



Summary

Main Features

About this issue

This release forms part of the suite of additional products that the ABS is producing to measure the economic impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

This publication provides information on the prevalence and nature of adverse impacts from COVID-19 experienced by businesses operating in Australia in mid-March 2020.

A sample of 3,000 businesses was selected for this survey, with a response rate of 41%.

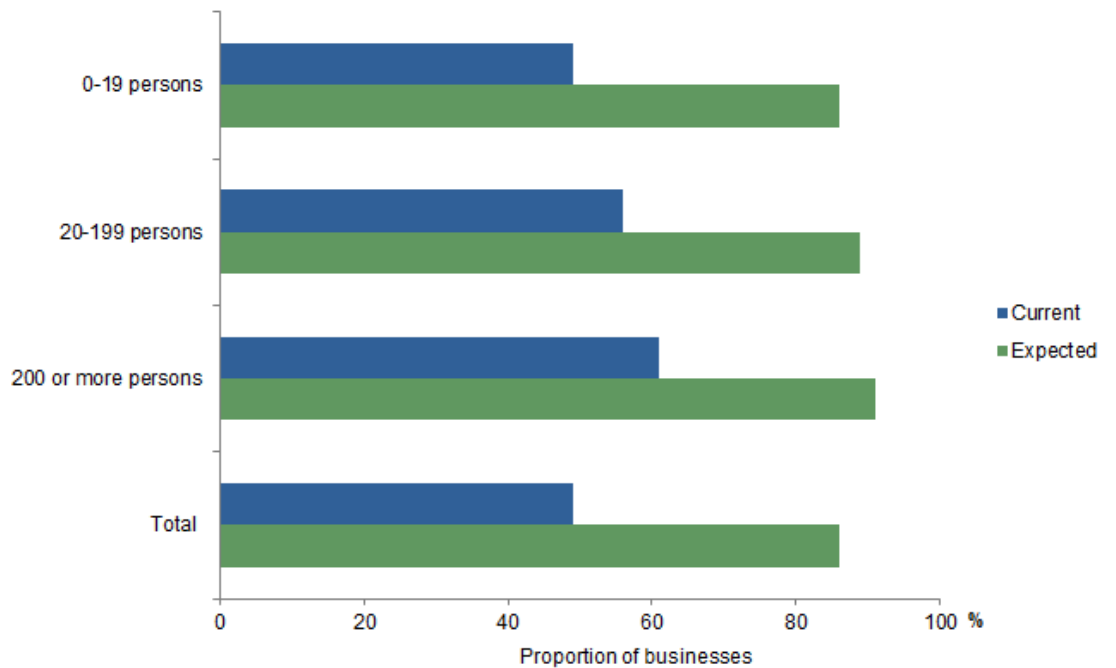
Data collection commenced on 16 March and was finalised on 23 March. The Australian Government's announcement of Stage 1 Restrictions on social gatherings were announced on the 22 March.

The ABS is committed to future collection of data to measure the business impacts of COVID-19. Any future information collected will evolve to maintain relevance in a changing environment.

Incidence of Adverse Business Impacts

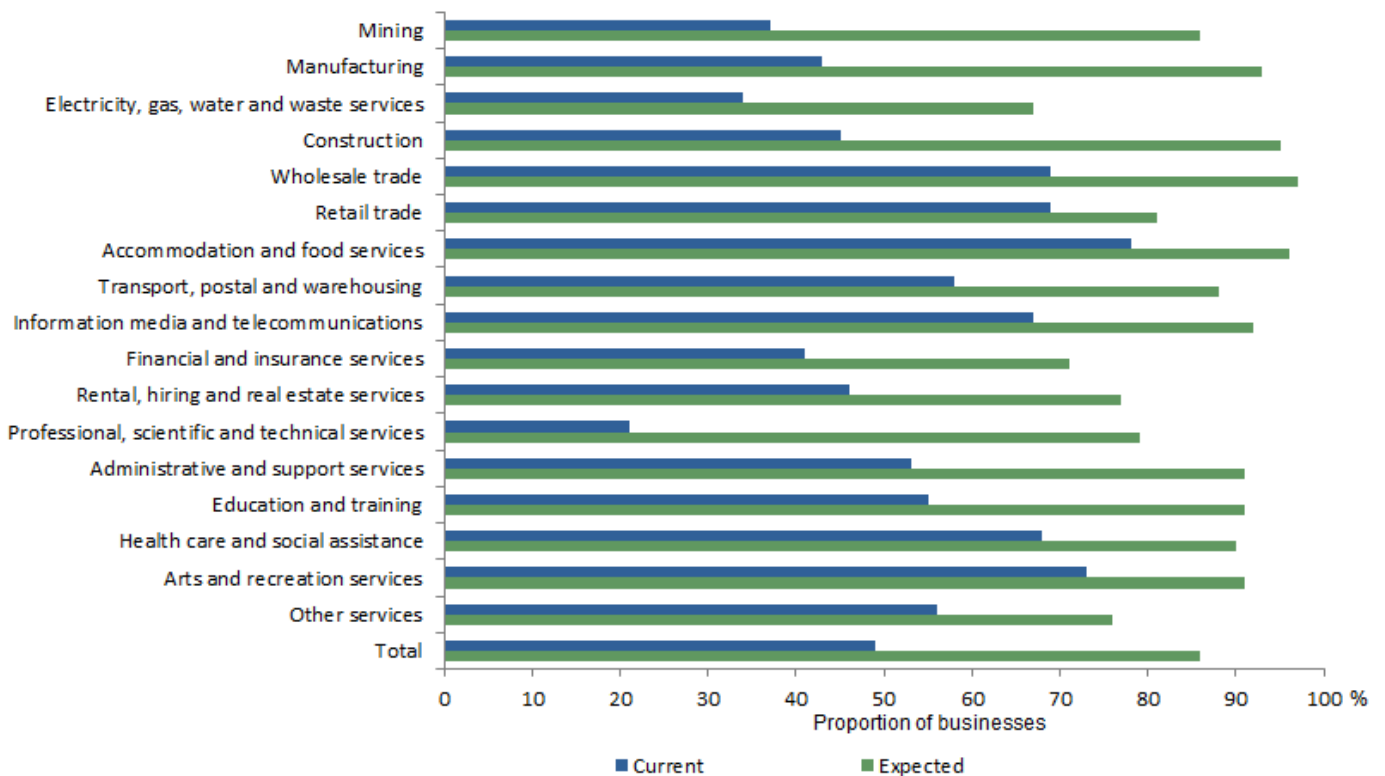
Businesses reported whether they were adversely impacted by COVID-19 in the previous two weeks and if they anticipated adverse impacts in the coming months.

Businesses adversely impacted by Coronavirus (COVID-19), current and expected, by employment size, March 2020



Approximately half of Australian businesses (49%) had experienced an adverse impact as a result of COVID-19 during the previous two weeks and 86% of businesses expected to be impacted in future months.

Businesses adversely impacted by Coronavirus (COVID-19), current and expected, by industry, March 2020



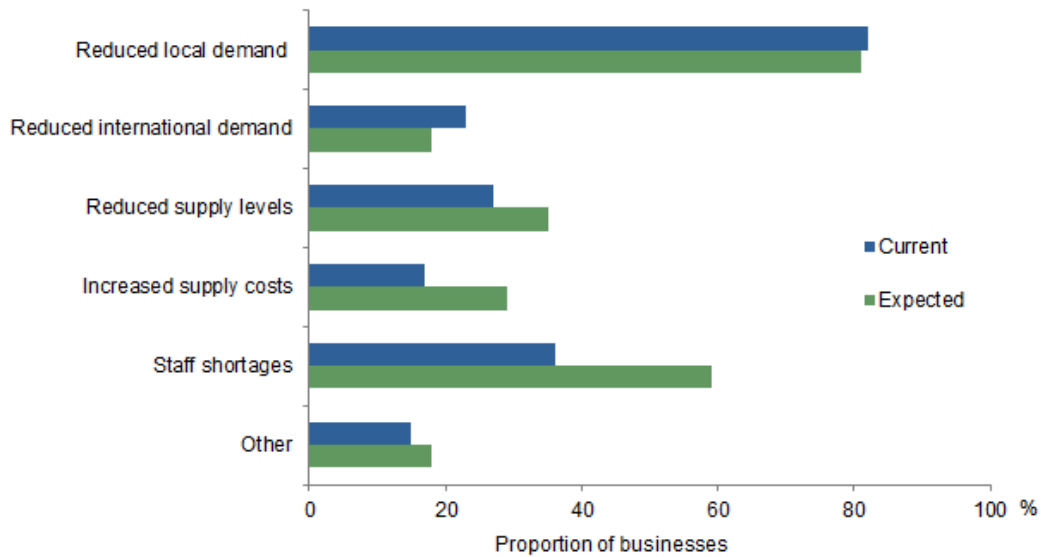
Over three quarters of businesses in Accommodation & food services (78%) reported that they had experienced adverse business impacts in the previous two weeks and 96% anticipated impacts over the coming months.

By contrast, businesses in Professional, scientific & technical services (21%), Electricity, gas and water supply

(34%) and businesses in Mining (37%) were the least likely to have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 in the previous two weeks.

Nature of Business Impacts

Businesses adversely impacted by Coronavirus (COVID-19), current and expected, by type of impact, March 2020



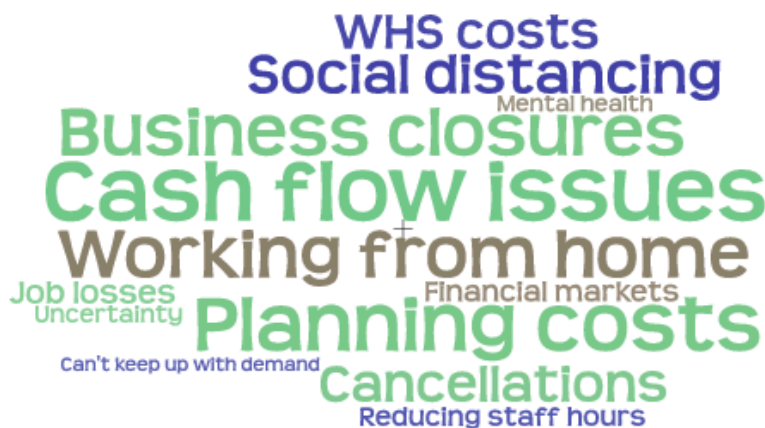
A reduction in local demand was the most common impact reported for the previous two weeks (82%) and was also the most common impact expected in coming months (81%).

Of impacted businesses, over a third had experienced staff shortages (36%) and 59% expected to experience staff shortages in coming months.

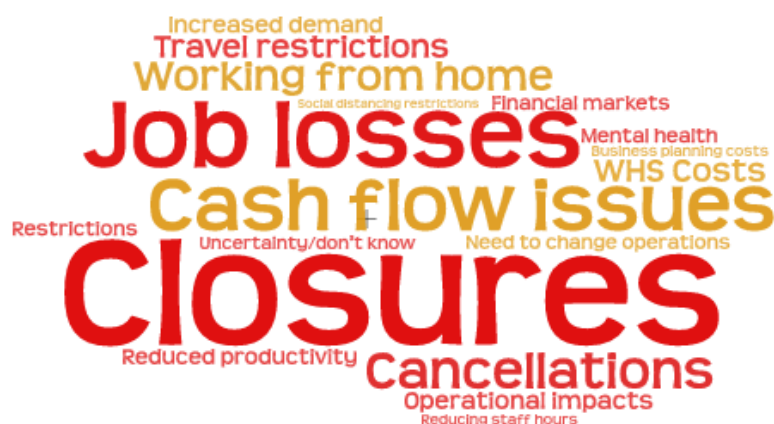
Thematic representation of business sentiments

A word cloud is a collection words depicted in different sizes. The bigger and bolder words reflect the more common themes identified by businesses as an additional impact due to COVID-19.

Experienced impacts of the last two weeks



Expected impacts in coming months



Data collection

Data was collected from 1,217 businesses through a telephone based survey, conducted between 16 and 23 March 2020. These businesses form a sub-sample of those included in the March quarter 2020, Business Indicators Survey.

When interpreting these results, please note:

- Response rates are significantly lower than typical ABS collections (41%).
- Non-response may be related to whether businesses are adversely impacted by COVID-19. If this were the case there is potential for systematic bias in these estimates that weighting procedures would not correct for. In particular, estimates of the prevalence of adversely impacted businesses may be an underestimate if businesses have typically not responded because they are impacted by COVID-19.

Technical Notes - Questionnaire

Supplementary Business Survey - Business Impact from COVID-19

- 1 (a) In the last two weeks, was your business adversely impacted by Coronavirus (COVID-19)?
- Yes
 - No
- (b) How has Coronavirus (COVID-19) adversely impact your business? (select all that apply)
- Reduced local customer demand
 - Reduced international customer demand (either overseas based customers or visiting international tourists)
 - Reduced stock or raw materials (such as material inputs)
 - Increased costs of stock or raw materials (such as material inputs)
 - Staff shortages due to COVID-19 related illness, quarantine measures, school closures or transport interruptions
 - Other (please specify)
- 2 (a) Do you expect Coronavirus (COVID-19) to adversely impact your business in coming months?
- Yes
 - No
- (b) How do you expect Coronavirus (COVID-19) to adversely impact your business, for example? (select all that apply)
- Reduced local customer demand
 - Reduced international customer demand (either overseas based customers or visiting international tourists)
 - Reduced stock or raw materials (such as material inputs)
 - Increased costs of stock or raw materials (such as material inputs)
 - Staff shortages due to COVID-19 related illness, quarantine measures, school closures or transport interruptions
 - Other (please specify)

About this Release

This publication is part of a suite of new products the ABS are releasing to provide more up-to-date information on the economic impact of coronavirus (COVID-19). It provides insights into the prevalence and nature of adverse impacts from COVID-19 on businesses operating in Australia.

Businesses report widespread impacts from COVID-19 (Media Release)

MEDIA RELEASE

26 March 2020

Embargoed: 11:30 am (Canberra time)

Australian businesses report widespread impacts from COVID-19 in March

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released the results of the first Business Impacts of COVID-19 survey as part of a series of additional product releases over the coming months to help measure the economic impact of coronavirus.

This release provides information on the prevalence and nature of adverse impacts from COVID-19 experienced by businesses operating in Australia in mid-March 2020.

Approximately half of the Australian businesses surveyed (49%) had experienced an adverse impact as a result of COVID-19 during the mid-March data collection period and 86% of businesses expected to be impacted in future months. The collection period pre-dated the Australian Government's announcement of Phase 1 Social Distancing Measures.

Adverse impacts were most prevalent in Accommodation & food services with over three quarters of businesses (78%) already reporting impacts and 96% of businesses reporting that they expected impacts in coming months. Businesses in Professional, scientific & technical services (21%), Electricity, gas and water supply (34%) and businesses in Mining (37%) were the least likely to have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 in the collection period.

A reduction in local demand was the most common impact experienced (82%) and was also the most common impact expected in coming months (81%). Of impacted businesses, over a third had experienced staff shortages (36%) and 59% expected to experience staff shortages in coming months.

Further information is available in Business Indicators, Business Impacts of COVID-19 (cat. no. 5676.0.55.003).

Media note:

- The additional ABS products being published to understand the economic impact of the coronavirus can be found on a dedicated page.
- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or ABS) must be attributed as the source,
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Communications and Partnerships Section on 1300 175 070 (8:30am - 5:00pm Mon-Fri),

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