

Regulation

What does UK business think?

Unchecked UK has undertaken extensive quantitative and qualitative [research](#) to better understand public attitudes to regulation. This research has found that there is strong public support for strong social and environmental protections among voters across the political spectrum.

Given that politicians advocating radical deregulation often claim that business will benefit from these policies, we wanted to ascertain whether the views of the private sector were at odds with those of the general public.

This paper sets out findings from a YouGov poll of UK businesses on behalf of Unchecked UK, the RSPB, the Wildlife Trusts, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, and the Women's Institute.¹

Key Findings

1. Most businesses think that deregulation via the Retained EU Law Bill will cause uncertainty and restrict trade, NOT bring about economic growth or deliver business benefits

CAUSE MORE UNCERTAINTY FOR UK BUSINESSES

68%

What do UK businesses really think about the Retained EU Law Bill?

Over two thirds (68%) of businesses think that these plans will cause more uncertainty for UK businesses.

Nearly two thirds (64%) of businesses think that these plans will **not** boost economic growth in the UK, compared to 27% who think it will.

Nearly two thirds (63%) of businesses think that these plans will restrict access to trade markets for UK businesses.

Over half (53%) do **not** believe that these plans will simplify regulation for the benefit of UK businesses.

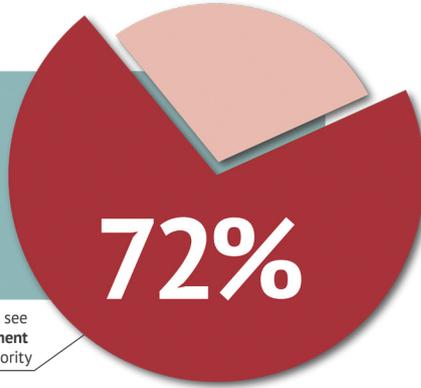
(Excluding those who answered 'don't know')

¹ Methodology: YouGov surveyed a representative sample of 1,000 UK businesses between 13 and 20 February on behalf of Unchecked UK. Data was weighted according to the dimensions of gender, age and geography on the basis of an ideal weighting from Statistics UK, so that the results are representative of the population in relation to the target group. The businesses surveyed covered a range of industries – including manufacturing, construction, IT and telecoms, hospitality and leisure, and retail, and ranged in size from micro-businesses (<10 employees) to large businesses (>250 employees).

2. Businesses do not see excessive government regulation as a priority issue

TOO MUCH
REGULATION IS
NOT A PRIORITY
ISSUE FOR
UK BUSINESSES

of businesses don't see
'too much government
regulation' as a top priority



Fewer than a fifth (18%) of UK businesses see excessive government regulation as the most important domestic issue facing them.

The rise in energy costs and inflation outrank other domestic issues, with 70% and 65% of participants (respectively) identifying these as the most important issue. This was followed by concerns around Britain leaving the EU and shortage of labour, flagged by 45% of businesses.

More businesses are concerned about climate change than excessive regulation.

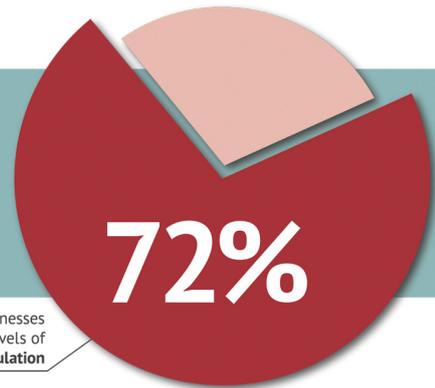
3. Businesses strongly support environmental regulation – and most want to see current levels maintained or increased

Seven in ten businesses (72%) think that the UK government regulates businesses' environmental practices 'too little' (38%) or the 'right amount' (34%).

Just one fifth (20%) think the government regulates business environment practices too much.

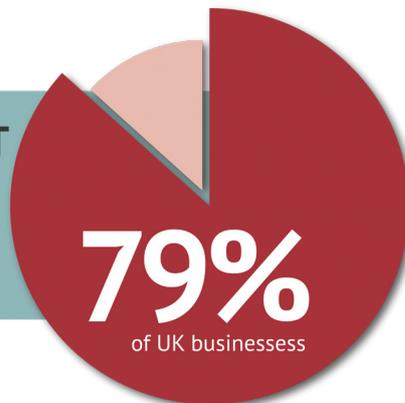
UK
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BACK
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of UK businesses
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environment regulation



4. Businesses strongly support health and safety regulations – with little support for weakening these rules

WILL NOT ACCEPT
LOWER HEALTH
AND SAFETY
STANDARDS



Four in five (79%) UK businesses say that they are not willing to accept lower health and safety standards for their employees and customers. Just 7% state that they would be willing to accept a lowering of these standards.



5. Businesses do not endorse the Bill in its current form, but nonetheless support the government reviewing all EU derived legislation

Excluding those who answered don't know, a majority of businesses believe the government are right to review all EU-derived legislation (69%), with 45% believing they should do this by the end of 2023, and a quarter (25%) believing they should instead extend the deadline beyond the end of 2023.

UK BUSINESSES ARE UNCONVINCED ABOUT THE RETAINED EU LAW BILL



One-in-four would prefer the review to continue into 2024



Nearly one-in-three think EU derived legislation should stay as UK law

Around three in ten businesses (31%) believe that the government should not be reviewing EU-derived legislation at all. 29% believe that all EU-derived secondary legislation should be retained, and 2% believe it should all be removed from UK law.

6. UK businesses recognise the benefits of regulation



When asked about government regulation of UK businesses, survey participants identified a number of advantages. The most important reason identified is to **create a level playing field** for businesses preventing firms from being undercut by businesses using poor corporate practices (34%).

The second most important reason given on the importance of regulation is its role in **ensuring public trust in businesses** and the products they sell (27%), while others stated that regulation **provides certainty** for businesses (23%), and **helps UK businesses to trade** in Europe and the rest of the world (22%).

Only one in twenty businesses (5%) think that there are no advantages of government regulation of UK businesses.

The full polling data can be found [here](#)

