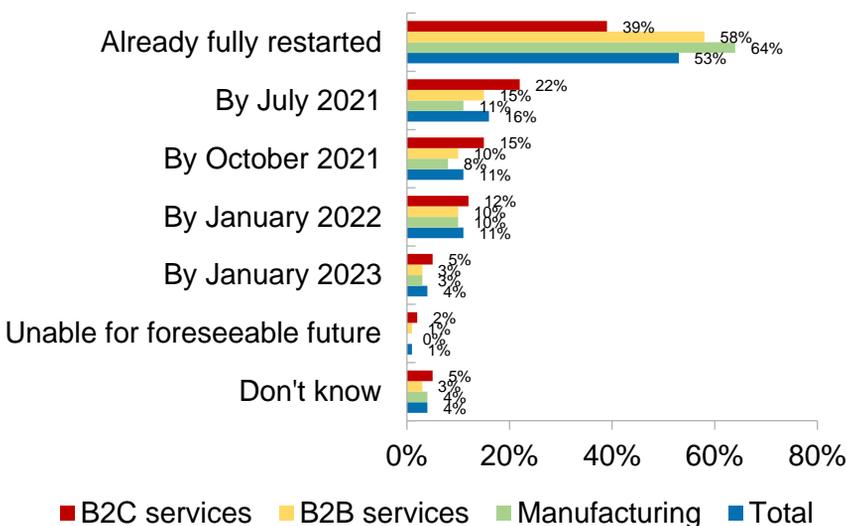


BCC and Funding Circle survey finds rising confidence among small businesses

A survey of more than 1,000 UK businesses, almost all SMES, carried out by the BCC and Funding Circle, finds that UK small businesses are increasingly confident in their ability to grow and power the economic recovery, although many still have fears about the ongoing impact of Covid restrictions.

- **Growth:** 63% of firms surveyed confident in their growth prospects over next 12 months.
- **Restarting:** 53% already operating at pre-pandemic capacity; 80% expect to be by October.
- **Barriers:** 38% cited further lockdowns as a barrier to re-opening, while 37% cited ongoing social distancing measures.
- **Finance:** 44% believe access to finance will help overcome the remaining barriers to fully restarting operations.

By approximately what date do businesses expect to fully restart operations? (n=1,087)



Top barriers to reopening (n=1,079)

38%
 cite 'concerns about possible future lockdowns'

37%
 cite 'COVID-19 requirements (e.g. social distancing)'

33%
 cite 'reduced or no customer demand for products/services'



Claire Walker
 Co-Executive Director
 BCC

"The ability of businesses to bounce back from the devastation caused by Covid is a huge testament to their resilience. Although, the financial support put in place by the government to help many through the last 12 months will have played a crucial role.

The government must now clarify the future of safety measures, such as social distancing, and set out a clear package of support that would be available should further restrictions be imposed on businesses this year, or in the years to come."



Lisa Jacobs
 Europe Managing Director
 Funding Circle

"While the road to recovery won't be straightforward, it is great to see SMEs are looking towards the future with such optimism. From our conversations with customers, it's clear their appetite to invest in their businesses is as high as ever. We're ready to continue helping them access the finance they need to overcome the remaining hurdles they face, and achieve their growth ambitions"