

Covid-19 – Online Tourism Business Survey

Prepared for: Great Yarmouth Tourism and
Business Improvement Area

Week 5: 17 April to 23 April

Prepared by:



On behalf of:



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 weekly 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 GYT BIA.

Outputs

A weekly report will be produced reflecting 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 economic impact assessment of the COVID-19 on the local economy in the context of the latest Cambridge Model results. This report includes responses from 20 March to 9 April, 2020. The report includes a breakdown of responses by week (week 1: 20 to 26 March, week 2: 27 March – 2 April, week 3: 3 April – 9 April, week 4: 10 April – 16 April and week 5: 17). The sample size is 491 responses (163 responses in week 1; 81 responses in week 2, 71 responses in week 3, 88 responses in week 4; and 88 responses in week 5).

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).



Report for period between 17 April and 23 April 2020 - Key developments:

Wednesday 22 April

The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) opens for applications. The scheme helps all viable large businesses with an annual turnover of £45 million affected by COVID-19 to access loans of up to £25 million.

Monday 20 April

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) opens for applications.

The Government announced two initiatives to support recovery planning; a £500 million Future Fund for high growth companies and Innovate UK, £750 million of funding for innovative firms across the UK.

Councils across England will receive another £1.6 billion in additional funding as they continue to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

Friday 17 April

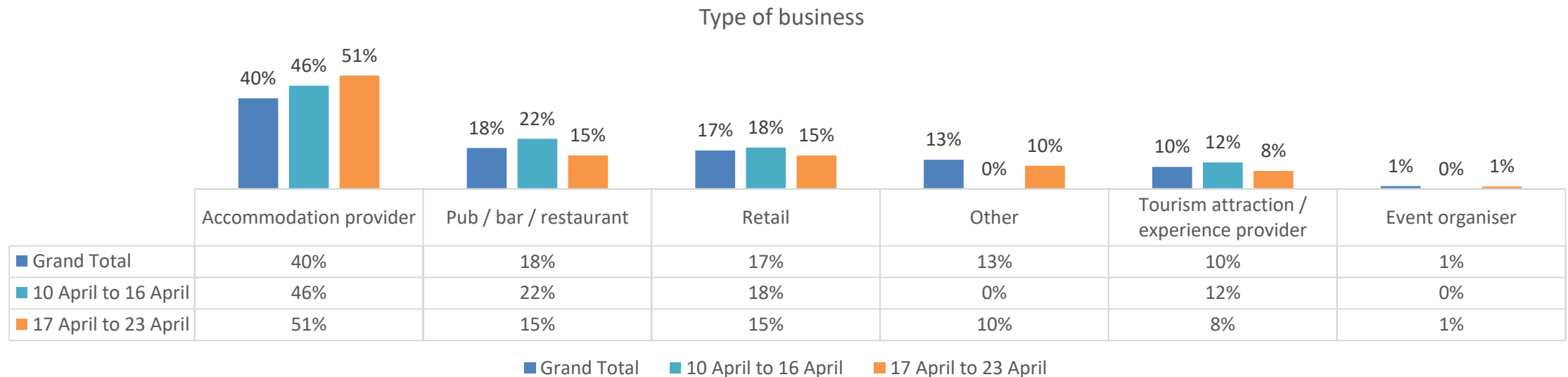
The Government announced that councils are to be allowed to defer £2.6 billion in business rates payments to central government, and £850 million in social care grants will be paid up front this month.



Research Outputs – Business Profile

During week 5 (17-23 April) there was an increase in the number of accommodation providers taking part in the survey. The proportion of pubs / bars / restaurants, retail outlets and attractions decreased slightly. These changes apply when comparing to week 4 and also against the overall sample since the survey started.

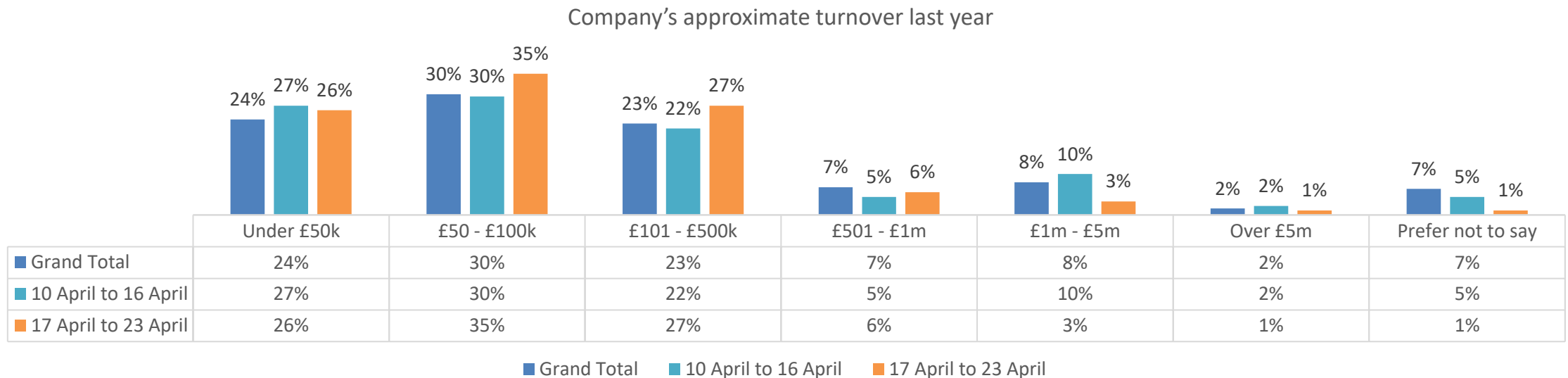
‘Other’ businesses include laundry services, estate agents, barbers / hair dressers and other types of food provision (fish and chip shop, Ice-cream parlours and food takeaways)



Q: *What type of business do you run?*

Research Outputs – Business Profile

There has been a continued increase in the proportion of respondents with turnovers ranging between £50k and £100k, increasing from 25% of the total sample in week 1 to 35% in week 5. Conversely, the proportion of smaller business (under £50k turnover) decreased slightly since last week but is above average against the 5-week period.

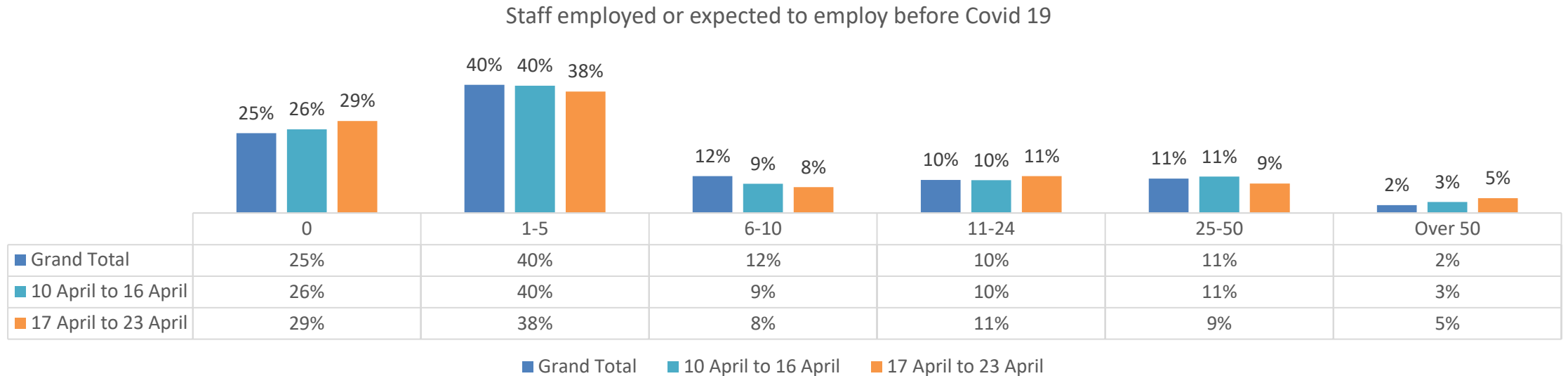


Q: What was your company's approximate turnover last year?

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

During week 5 there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of businesses employing between 1 and 5 members of staff (38% from 40% in week 4).

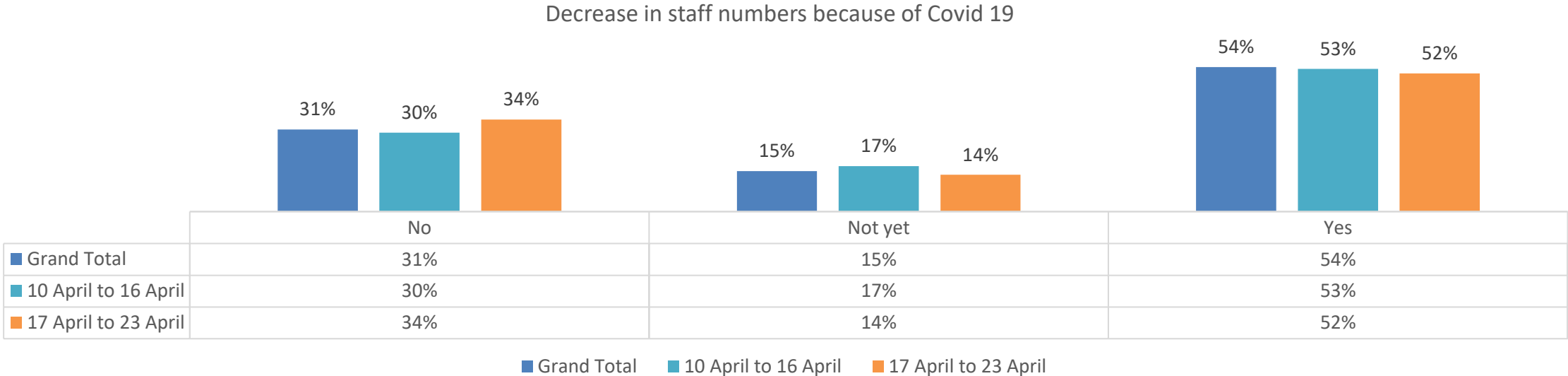
There has been an increase in the proportion of businesses that did not employ anyone before the start of the Covid 19 crisis (29% up from 26% in week 4) and those employing between 6-10 and 25-50 staff. (one and two percentage point drop respectively).



Q: How many staff did you employ or expected to employ before the start of the Covid 19 crisis?

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

The proportion of businesses decreasing their staff numbers has gone down one point since week (52% form 53% in week 4). Similarly, the proportion that are planning to do it soon has also decreased, with 14% saying they have not decreased their staff ‘yet’ (compared to 17% in week 4).



Q: Have you had to decrease you staff because of Covid 19?

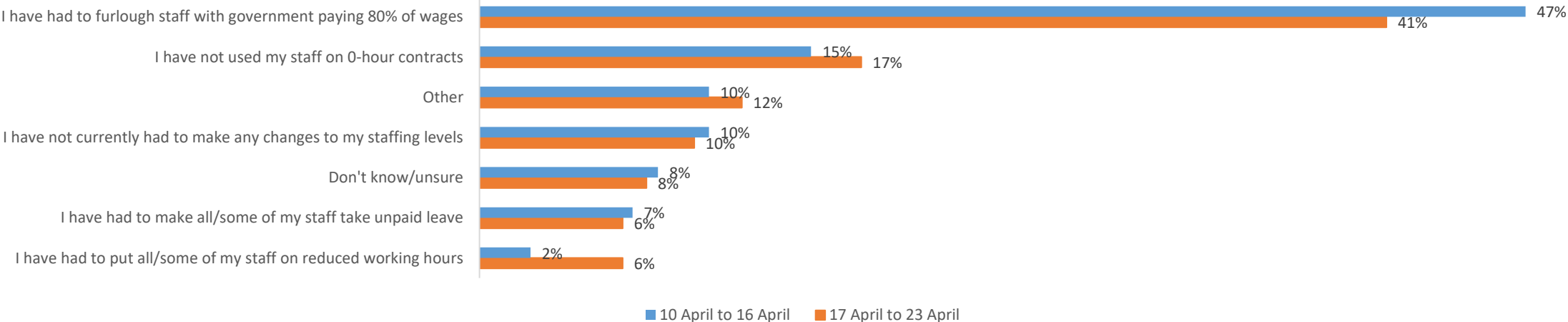


Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

Two in five (41%) said they had had to furlough staff with government paying 80% of wages, down from 47% in week 4. There was a slight increase in the proportion that said they had not used their staff on 0-hour contracts (17% up from 15% in week 4).

Businesses that had to put all/some of my staff on reduced working hours increase from 2% in week 4 to 6% in week 5.

Other effects of Covid-19 on staffing levels



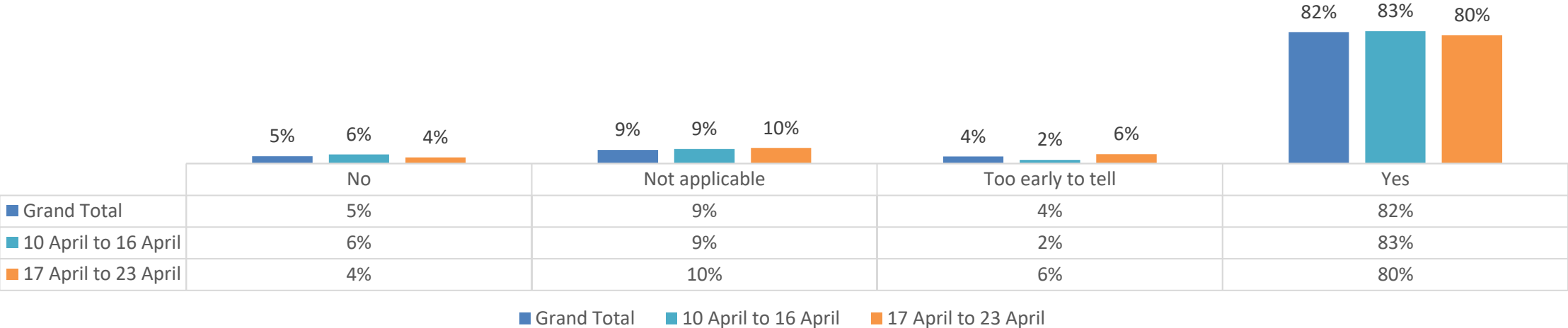
Q: What other effect has Covid-19 had on your staffing levels to date?



Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

There was a limited change (downwards) in proportion of businesses that reported changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19 such as changes to dates or other details but not outright cancellations of bookings. The results show that this proportion was 80% in week 5, down from 83% in week 4.

Changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19



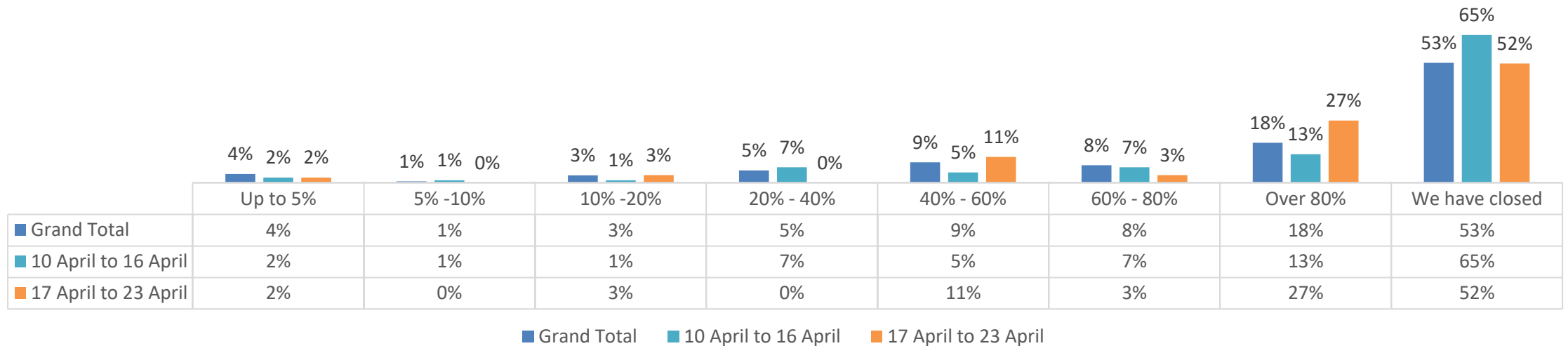
Q: Have there been any changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19?
Changes to dates or other details but not outright cancellations of bookings



Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

Covid-19 is having significant impacts on the local tourism industry. Just over half of businesses are reporting closures (52% this week compared 65% in week 4). It should be taken into account that the Government forced accommodation providers and other tourism and leisure related businesses to temporarily close their doors. The drop in the proportion of businesses that report closures may be influenced by the fact that some businesses have been closed for a number of weeks now and may have decided not to take part in the tracker survey anymore.

Percentage of trade lost to date

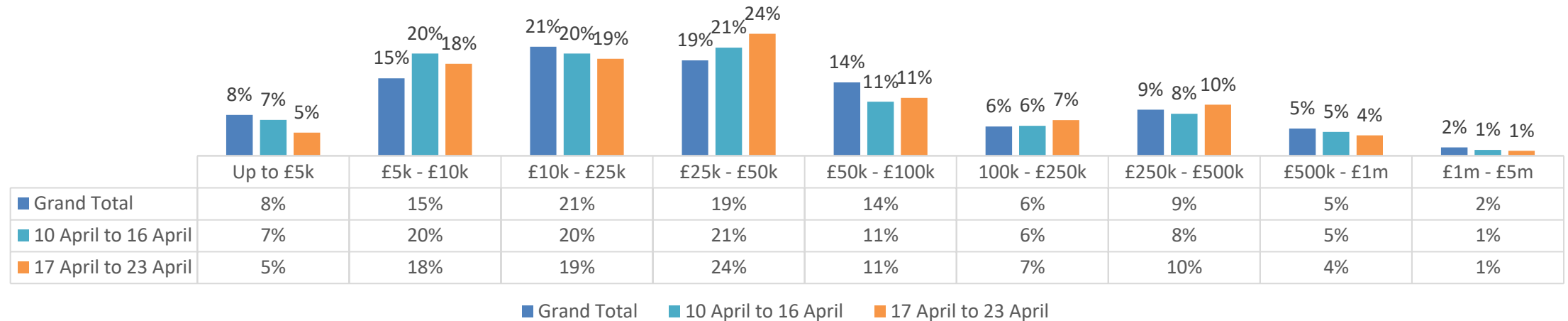


Q: If your trade has decreased what percentage of trade would you say you have lost to date?

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

The proportion of participants reporting losses of up to £25k has dropped from 47% in week four to 42% in week 5. Conversely, the proportion reporting losses of between £25k and £50k has gone up from 21% in week 4 to 24% in week 5.

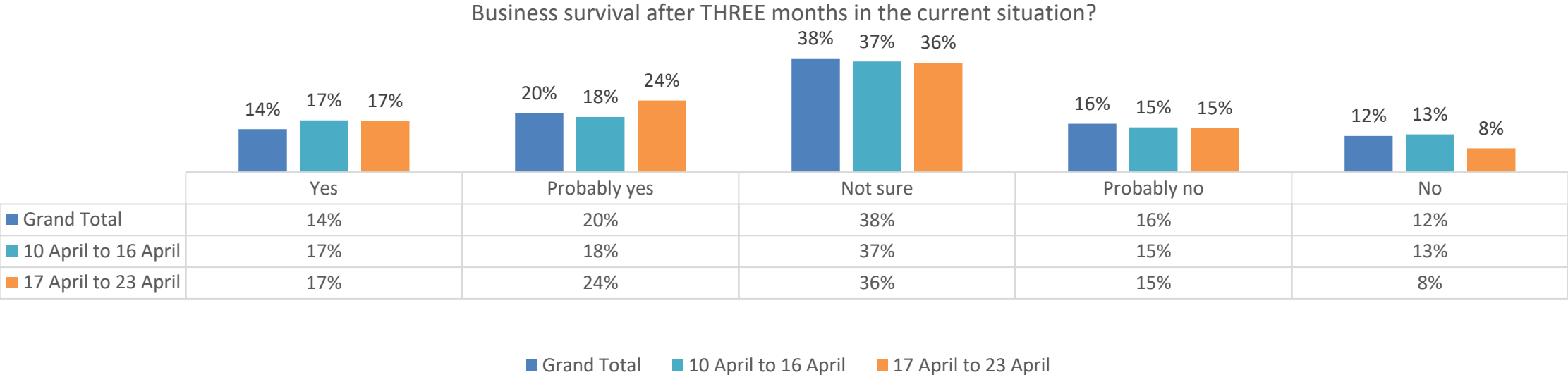
How much could this mean in terms of lost turnover?



Q: Approximately how much could this mean in terms of lost turnover?

Research Outputs – Business Survival

There continues to be an increase in those who believe their business will survive the next three months (41% said ‘yes’ or ‘probably yes’, compared to 35% in week 4). Levels of uncertainty were relatively unchanged week-on-week. The proportion of those that said ‘No’ or ‘probably no’ decreased from 28% in week 4 to 23% in week 5. This could be interpreted to mean that the financial support announced by the Government is helping businesses stay afloat.



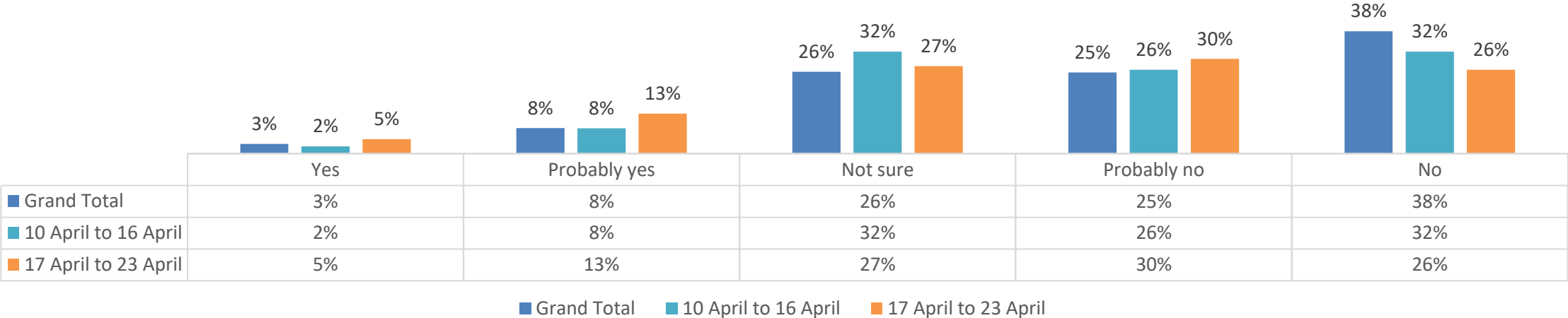
Q: *Would your business survive for three months in the current situation?*



Research Outputs – Business Survival

Similarly, there’s a slight decrease in the proportion predicting that their business probably won’t survive for SIX months in the current situation (56% said ‘no’ or ‘probably not’ in week 5, compared to 58% in week 4). These results could imply that although the Government support may be helping with immediate business survival, there continues to be a lot of uncertainty about longer term business continuity.

Business survival after SIX months in the current situation?



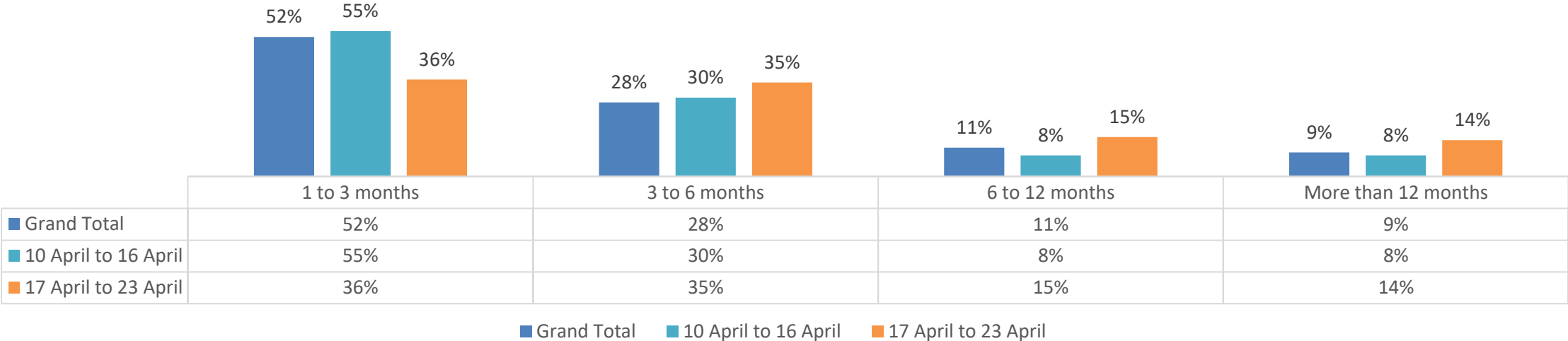
Q: Would your business survive for six months in the current situation?



Research Outputs – Business Recovery

This weeks results show a marked change in the perception as to how long it will take to get back to business as usual. Only a third (36%) believe that if Covid 19 were to end today, it would take them between 1 and 3 months to get back to business as usual, down from 55% in week 4. A record 14% believe it will take more than 12 months to fully recover.

If Covid 19 were to end today, how long before your get back to business as usual?



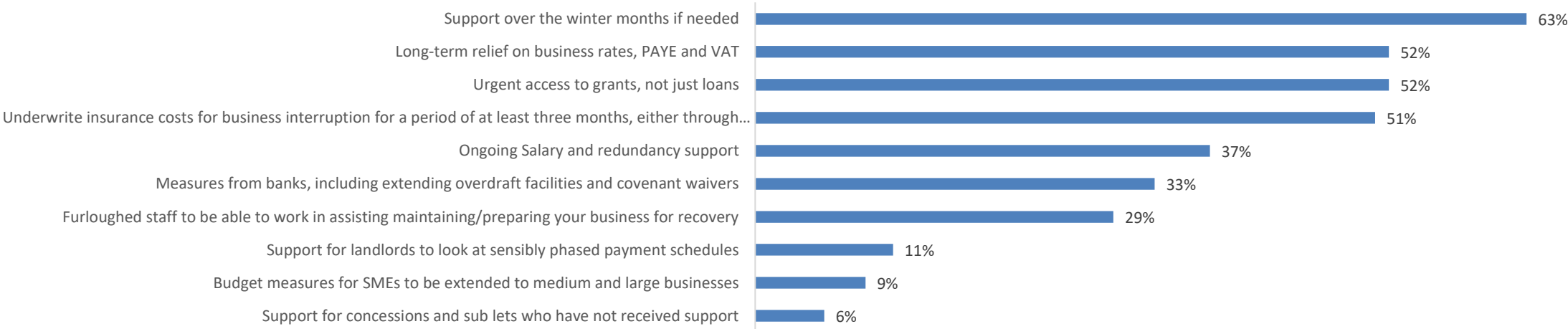
Q: Finally, If Covid 19 were to end today, how long would you estimate it would take for your company to get back to business as usual?



Research Outputs – Business Support

Two thirds of respondents (63%) believe that the Government should offer support over the winter months if that was needed. About half would welcome long-term relief on business rates, PAYE and VAT; urgent access to grants, not just loans, and; underwrite insurance costs for business interruption for a period of at least three months, either through insurance companies or direct to businesses.

Support from Government going forward



Q: What support from Government would be crucial for your business going forward?



Research Outputs – Further opinions

At the end of the survey businesses were asked if they had any other comments they would like to raise. This week the survey asked businesses to specify about major challenges short term and long term. A summary of comments / key themes is below:

Shorter term

Easier access to loans

Insurance payments

Businesses are experiencing a significant drop in summer bookings and worries that this may not pick up even when restrictions are lifted.

Government support is not covering for all operational and payroll costs over winter months

Longer term

Essential planning for winter months to ensure business survival

Changes in shopping / holiday habits may affect business long term

Ongoing restrictions regarding social distancing (even after lock down is lifted) may affect recovery times

Suggestion of a change in bank holiday dates, with extra bank holiday in September / October to create some income for the low season.





Produced by:



destinationresearch
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Main contact:

Asa Morrison
Great Yarmouth Tourism &
Business Improvement Area

asa@gyta.com
www.gyta.com

Research & methodology contact:

Sergi Jarques
Director
Destination Research Ltd

info@destinationresearch.co.uk
www.destinationresearch.co.uk