

Companies expect to run out of cash within weeks

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Deserted shopping streets in cities such as Glasgow have hit businesses of all sizes in most sectors



A large number of companies are in danger of running out of money within weeks, according to a survey tracking the impact of coronavirus.

The [British Chambers of Commerce](#) found that a majority of businesses, or 62 per cent, polled late last month said that they had enough cash to keep them going for the next three months only.

Almost a fifth, or 18 per cent, said that they had sufficient capital to cover their outlay for a month and 6 per cent said that they had enough in reserve to sustain them for more than a year.

The BCC was set up more than 150 years ago and is one of the main lobby groups for the [business community](#), pooling information from a network of 53 regional centres.

It carried out its poll, which it is calling The Covid-19 Business Impact Tracker, among more than 600 businesses between March 25 and 27. Adam Marshall, the organisation's director-general, said that companies had reported a sharp decline in revenues at home and overseas. "The coronavirus pandemic has taken a heavy toll on business and economic activity across the UK," he said.

The survey found that companies were planning to put large numbers of workers on furlough after the government guaranteed that the taxpayer would pay 80 per cent of staff salaries up to £2,500 a month.

Almost a third, or 32 per cent, of the companies that responded to the survey said that they were planning to furlough between 75 per cent and all of their employees. Twenty-six per cent said they were not planning to draw on the government's guarantee next week.

With much of the nation in lockdown, 18 per cent said that they had temporarily closed their operations. While none said that they had shut permanently, the BCC said that it expected the numbers in both cases to rise over the months ahead.