Covid-19 – Online Tourism Business Survey

Prepared for: Great Yarmouth Tourism and Business Improvement Area

January 2021

Prepared by:

destinationresearch
delivering results : measuring what matters

On behalf of:

GREATER Yarmouth
TOURISM & BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

Introduction and Methodology and approach

This report evaluates the immediate and ongoing impacts of Covid- 19 to Tourism Business in Greater Yarmouth, as we as assessing the long-term economic impact.

Methodology

The results are based on a monthly online survey to businesses in the Greater Yarmouth area. It uses a structured questionnaire, adapting some questions and adding / removing other questions as the situation evolves. We are using a ‘Have your say’ online platform style survey, based on personalised email invitations to fill in a short online questionnaire. The survey allows to closely monitor the immediate impact of COVID - 19 on an ongoing basis. The survey is fully managed in-house by Destination Research using Typeform software package, which offers full online and mobile functionalities. The results of the survey are being used and distributed by GYTBIA.

Outputs

The monthly report reflects on the very latest industry sentiment. This and subsequent reports will include a summary of immediate reactions, longer term recovery plan actions as well as general business performance. This January report is the first one of the series and based on 81 responses. Subsequent reports will include a breakdown of responses for the current and past months as well as an average of all responses for the year to date.

Outcomes

Ultimately, the research should allow Greater Yarmouth Tourism and Business Improvement Area (GYTBIA) to:

- Provide a forum for consistent and comprehensive analysis of the implications of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the local tourism industry.
- Act as the one-stop-shop communications channel for the local tourism industry in relation to Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Key developments:

National lock down restrictions

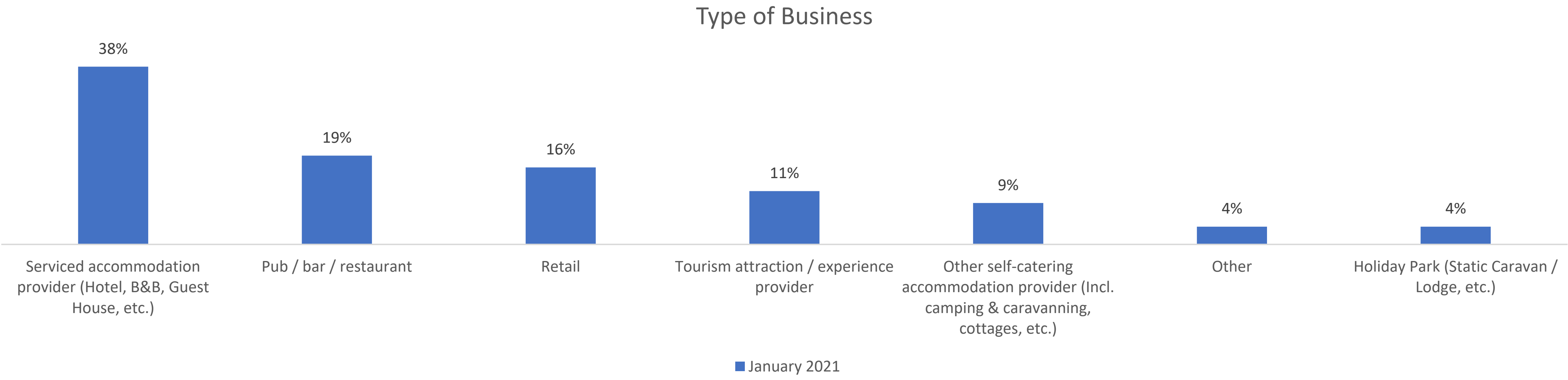
The Government imposed a national lockdown on 4 January 2021. At the time of the government announcement, it was stated the lockdown would last at least six weeks, as the UK tackles increasing coronavirus numbers and severe pressure on the NHS. The table below summarises the restrictions that apply to various areas of the tourism and hospitality industries.

	Lockdown restrictions
Travel and transport	You must not leave your home unless you have a reasonable excuse. If you need to travel you should stay local – meaning avoiding travelling outside of your village, town or the part of a city where you live – and look to reduce the number of journeys you make overall.
Staying overnight	You cannot leave your home for holidays or overnight stays (UK and abroad) unless you have a reasonable excuse for doing so (includes staying in a second home or caravan).
Shops	Non-essential shops will be closed. Essential shops such as supermarkets will remain open.
Hospitality and entertainment (indoor and outdoor attractions)	Hospitality venues are required to close, including cafes, restaurants, pubs, bars, attractions and social clubs.
	This is with the exception of providing food and non-alcoholic drinks for takeaway (until 11pm), click-and-collect and drive-through. All food and drink (including alcohol) can continue to be provided by delivery.

Research Outputs – Business Profile

Half of all respondents (51%) are accommodation providers. Of these, serviced accommodation businesses account for almost two in five respondents (38%). Non-service include campsites, cottages (9% combined) and holiday parks (4%).

The other half of the sample is made up of pubs and restaurants (19%), retail (16%), tourism attractions (11%) and 4% falling under the ‘other’ category.

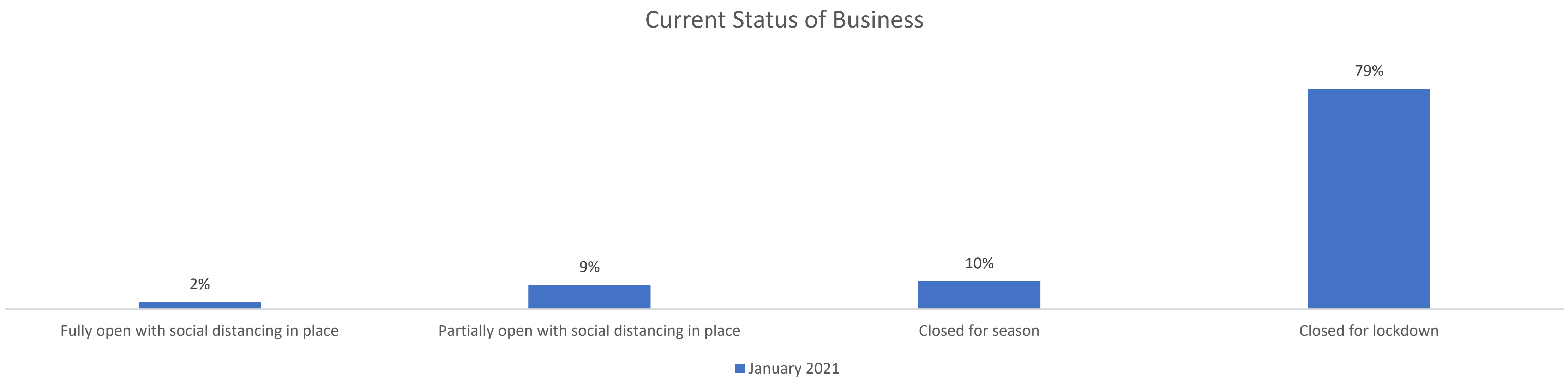


Q: What type of business do you run? *(81)*

Research Outputs – Current Status

Four out of five responds (79%) are currently closed due to lockdown restrictions. A further 10% are closed for the season.

A small proportion of respondents (11%) were open with social distancing measures in place. Of these, 9% were partially open and 2% were fully open.



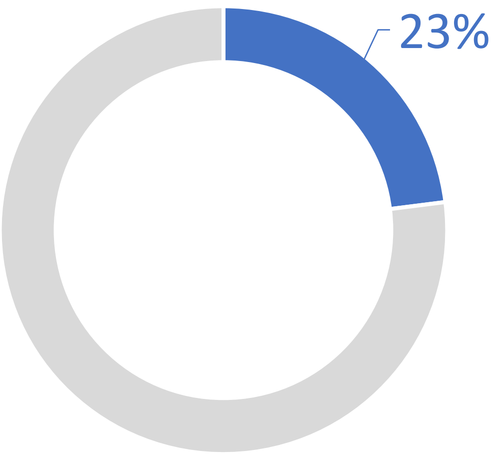
Q: What is the current status of your business? *(81)*

Research Outputs – Current Status

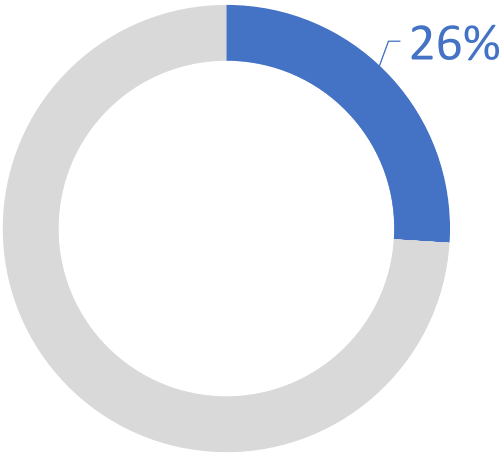
Those that remain open are operating at 23% of their usual capacity. As a result, their volume of trade during the week prior to completing the survey was about a quarter (26%) compared to the level achieved the same week the previous year.

Current staff levels account for 28% of the usual staff levels employed before the start of the pandemic.

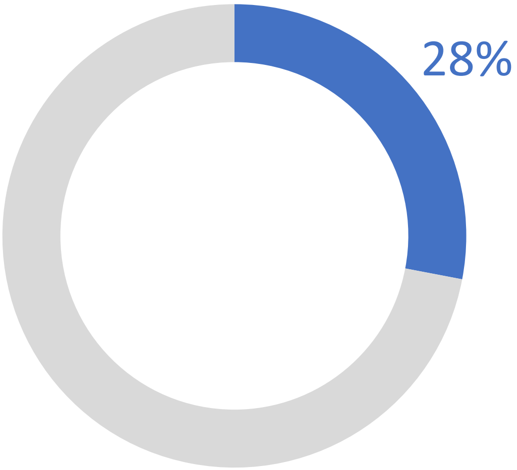
Percentage of usual capacity operating at



Percentage of trade last week compared to the same week last year



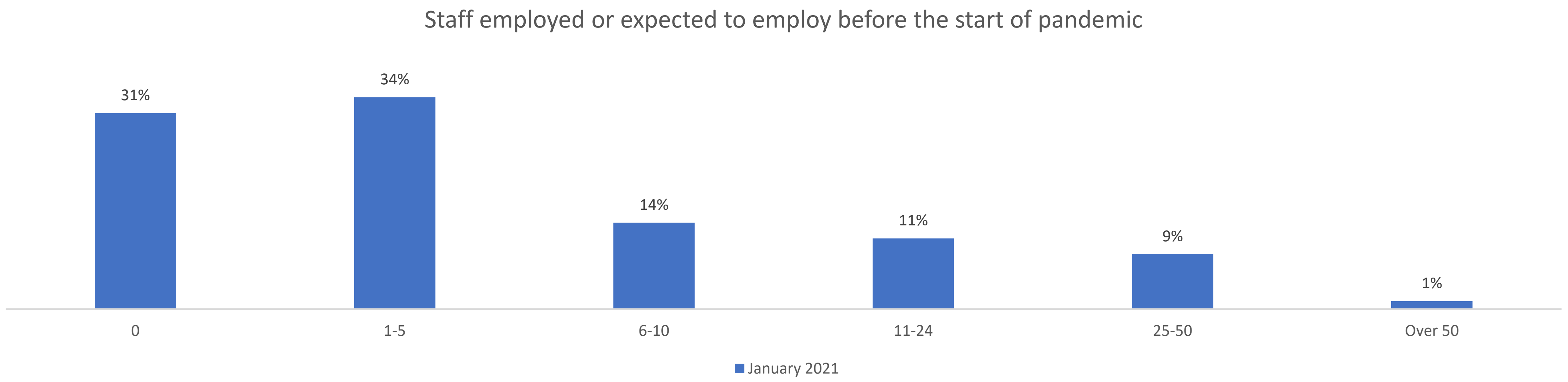
Percentage of usual staffing levels operating at



Q: If you are open, approximately what percentage of your usual capacity are you operating at? *(81)*
Q: What was your percentage of trade last week compared to the same week last year? *(81)*
Q: Approximately what percentage of your usual staffing levels are you operating at? *(81)*

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

Almost two thirds of businesses taking part in the survey were small or micro businesses. Three in ten (31%) don't employ any staff other than the business owners. A third (34%) employ between 1 and 5 members of staff. Businesses with 6 to 10 employees account for 14%, followed by the 11-24 group (11%), the 25-50 (9%) and larger businesses, with over 50 employees (1%).

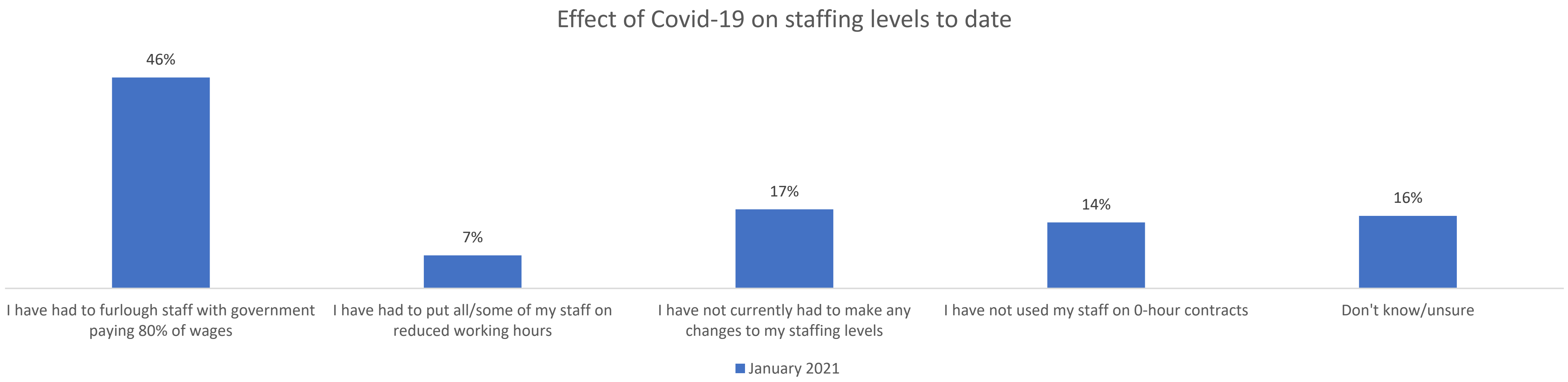


Q: How many staff did you employ or expected to employ before the start of the pandemic? *(80)*

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

The most significant effect of the pandemic was having to furlough staff with government paying 80% of wages, affecting 46% of respondents. Furthermore, 14% had not used their staff on 0-hour contracts and 7% had to put some or all of their staff on reduced working hours.

A significant minority (17%), didn't have to make any changes to their staff and a further 16% were unsure or unable to answer.



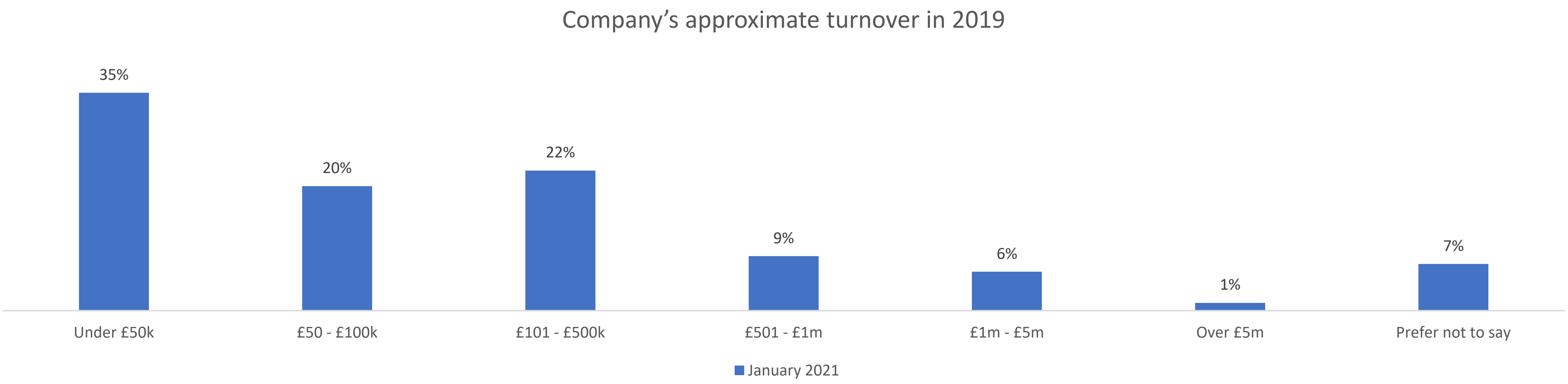
Q: What other effect has Covid-19 had on your staffing levels to date? *(80)*

Research Outputs – Impact on business turnover

As mentioned earlier, a significant proportion of businesses taking part in the survey were smaller businesses and this is reflected on the turnover figures for 2019. Just over a third (35%) achieved a turnover of under £50k, a further 20% made between £50k and £100k and 22% achieved a turnover of between £101k and £500k.

The remaining 16% include larger turnovers (9% achieved between half a million and a million pounds, 6% between one and five million and 1% over £5 million.

Note that 7% or respondents preferred not to disclose their performance information.

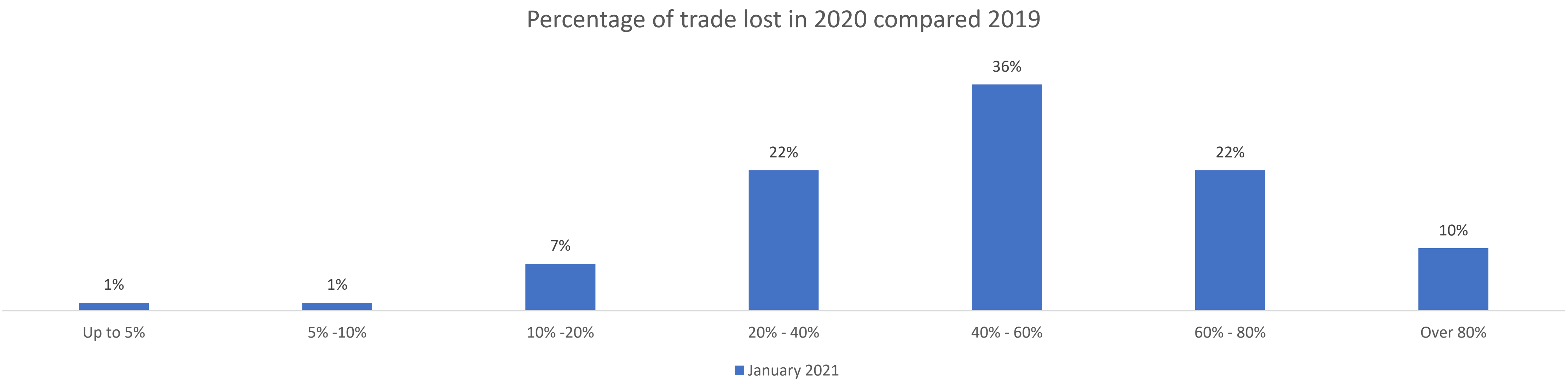


Q: What was your company's approximate turnover 2019? *(81)*

Research Outputs – Impact on business turnover

About a third of respondents lost up to 40% of their 2020 turnover, compared to 2019. Of these, 22% lost between 20% and 40%, with the rest losing less than 20%.

Just over a third (36%) lost between 40% and 60% of turnover, with 22% losing up to 80% and 10% suffering losses of more than 80% in trade, compared to 2019.

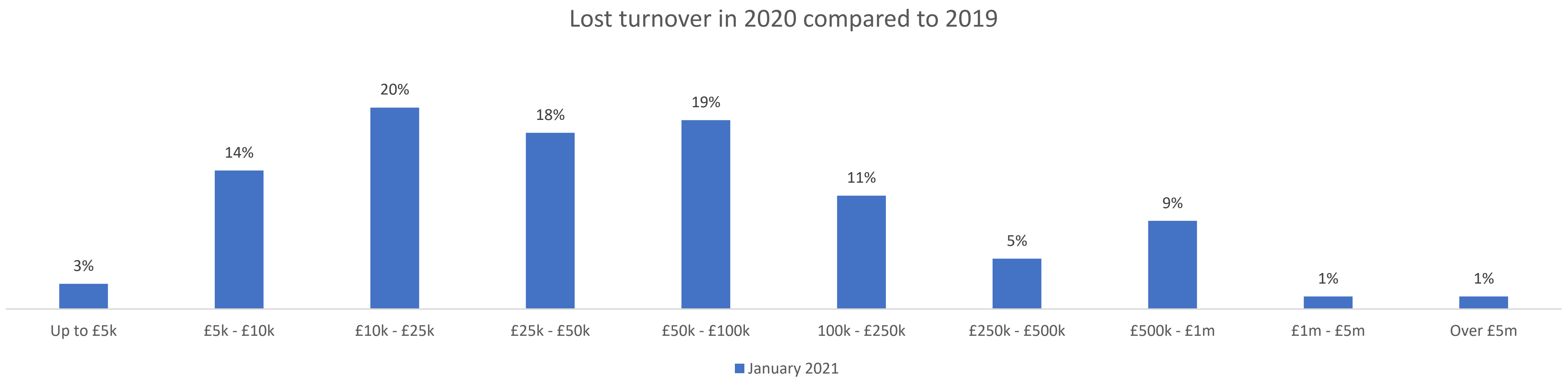


Q: If your trade has decreased what percentage of trade would you say you have lost in 2020 compared 2019? *(81)*

Research Outputs – Impact on business turnover

In most cases (74%), the loss of turnover in 2020 compared to 2019 was up to £100k. Of these, 37% lost up to £25k, perhaps reflecting on the proportion of smaller businesses taking part in the survey.

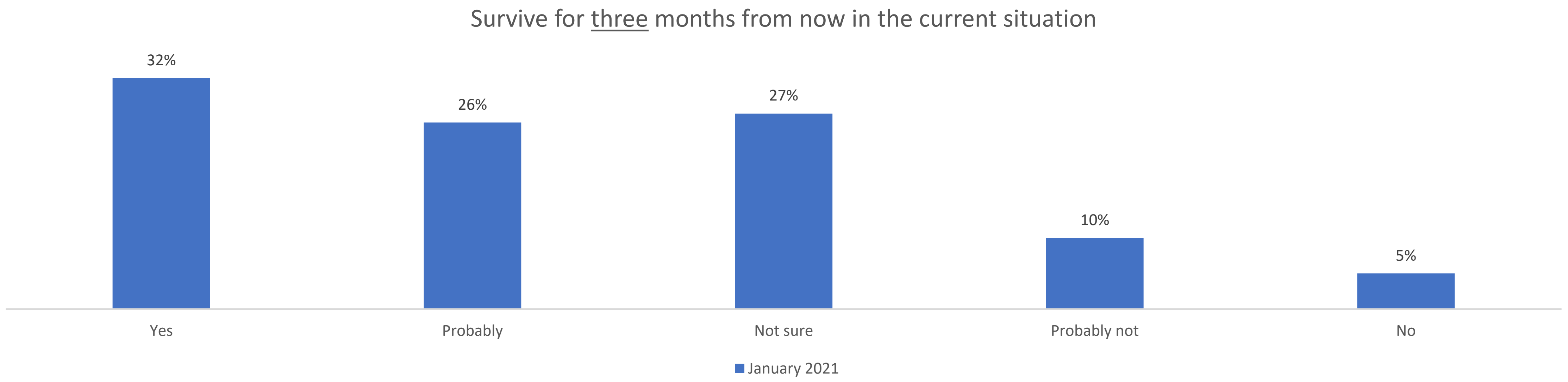
A further 16% report losses of between £100k and £500k and 11% lost over £500k.



Q: Approximately how much could this mean in terms of lost turnover in 2020 compared to 2019? *(80)*

Research Outputs – Business Survival

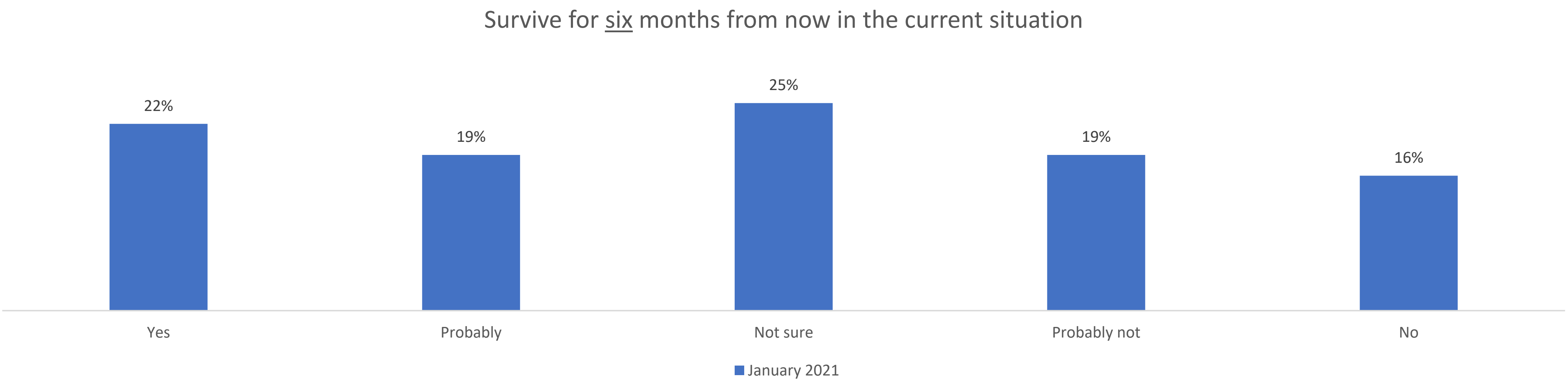
Just under three in five (58%) businesses have a positive outlook on their likelihood or surviving the next three months. Just over a quarter (27%) are still not sure and 15% don't expect to survive longer than three months.



Q: Would your business survive for **three months** from now in the current situation? *(81)*

Research Outputs – Business Survival

Just over two in five (41%) are confident they will survive for six month in the current situation. Those ‘not sure’ about their survival after six months account for 25% of the sample. Importantly, over a third (35%) think they probably won’t survive after six months.

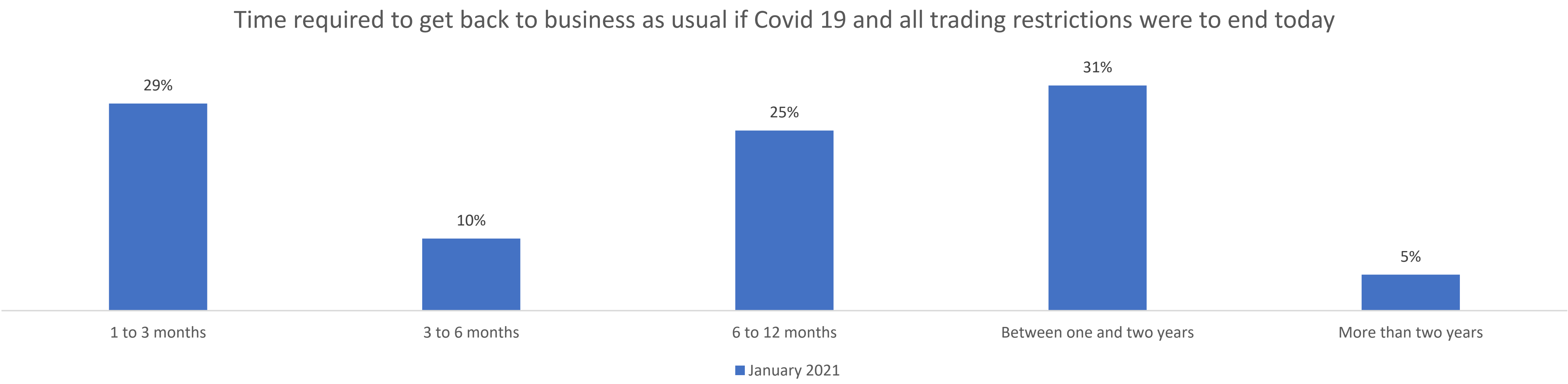


Q: Would your business survive for **six months** from now in the current situation? *(81)*

Research Outputs – Business Recovery

Should trading restrictions linked to Covid-19 end today, the majority of businesses (36%) would expect to need between one and two years (31%) or in some cases even longer (5%) to recover.

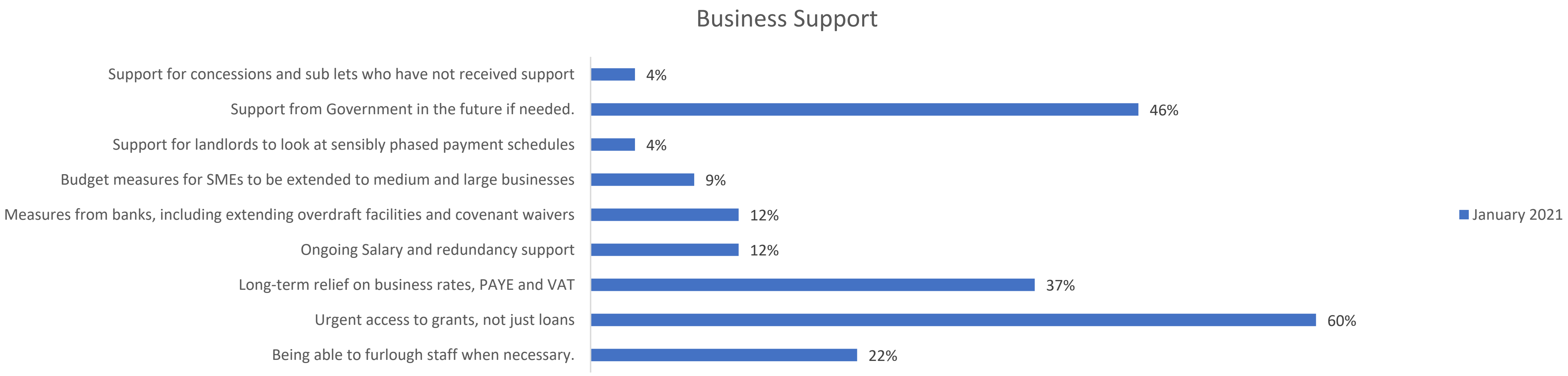
However, those expecting to need up to 6 months account for 39% (with 29% needing only up to 3 months). Finally. a quarter (25%) estimate that all trading restrictions were to end today, it would take their company between 6 moths and a year to get back to business as usual.



Q: If Covid 19 and all trading restrictions were to end today, how long would you estimate it would take for your company to get back to business as usual? *(80)*

Research Outputs – Business Support

Three in five respondents (60%) are requesting urgent access to grants, not just loans, and almost half (46%) say they will welcome support from government in the future, if needed. Those requesting long term relief on business rates, PAYE and VAT account for 37% of respondents and two in five (22%) would like to be able to furlough staff when necessary.



Q: What support from Government would be crucial for your business going forward? *(81)*

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