of how this could be improved if regulators had a stronger legal duty to promote economic growth alongside their main objectives.
- 68 out of 123 respondents (55%) believe that combining or streamlining the number of regulators would save their organisation money.
- 117 out of 271 respondents (43%) selected areas in which they thought that regulators need clearer and stronger guidance from Government to help them do their jobs better. 90 (77%) thought that regulators need clearer and stronger guidance to help them support growth; 53 (45%) to balance competing priorities; 47 (40%) to improve regulator

accountability; 39 (33%) to manage risk; 9 (8%) to help regulators in another way; and 11 (9%) thought regulators do not need more guidance from Government. 89 of the 117 respondents (76%) provided further information about the regulators they were thinking about for the previous point and evidence supporting their views.

- 27 out of 107 respondents (25%) think that regulators are sufficiently transparent about their expected and actual delivery times, by having the right Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure their performance. 23 out of 106 respondents (22%) think that regulators are sufficiently transparent about their expected and actual delivery times by providing updates on progress in reaching their decisions. 72 out of 107 respondents (67%) provided specific examples to questions covering regulators transparency around expected and actual delivery times.
- 64 out of 102 respondents (61%) have experienced delays by regulators, such as delayed approvals, authorisation and licensing. 59 out of 102 respondents (58%) provided further information on the regulators and relevant processes where respondents experienced delays.
- 47 out of 271 respondents (17%) provided information on how much delays caused by regulators cost their business.
- 70 out of 271 respondents (26%) suggested ways in which regulators could make decisions faster and improve delays.
- 64 out of 99 respondents (65%) provided examples of where regulators used outdated or unnecessarily complex processes.
- 28 out of 78 respondents (36%) reported that regulators provide sufficiently clear guidance about their requirements and processes when submitting an application.
- 19 of 79 respondents (24%) reported that regulators clearly explain how their decisions, guidance and rules affect business and consumers. 42 (53%) of those respondents provided evidenced examples where the impact of decisions, guidance and rules was not clearly explained by regulators.
- 60 out of 271 respondents (22%) suggested changes that regulators could make to their internal procedures to reduce administrative costs.
- 51 out of 79 respondents (65%) reported that mechanisms for businesses to challenge a regulators decision are unnecessarily complex or burdensome. Of those 79 respondents, 47 (59%) provided further detail on what ways the process for challenging a regulators decision is unnecessarily complex or burdensome; 28 (35%) gave detail on the time and capital resource devoted to challenging a regulators decision; 46 (59%) specified whether they have decided to leave a decision they disagree with unchallenged due to the potential cost of the challenge. 26 (56%) out of 46 respondents have decided to leave a regulatory

decision unchallenged due to the potential cost of that challenge. 40 respondents suggested changes that they would make to the appeals mechanisms to reduce the costs they impose on businesses.

- 64 out of 95 respondents (67%) have decided not to bring a product or service to market because of regulatory issues. 67 (71%) out of 95 respondents provided examples to explain why this was the case.
- 48 out 86 respondents (56%) have decided not to adopt new technology or working practices in the UK because of regulatory obligations or uncertainty, and provided further details to explain why this was the case.
- 64 out of 271 (24%) respondents provided information on what improvements in the regulatory environment could better support businesses in bringing new products or services to market, or to adopt new technology or working practices.
- 60 out of 271 respondents (22%) provided information on areas where they would like to see the Government test new approaches to regulation (e.g. adoption of 'fast-lanes' for approvals), disapply regulation to allow innovation in a controlled environment (i.e. a sandbox) or create dedicated services within Government support businesses in their interactions with regulators they need to engage with.
- 58 of 271 respondents (21%) provided details of international best practices in their sector in other major economies that the UK should consider.

The Department for Business and Trade

The Department for Business and Trade is an economic growth department. We ensure fair, competitive markets at home, secure access to new markets abroad and support businesses to invest, export and grow. Our priorities are the Industrial Strategy, Make Work Pay, the Trade Strategy and the Plan for Small Business.

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