

Covid-19 – Online Tourism Business Survey

Prepared for: Great Yarmouth Tourism and
Business Improvement Area

Week 14: 30 June to 06 July

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 11 April to 18 April, 2020. The report includes a breakdown of responses by week as well as an average of all responses to date. The weekly sample size is as follows: 163 responses in week 1; 81 responses in week 2, 71 responses in week 3, 88 responses in week 4; 88 responses in week 5; 95 responses in week 6; 103 responses in week 7, 73 responses in week 8; 96 in week 9, 76 in week 10, 74 in week 11, 76 in week 12, 60 in week 13 and 57 in week 14.

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 30 June and 6 July 2020 - Key developments:

Self-isolation lifted for lower risk countries in time for holidays this summer

The Government has published a press release stating that from 10 July 2020 you will be able to travel to many countries without having to self-isolate on return to England.

VisitBritain - Revised Domestic forecast for 2020

The annual VisitBritain forecast for the volume and value of domestic tourism within England in December each year. This has now been updated to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on domestic tourism.

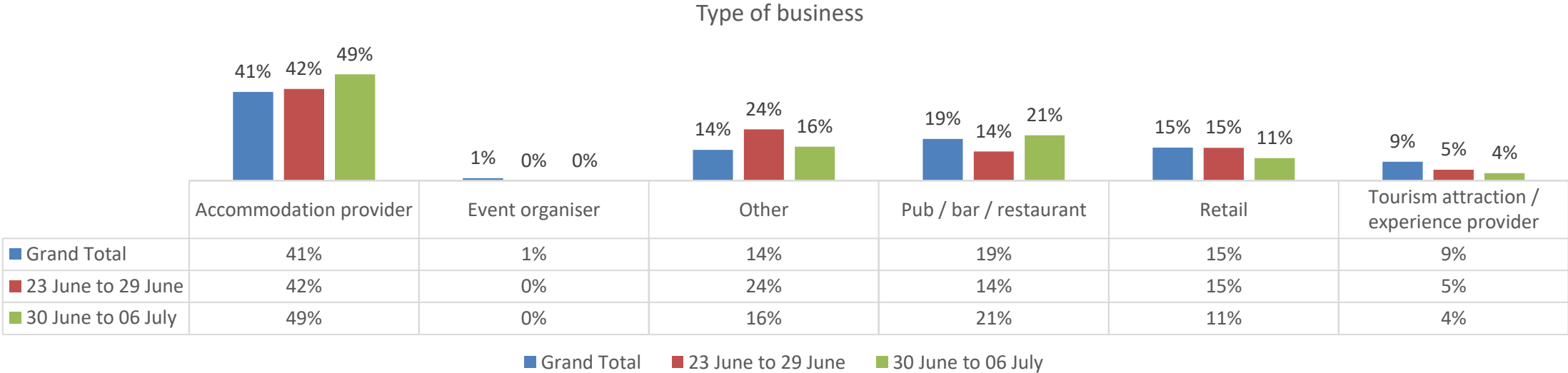
We have forecast a central scenario for England of £39.2bn in domestic tourism spending in 2020, down 48% compared to 2019 when spending by domestic tourists in England was £75.9bn. This comprises £10.0bn from overnight tourism, down from £19.5bn in 2019, and £29.1bn from day trips, down from £56.5bn in 2019.

This is a short-term forecast that describes one possible outcome and involves many assumptions and simplifications due to the fast-moving and uncertain situation; it is therefore subject to revision. Two specific assumptions made are: (1) No major second wave of the virus that would necessitate a renewed national lockdown; (2) By early 2021 we are unlikely to be back to baseline (pre-COVID) levels in any purpose/category.



Research Outputs – Business Profile

During week 14 there was an increase in the number accommodation providers and pubs / bar / restaurants. The proportion of retail, tourism attractions and ‘other’ businesses decreased when compared to the previous week.



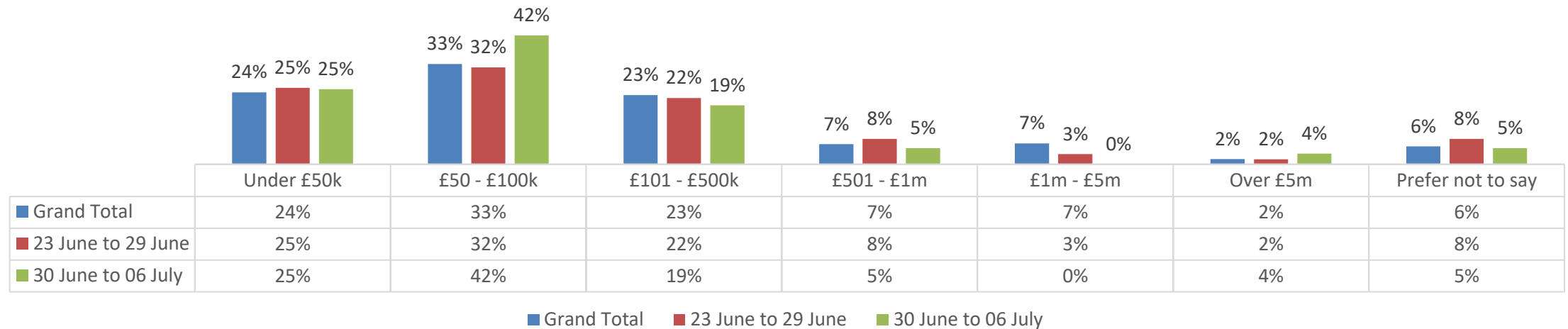
Q: What type of business do you run? (57)



Research Outputs – Business Profile

Businesses with turnover up to £100k account for two thirds of businesses included in the sample (67% combined). In particular, this week we saw an increase in the £50k - £100k bracket and a reduction in the £101k - £500k brackets compared to previous weeks. Larger businesses, with turnover over £500k account for the remaining 14%. Overall, 86% of all responses have been from SMEs (turnover up to £500k).

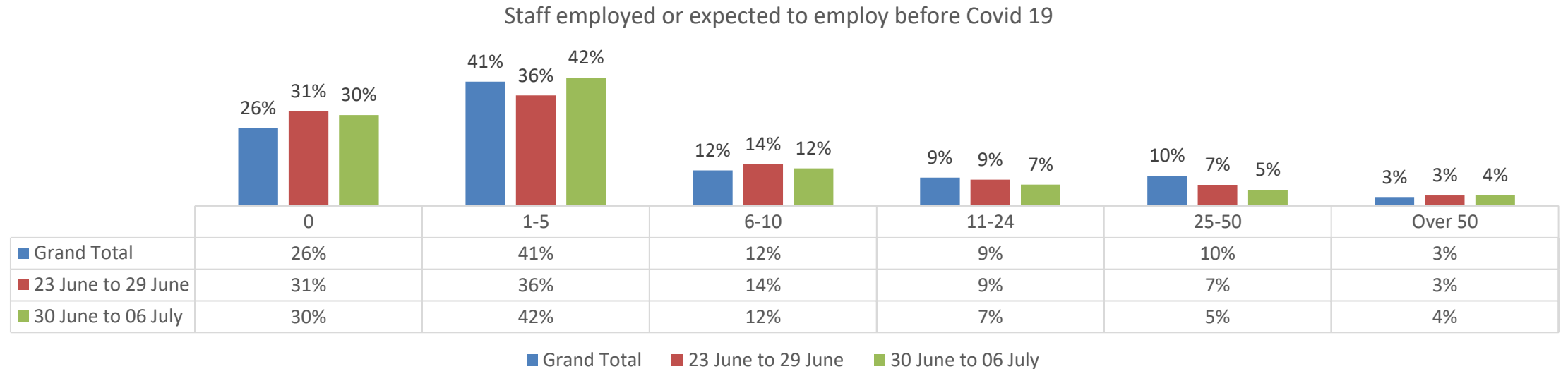
Company's approximate turnover last year



Q: What was your company's approximate turnover last year? (57)

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

A few changes is the size of businesses taking part in the survey. There was an increase in the proportion of businesses employing between 1 and 5 - up six points to 42%. All other groups employing at least 6 members of staff showed only minor decreases on last week.



Q: How many staff did you employ or expected to employ before the start of the Covid 19 crisis? (56)

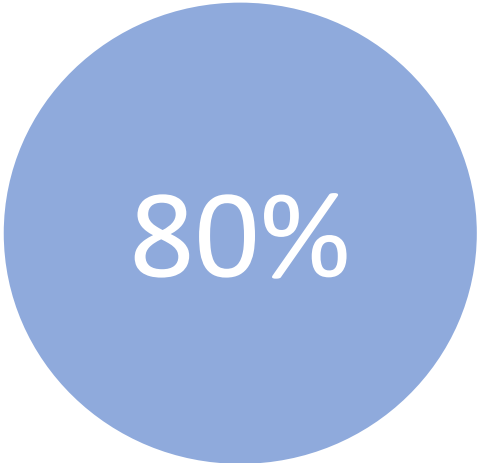
Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

The large majority of businesses have started planning for re-opening. Most businesses are planning to open partially only and the expected capacity is estimated at 53% of normal operations. However, respondents expect to bring back four out of five employees (80%).

Percentage of usual capacity expected to be reopening at.



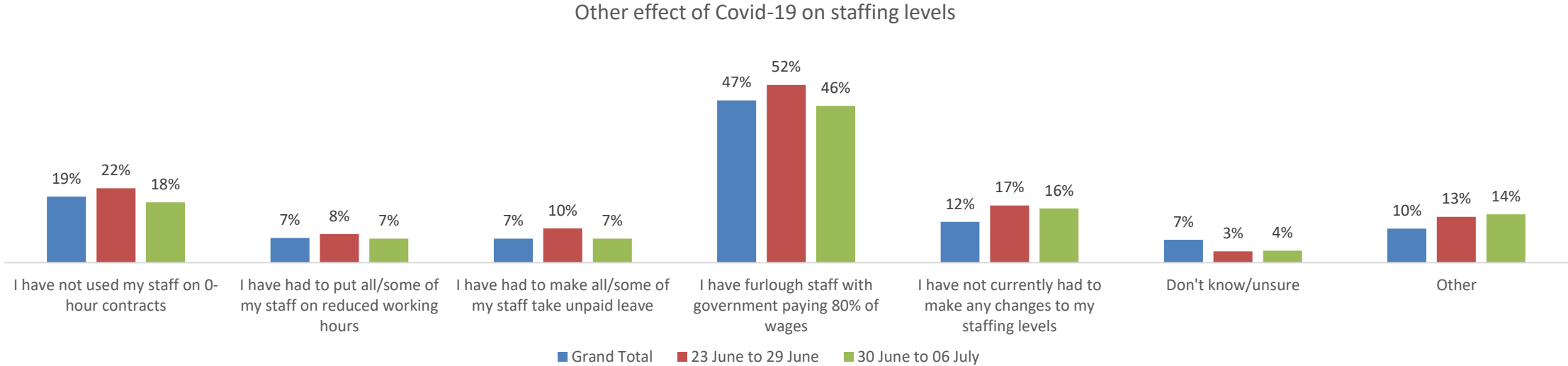
Percentage of usual staffing levels expected to be reopening at.



Q: If and when you plan your reopening, approximately what percentage of your usual capacity do you expect to be reopening at? Q: Approximately what percentage of your usual staffing levels do you expect to be reopening at?

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

Very small changes in terms of other staffing levels when compared to the all time average for the 14-week period. Under half (46%) said they had had to furlough staff with government paying 80% of wages, one point up on the series average.



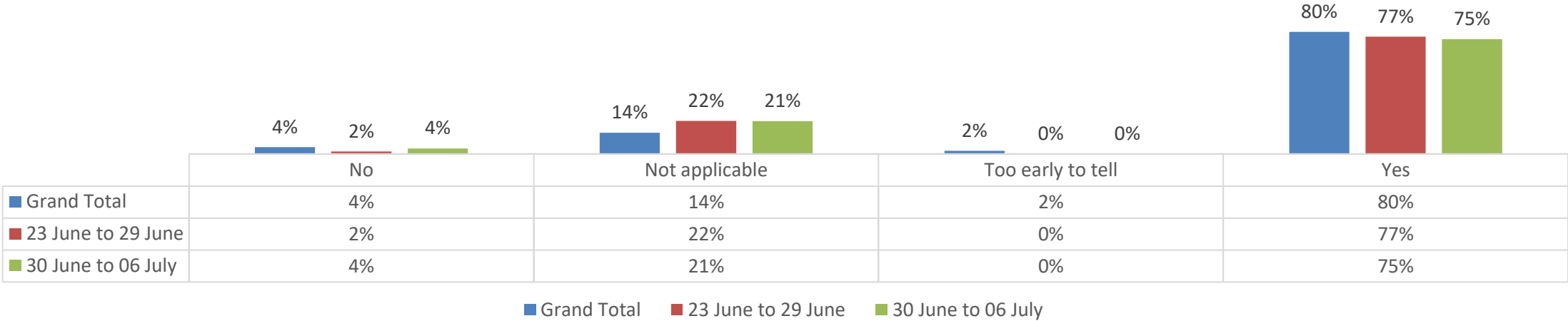
Q: What other effect has Covid-19 had on your staffing levels to date? (56)



Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

The proportion of businesses that reported changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19 this week is 75%, two percentage points below last week’s and 5% down on the 14-week average. Note that there’s a significant and growing group that deem the question not applicable to their business model.

Changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19



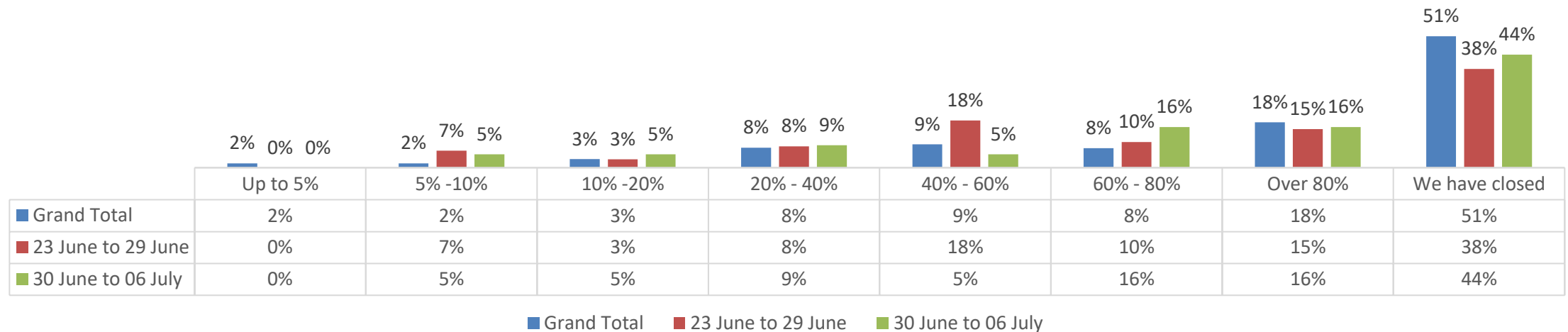
Q: Have there been any changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19?
Changes to dates or other details but not outright cancellations of bookings (57)



Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

Covid-19 is having significant impacts on the local tourism industry. Just over two in five (44%) are reporting temporary closures. The proportion is higher than in previous weeks (38% in week 13) but lower than the 53% average for the full series). It should be taken into account that the UK Government forced accommodation providers and other tourism and leisure related businesses to temporarily close their doors but many are now starting to open following the latest announcement and the publication of sector-specific guidance.

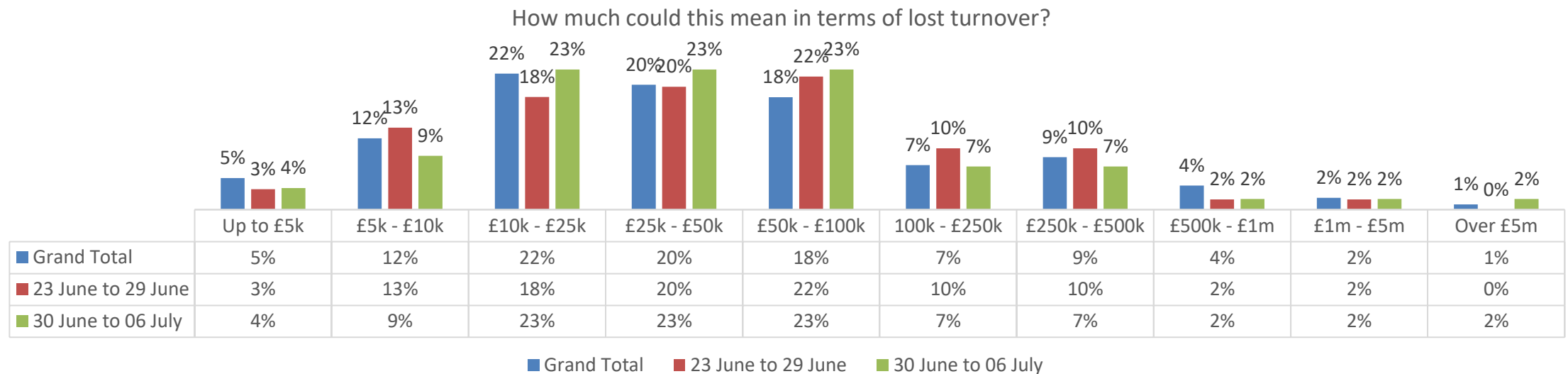
Percentage of trade lost to date



Q: If your trade has decreased what percentage of trade would you say you have lost to date? (57)

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

Looking at the differences between this week’s results and the 14-week period we notice an increase in the proportion of businesses reporting losses of between £10k and £100k. When comparing this week’s results to the overall average we also notice a 5% increase in the proportion of businesses claiming turnover losses of between £50k and £100k.

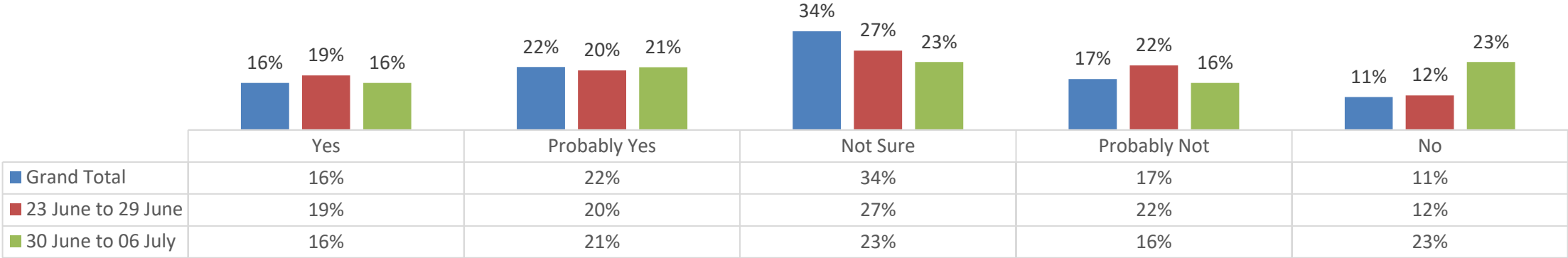


Q: Approximately how much could this mean in terms of lost turnover? (57)

Research Outputs – Business Survival

Almost two in five businesses (37%) have a positive outlook on their likelihood or surviving the next three months. However, the same proportion (39%) don't expect to survive longer than three months and 23% are still not sure.

Business survival after THREE months in the current situation?



■ Grand Total ■ 23 June to 29 June ■ 30 June to 06 July



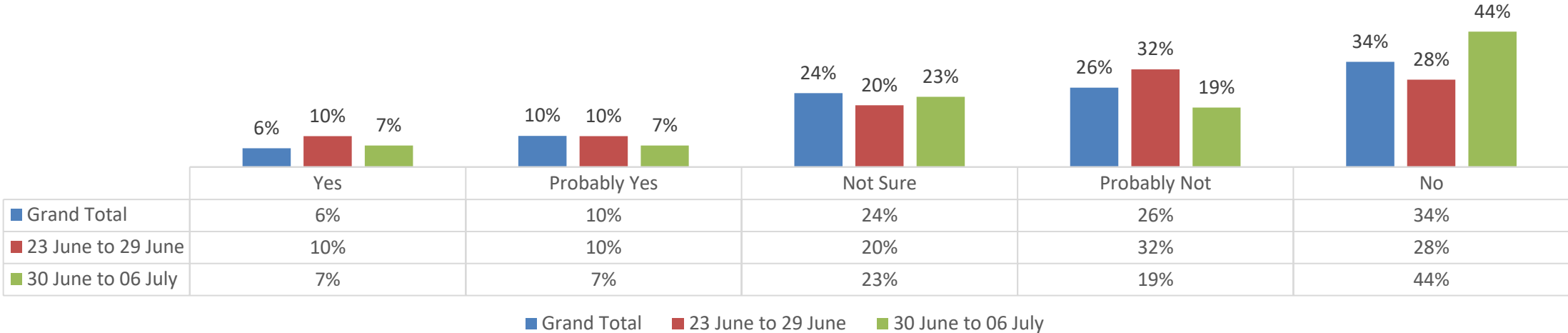
Q: Would your business survive for three months in the current situation? (56)



Research Outputs – Business Survival

Those ‘not sure’ about their survival after six months account for 23% of the sample and only 14% are confident they will survive for six month in the current situation. Almost two thirds (63%) think they probably won’t survive after six months. Note that 44% said no with certainty, compared to 34% average for the whole series.

Business survival after SIX months in the current situation?

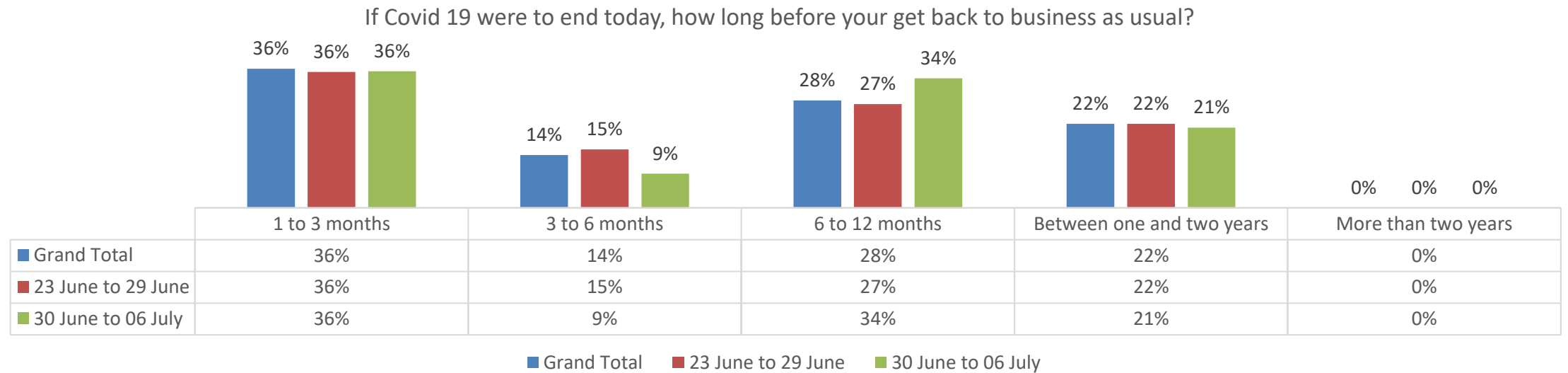


Q: Would your business survive for six months in the current situation? (56)



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. Just over a third (34%) believe that if Covid 19 were to end today, it would take them between 6 and 12 months to recover (7% increase on last week). Conversely, only 9% expect to need between 3 and 6 months – down from 15% last week.

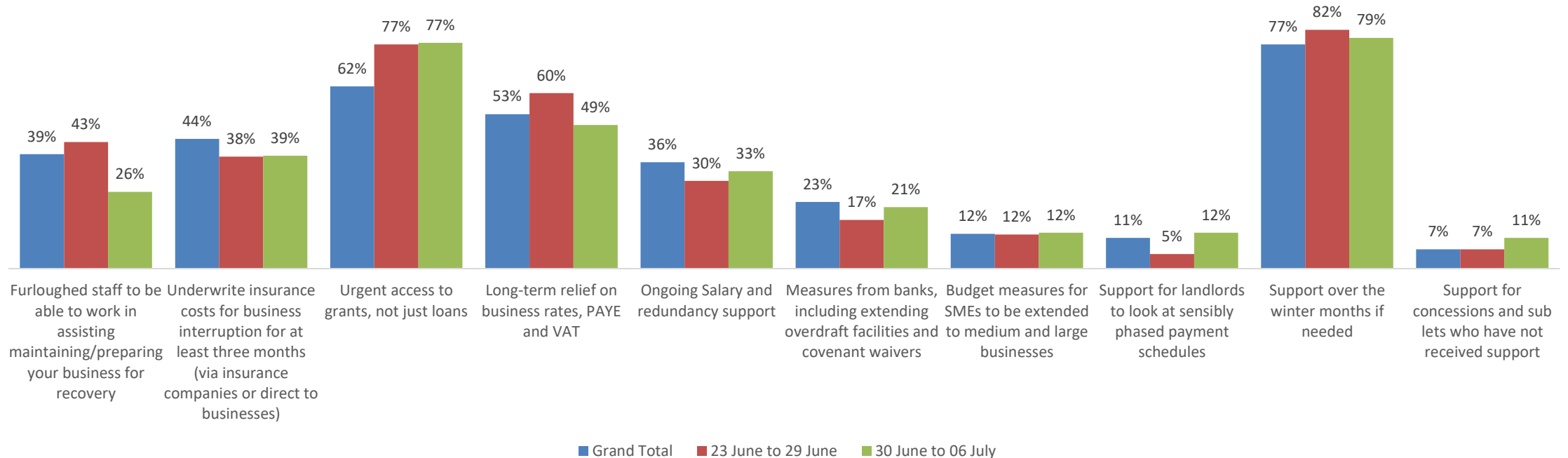


Q: Finally, If Covid 19 were to end today, how long would you estimate it would take for your company to get back to business as usual? (56)

Research Outputs – Business Support

Four in five businesses (79%) are saying they will need support from government over the winter months. The urgent access to grants, not just loans remains high (77%) and it's a request that has increased significantly over the last few weeks – note that the all series average is significantly lower at 62%.

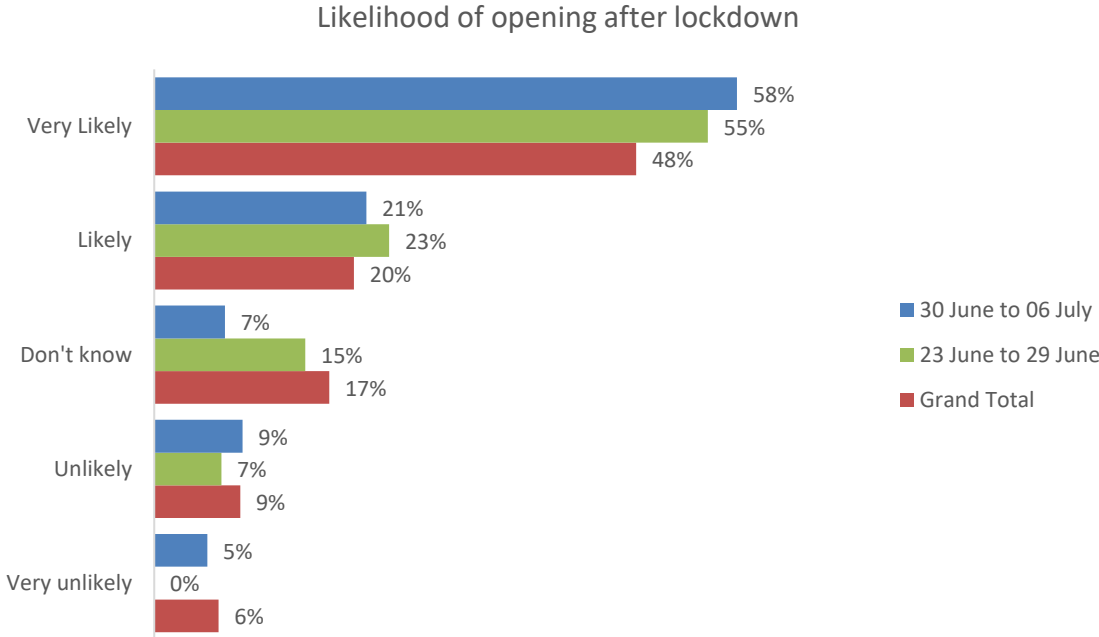
Support from Government going forward



Q: What support from Government would be crucial for your business going forward? (75)

Research Outputs – Business after lockdown

Most businesses are making preparations to open as soon as possible. With the release of the sector specific guidance almost three in five (58%) are now very likely to open after lock down and a further 21% are 'likely' to open. Those unsure account for 7% and 14% are 'unlikely' to open (of these, 5% are 'very unlikely' to open).



Q: How likely are you to open your business, if the Government removes the lockdown, but keeps social distancing and safety measures still in place. (60)



Research Outputs – Further opinions

VisitEngland has introduced the 'We're Good To Go' industry standard to provide a 'ring of confidence' for tourism and to demonstrate that businesses are adhering to public health guidance relating to COVID-19. Respondents were asked about their initial thoughts about the 'We're Good To Go' industry standard.

Overall, most businesses think it is a good idea and many have either applied for it or they are already using it and displaying the certificate.

However, for a sizable minority the new industry standard has a number of limitations. For some the new scheme comes with too many restrictions and others believe the new industry standard will not be recognised by many visitors and would need to be promoted before it is recognised and provides the intended reassurance to consumers.



Q: What are your initial thoughts about the 'We're Good To Go' industry standard? (41)

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: staying closed until next season and laying off staff

Sort term

Businesses are trying to encourage bookings for the remainder of the summer period albeit being cautious about guidance and potential local outbreaks.

The social distancing change from 2 meters to 1 one meter 'plus' has been positive.

The locals community are not too happy about influx of tourists.

Long term

Very concerned long term. Businesses are uncertain about getting through the winter if 'second waves' result in further lockdowns and other trade restrictions.

Reduce VAT on tourism

More grants, not just loans.



Q: Do you have any other comments you would like to raise? We are particularly interested in your major challenges short term and longer term? (26 excluding 'no', 'd/k', n/a, etc.)



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