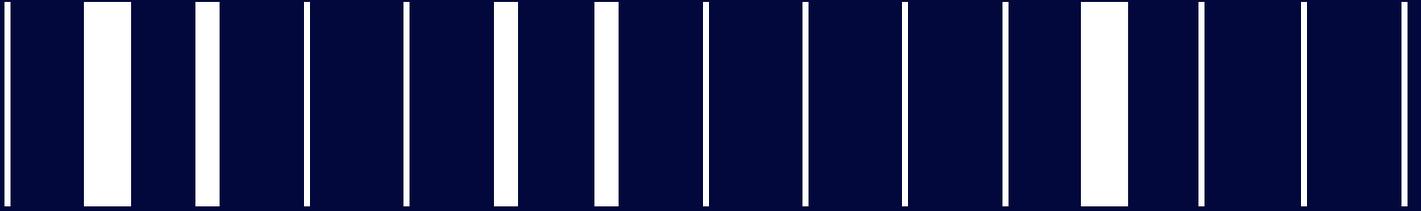
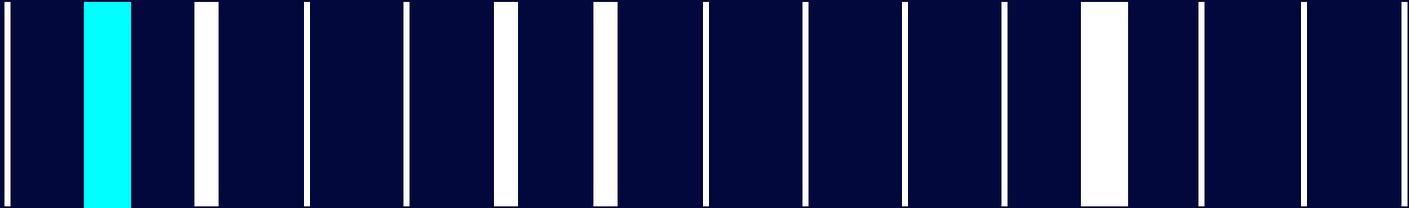


The great opportunity?

March 2021





Contents

Executive summary	1
Approach.....	3
Economic and social context	5
What is the great opportunity?	7
The research findings summary perspectives	9
The research findings detail and implications.....	13
In conclusion	33
Additional methodology notes.....	35



Ismail Amla - Chief Growth Officer

1 Executive summary

Disruption is by its very nature unanticipated and dramatic – forcing us to innovate, to try new approaches. Historically events like major wars, significant economic depressions or a seismic political change have been sources of immense reinvention. The long bow, the telephone, the welfare state, the NHS, slum clearance, the United Nations, the Marshall Plan, all arose from an event that forced us to find a new approach out of sheer necessity.

The disruption we have experienced over the last year is unprecedented within most modern lifetimes. It's been challenging and for many exhausting. And we're still in the eye of the storm. For many the economic and social scars will need time to heal before a sense of optimism returns. However, the resilience, adaptability and creativity that individuals, organisations and industries have displayed over the past 12 months demonstrates what is possible when we're forced to into a corner. It's been inspiring and represents a great opportunity to reimagine and rebuild.

As part of a new research project, conducted together with leading market-research firm YouGov, Capita surveyed over 350 senior decision-makers across three industry groupings – Government, Financial Services and Critical Infrastructure¹ – to establish the impact the events of 2020 had on them personally, on their organisations and for the industries they work in, and to understand their outlook for the year ahead as many of us plan for the post-pandemic rebuild. We will take this 'pulse' once a quarter throughout 2021 and report on the shifts in sentiment and the implications.

This first pulse focused on the last 12 months and the look ahead.

In summary those we surveyed held an unsurprisingly negative view of 2020. There was acknowledgement that this has been a period of immense change, faster than many anticipated, and that we are not out of the woods yet. Many voiced the view that they expect more volatility ahead in 2021, and beyond, as the journey towards recovery unfolds.

From an organisational perspective, private and public sector bodies experienced huge disruption, driven in particular by changes to work locations and patterns. Whilst not everyone moved to a 'home office' environment (for instance many workers remained in the field and on the front line) the disruption to 'normal' working habits was severe.

On a positive note, there was acknowledgement that, for many, change was actually embraced and that, despite the circumstances, for some productivity was not felt to have suffered. In a minority of cases, it was even felt to have improved. On the whole respondents believed that their industries had responded well to the myriad of challenges the pandemic threw at them, and that they were able to make changes much quicker than anticipated.

There were signs that greater collaboration, more innovation and faster adoption of technologies were points of positive progress. If nurtured, these could all be factors contributing to better outcomes for business and society as we emerge from the pandemic. Crisis events throughout history have frequently resulted in strategic inflections. It's at these points organisations must make difficult choices regarding the future they will choose, and the capabilities they require for the journey. Focusing on what will be enduring shifts in behaviour for the next decade and beyond will be key to unlocking competitive advantage.

¹ Government covers Central and Local Government, Police, Army, Navy and RAF; Financial Services covers Retail Banking, Investment Banking, Wealth and Asset Management and Insurance; Critical Infrastructure covers Telecommunications, Utilities, Oil and Energy and Transport

Overall as we reflected on the results of this 'pulse' it was clear that the last 12 months have been tough, and that the next 12 months will require equal, if not greater, levels of resilience and perseverance. However, we should reflect on the huge accomplishments of so many, whether that be the individuals who have had to juggle competing priorities at home, the organisations that have dispelled myths about what is possible to achieve and the industries that are responding to years' worth of transformation in weeks and months.

There are signs of recovery, both in the sentiment expressed, and in the wider socio-economic environment. The levels of determination, persistence and ingenuity shown during this most difficult of periods gives us hope and optimism for a brighter future.

There were signs that greater collaboration, more innovation and faster adoption of technologies were points of positive progress. If nurtured, these could all be factors contributing to better outcomes for business and society as we emerge from the pandemic.



2 Approach

Capita partnered with leading market research firm YouGov to conduct primary research amongst senior decision-makers in the UK, with the objective of better understanding current sentiment amidst the unprecedented changes to work and life brought about by the pandemic.

We wanted to understand whether the events of 2020 had manifested in a negative outlook, or whether the amazing achievements in spite of numerous hardships had given rise to a renewed sense of optimism about the future. We asked for opinions on topics including productivity, collaboration, technology adoption and innovation, in addition to seeking to understand the pace of change and whether our respondents thought it was sustainable.

The research focused on senior decision-makers working across Critical Infrastructure, Financial Services and Government, with decision-making responsibilities in areas including management, business development, IT, finance, business transformation, procurement, innovation and data analytics. We asked respondents about their individual reflections, their thoughts on the organisations they worked for and finally their opinions on their respective industries.

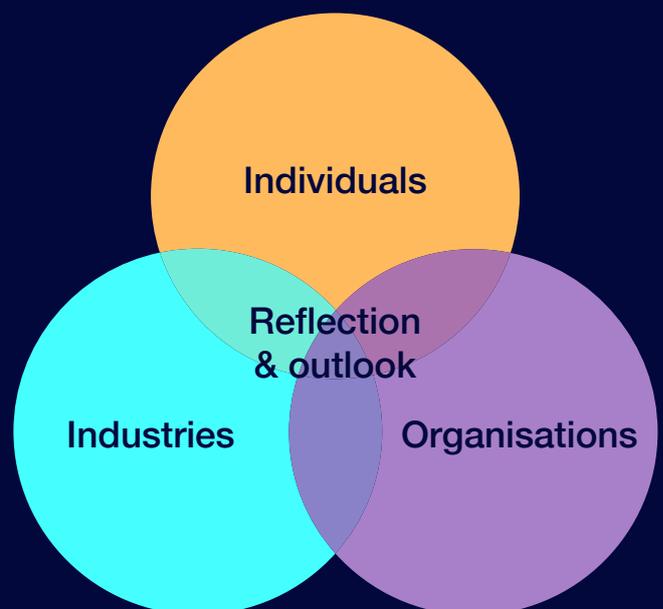
We're fascinated at how these perspectives will change throughout 2021. This report is the first in a series of 'pulses' we will take throughout the year.

We've highlighted many of these conversations, in quotes and references to articles, interviews and podcasts, at relevant points throughout this report so you can understand more about the variety of perspectives that were shared with us as part of the great opportunity debate.

We're fascinated at how these perspectives will change throughout 2021. This report is the first in a series of 'pulses' we will take throughout the year.

We'll check in again with our respondents in the second, third and final quarters of 2021 to see how sentiment has shifted and reflect on what this might mean for respondents – as individuals, for the organisations they work for, and for the industries they operate in as lockdown looks set to ease.

In the next section we set out the broader economic and social context for this research.





3 Economic and social context



Last year the UK economy experienced its biggest shock for 300 years. Not since the great frost of 1709, a disaster for the UK as an agricultural economy, have we seen similar levels of disruption². Today the UK has a very different economic DNA, with services now accounting for over 80% of UK economic output, and over 80% of UK workers employed in service provision³. As a result, the impact of lockdown on the economy proved to be extremely severe as many businesses in the service sector were upended.

From an economic standpoint, GDP contracted by 10% in 2020⁴. An initially strong recovery from the first lockdown petered out as the virus surged back in the third and final quarters of the year, seeing the UK narrowly avoid a double dip recession.

Whilst the recent release of a UK roadmap towards ending lockdown is a cause for optimism, there remains significant uncertainty about the economic recovery. The March 2021 budget suggests that the road to recovery will be long and that significant interventions will be required to support challenges relating to productivity, employment, education, supporting small business and many other areas.

There are both upside opportunities and downside risks reflected in the array of published economic forecasts⁵. Upside scenarios include the faster rollout of the vaccination programme, a boost to consumer spending as a result of pent-up household savings and potential productivity improvements as a result of more organisations adopting technologies such as robotics and automation. These scenarios could result in a faster recovery. In addition, history suggests that there will be upsides in terms of innovation, with new businesses finding ways to deliver value in an environment where many markets have shifted,

2 Pain, S. (2009) "1709: The year that Europe froze", New Scientist, February 4th

3 House of Commons (2021) "A5: Services", March 3rd

4 ONS (2021), "GDP first quarterly estimate, UK: October to December 2020", February 12th

5 National Institute UK Economic Outlook (2021), "Brexit Britain in Covid Recovery Ward", February, Series A. No. 1

and one where both consumers and businesses are accelerating their moves to buying and operating digitally.

Signs from other economies are cause for optimism. The US is poised for a strong recovery as the government rolls out an extraordinary stimulus package⁶, and countries such as Australia and New Zealand, who applied hard-line tactics to curb the virus, have seen their economies accelerate out of pandemic-induced recessions⁷.

Downside scenarios revolve around risks that include a resurgence of Covid-19 or the emergence of a new variant, potential vaccination programme issues as it continues to expand or policy false starts that hamper the economic recovery. These scenarios could result in a much slower path to recovery. Some European countries have recently found themselves imposing new lockdown measures as a result of sharp rises in infections in recent weeks.

In summary, it's likely that the economic challenges will run deeper and have an impact that is wider reaching than we first imagined in early 2020. Whilst we are not yet home free, there is evidence to support cautious optimism that a recovery is on the way.

On a societal level we've experienced a humanitarian crisis on a scale few of us will have seen before. Unemployment and furlough have meant that many have lacked the routine that comes with work, and for those in education and those supporting education, the past year has been significantly challenging. Roughly 11 million children were sent home to manage their education remotely, and The Office of Communications (Ofcom) estimates that between 1.14 million and 1.78 million children in total in the UK have no home access to a laptop, desktop or tablet posing a serious problem to ensuring meaningful remote educational provision⁸.

6 Kasumov, A. and Smith, C. (2021), "How the Biden \$1.9tn stimulus has poured fuel on a global market shake-up", Financial Times, March 15th

7 Smyth, J. (2020), "New Zealand's 'go hard and early' Covid policy reaps economic rewards", Financial Times, December 17th

8 Vibert, S. (2020) "Children without internet access during lockdown", Children's Commissioner, August 18th



For those that lost loved ones and colleagues, and those who have cared for and continue to look after the sick, the scale of crisis and the mental toll has been unimaginable. At the end of last year, over half (54%) of the adult UK population reported feeling anxious or worried because of the pandemic⁹. It will take some time for the real impacts to be understood.

And the debate regarding inequality **cannot be ignored**.

On gender sadly it has become very clear that women have shouldered a disproportionate burden during the pandemic. The UN estimates that women are spending up three times as long on unpaid domestic duties and childcare in 2020, and the pandemic has only widened this gap¹⁰. This is due to lack of childcare, lack of domestic support, lack of access to support networks, and in the most extreme cases unemployment. According to UN research, women were significantly more likely to use food banks, be claiming benefits for the first time, and struggling to meet debt repayment¹¹. All of these are factors are challenging and emotionally draining. At the start of the second UK lockdown in October 2020 the health charity CARE found that 27% of women had reported struggles around mental health. This compared to 10% of men¹².

It also became clear that women's employment status was far less resilient than men's. They were more likely to be in low-paid, low-skilled work, more likely to have zero hours contracts, or simply be part of the informal economy and paid in cash¹³. Women make up 39% of the workforce globally but comprise 54% of the workers in sectors such as hospitality and food services, some of the areas worst hit by the pandemic – and that's just the jobs we know about¹⁴.

9 Mental Health Foundation (2020) "Wave 9: pre-Christmas 2020"

10 United Nations (2020) "World's Women report", United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, October 20th

11 UN Women (2020), Covid-19 and its economic toll on women: The story behind the numbers, September 16th

12 Broster, A. (2020) "Coronavirus Has Caused A Crisis In Women's Mental Health, According To Study", Forbes, September 25th

13 UN Women (2020), Covid-19 and its economic toll on women: The story behind the numbers, September 16th

14 McKinsey & Co. (2020), Covid-19 and gender equality: Countering the regressive effects, July 15th

Another inequality relates to income. Whilst the household savings ratio reached record levels last year, high-income, employed households were far more likely to have made big savings during the pandemic with Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey data suggesting that 42% of high-income households had saved more compared to 22% of low-income households. Middle-income, employed people and retirees were also more likely to say their savings had risen. For those who were unemployed or furloughed, savings were more likely to decrease¹⁵.

The pandemic also exposed significant inequalities in the jobs market. According to the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) in 2021 the UK's unemployment rate is forecast to reach 6.8%, compared with 4.4% in 2020¹⁶. This is especially concentrated in the youth market, who are particularly exposed to the industries hardest hit, such as those operating in the accommodation, food and leisure and non-essential retail sectors. People aged under 30 and those with household incomes under £10,000 were around 35% and 60%, respectively, more likely to be furloughed than the general population¹⁷. The unemployment rate (the proportion of the economically active population who are unemployed) for 16- to 24-year-olds was 14.2% in the last quarter of 2020¹⁸.

The societal challenges could well extend far beyond the economic trauma. Burn-out, isolation and the dissolving of the line between personal and work life have taken their toll. Wellbeing has been thrust up the agenda as a key focus for organisations. The scale of inequalities in our society has also been laid bare. There is an opportunity to address many of these challenges head on, if we are prepared to be bold and confront them now.

15 ONS Households (S.14): Households' saving ratio; Bank of England commentary

16 Office for Budget Responsibility; GOV.UK; 2015-2025

17 Office for National Statistics – Labour Force Survey

18 House of Commons Youth Unemployment Statistics

4 What is the great opportunity?

The disruptive nature of the pandemic is uncontested. But if we step back and adjust our perspective, could this also be a great opportunity to think differently about our future?

Despite the challenges, perhaps we should view life after the pandemic as a new frontier. One where we challenge our assumptions about what's possible, where we rethink how we live and work, and where we rebuild different types of organisations for a renewed world and a better society. There is a saying that the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. Might now be the time to plant those trees?

Despite the challenges, there are causes for optimism:

- The continuing success of the UK vaccine programme should allow a meaningful reduction in social distancing restrictions as we approach the middle of this year. At the time of writing half of UK adults had received their first dose of a Covid vaccine¹⁹. The roadmap set out by the government should allow sectors of the economy that have been in semi-stasis to restart.
- Whilst unevenly distributed, the household sector has built up substantial savings during lockdown, and this may spur a boon in spending for some of those sectors hit hardest, such as accommodation, tourism, leisure and non-essential retailing. Countries that are further down the path to recovery have witnessed a strong inflection towards growth, with Australia being an example, posting a 3.1% increase in GDP in Q4 2020, on the back of a revised 3.4% increase in Q3. This is the first time in more than 60 years that the country has seen more than 3% GDP growth in two consecutive quarters²⁰.
- Whilst higher than recent years, unemployment has remained relatively low compared to many other countries in the Eurozone, the G7 and the USA²¹, especially given the size of shock to the economy (although as discussed previously there have been stark impacts on sectors such as the youth market and continued extensions to furlough schemes may yet mask the long-term impact).
- Whilst the debate will continue, there are signs that working remotely has provided many previously office-bound workers with greater flexibility, more time with families and an ability to explore a different lifestyle, whether that be through new working patterns or choosing to locate their homes in a different place.

Beyond these arguments, there have been great achievements during the pandemic itself, illustrating the remarkable persistence, creativity and drive of many individuals and organisations, and showing that a crisis is in fact a showcase for how to turn challenges into opportunities²². For example:

- Assumptions have been challenged regarding the effectiveness of remote working in many industries. For instance, in healthcare in December 2019, NHS Digital reported that just 15% of 23 million primary care appointments during the month had taken place by phone or online²³. By April 2020, that number had increased to 49%²⁴. By May 2020, many GP practices were reporting that almost 90% of appointments were taking place remotely²⁵. Whilst the majority of these appointments were by telephone, and it's likely that these levels of remote appointment will not be maintained, it illustrates

19 Department of Health and Social Care (2021), "More than 25 million people in the UK have received their first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine", March 17th

20 Trading Economics (2021) "Australia GDP Growth Rate", Australian Bureau of Statistics

21 House of Commons (2021) "Unemployment – International Comparisons: Key Economic Indicators", February 10th

22 Langan-Riekof, M. Avvani, A.B. and Janetti, A. (2017) "Sometimes the world needs a crisis: Turning challenges into opportunities", Brookings Institute, April 10th

23 NHS Digital (2020) "Appointments in General Practice December 2019", January 30th

24 NHS Digital (2020) "Appointments in General Practice April 2020", May 28th

25 RCGP (2020) "RCGP survey provides snapshot of how GP care is accessed in latest stages of pandemic", July 30th

that there are alternatives to delivering traditional face-to-face care. Another example is the courts system. The UK went into lockdown on 23rd March and by 24th April, 90% of the hearings were taking place using audio and video technology enabled by The Coronavirus Act²⁶. The telephone and the video conferencing system became the biggest courthouses in the world. Again, whilst wholesale digital transformation of the justice system is still some way away, this example illustrates that technology can play a role in the evolution of many of our citizen services.

- We've witnessed timelines for drug discovery and delivery shrink by years as collaborative efforts brought lifesaving vaccinations to market in record time. The speed with which vaccines were developed was remarkable — from publication of the first SARS-CoV-2 sequences through phase 1 trials (the earliest trials of drugs in people) in six months, as compared with a typical timeline of three to nine years²⁷.
- New technologies have also been embraced in the delivery of education. Countries such as India have been especially forward thinking in adapting to the unprecedented circumstances that saw millions of school children shift to remote education²⁸.
- Community spirit has seemingly resurfaced, with almost half a million people signing up as volunteers to administer Covid-19 vaccines²⁹.

- Sustainability has been acknowledged as the next humanitarian crisis we must address³⁰, backed by powerful institutions that have made organisations and individuals pay attention³¹. Even the temporary respite achieved during the pandemic has yielded positive results – think of the canals of Venice clearing once cruise ships left, and the skies of the UK free of vapour trail from flights. It has offered encouragement that change is both possible and affective.

And there are many examples from history where the times after crisis were fertile grounds for new thinking, creativity, innovation, and fundamental changes to the status quo.

In our mind this illustrates that there are choices to be made. Choices about whether to be paralysed by indecision, or whether to lean into the opportunity to change. Is this an opportunity to stand back, reflect and redefine how we live, work and behave, as citizens, employees, businesses and individuals?

“After coronavirus the world will never be the same. But maybe, it can be better.

Vanessa Bates Ramirez, Singularity Hub

26 Parliament.uk (2020) "Technology and the courts", Commons Select Committee.

27 Heaton, P. M. (2020) "The Covid-19 Vaccine-Development Multiverse", The New England Journal of Medicine, 383:1986-1988

28 The Economist (2020), "Educational technology is coming of age during the pandemic", November 11th

29 NHS Digital (2021), "Coronavirus vaccine studies volunteers dashboard", March 18th

30 Gaynor, T. (2020), "Climate change is the defining crisis of our time and it particularly impacts the displaced", November 20th

31 Eccles, R.G. and Klimenko, S. (2019), "The Investor Revolution", Harvard Business Review, May – June 2019

5 The research findings summary perspectives

5.1 Individuals

As individuals we grappled with shifts in working patterns and locations, increased responsibilities such as home-schooling and childcare, and the challenges of looking after loved ones when they fell ill. We faced false starts, delays and isolation coupled with ever-increasing levels of frustration and uncertainty concerning when we might be able to return to 'normal' (a word that has been the subject of significant debate over the last 12 months).

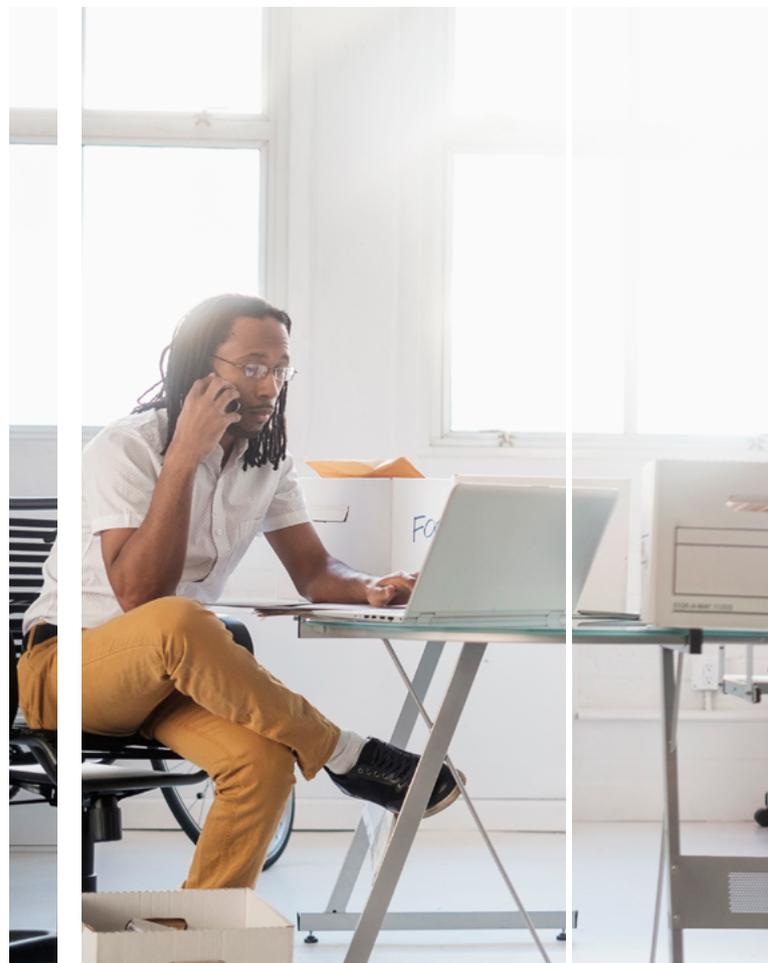
Perhaps unsurprisingly, the challenges of the past year were reflected in the finding that almost three times as many respondents felt 2020 had been a negative year for them personally versus those who viewed the last 12 months as a positive experience.

The obvious disruption for many at an individual level was the change to working locations and patterns (though there were signs that some felt that this had actually helped them to be more productive). There were also suggestions that some individuals' perceptions of the purpose of work as part of their life had shifted. Perhaps the magnitude of events has resulted in many reflecting on what truly matters?

Surprisingly we found that there was a cohort of respondents that felt that they could sustain greater levels of change than they had experienced over the last year. This hints that despite the disruption to their lives, there are some individuals showing remarkable levels of resilience and appetite to transform, even in light of the longer working hours and additional responsibilities both inside and outside work.

As we look forward respondents anticipate further disruption ahead. At an individual level many believe this will be tied to the challenges of re-connecting with colleagues and easing back into society as lockdown lifts. The strain on mental health caused by the past year's events is also anticipated to be a challenge, and one we will monitor as we continue the research.

The challenges of the past year were reflected in the finding that almost three times as many respondents felt 2020 had been a negative year for them personally versus those who viewed the last 12 months as a positive experience.



5.2 Organisations

Organisations of all types, shapes and sizes have had to cope with fundamental shifts in established ways of working and assumptions about how the environment they operate in.

There were dramatic shifts in demand and supply as rules changed. Consumer and buyer behaviours also shifted as we were forced to operate remotely. This led to greater opportunities for some of the more digitally native businesses used to operating online, whilst at the same time exposing those who may have still been grappling with the longer-term trend of the shift to digital. For some this proved to be an existential challenge; others were forced to seek out levels of external support that they probably never imagined they would need, from both government and private institutions.

Again, overall sentiment from an organisational point of view was negative. For the majority the shift to remote working was perhaps their biggest change and challenge, forcing many to rapidly re-orient day-to-day operations around a new way of working. This seemed to be especially so within the Financial Services and Government sectors. Arguably companies operating within what we have termed 'Critical Infrastructure' have less flexibility in this regard, so their biggest challenge focused on understanding how their field operations and structures had to change. Ultimately though, almost everyone reported that their organisations had experienced change, and for the majority this change happened much faster than they expected.

However, there was also evidence to suggest that many felt the level of change they had gone through is sustainable, and much like at an individual level, some even thought that their organisations were capable of dealing with even more change. When the three main industry groupings were compared, those working in Government were found to be the least likely to think they could sustain current levels of change.

Conversely, respondents in the Government sector also found that they were actually making decisions more quickly than before and were also more likely to be innovating than pre-pandemic. They also noted they were more likely to be collaborating (the only sector to be doing this more than before). This chimes well with research into the field of innovation in a crisis, which highlights how factors such as a sense of urgency, focus, collaborative problem-solving, experimentation, intensity and a different attitude towards risk combine to support innovation in times of heightened disruption³².

On a further positive note, the majority of respondents thought that their organisations had been quick to adopt new technologies. They were also of the view that their organisations had ultimately been more productive.

Again, the continued disruption caused by Covid-19 translated into feelings of uncertainty ahead for organisations in the UK.

³² Johnson, E. and Murray, F. (2020) "What a Crisis Teaches Us About Innovation", MIT Sloan Management Review Winter 2021



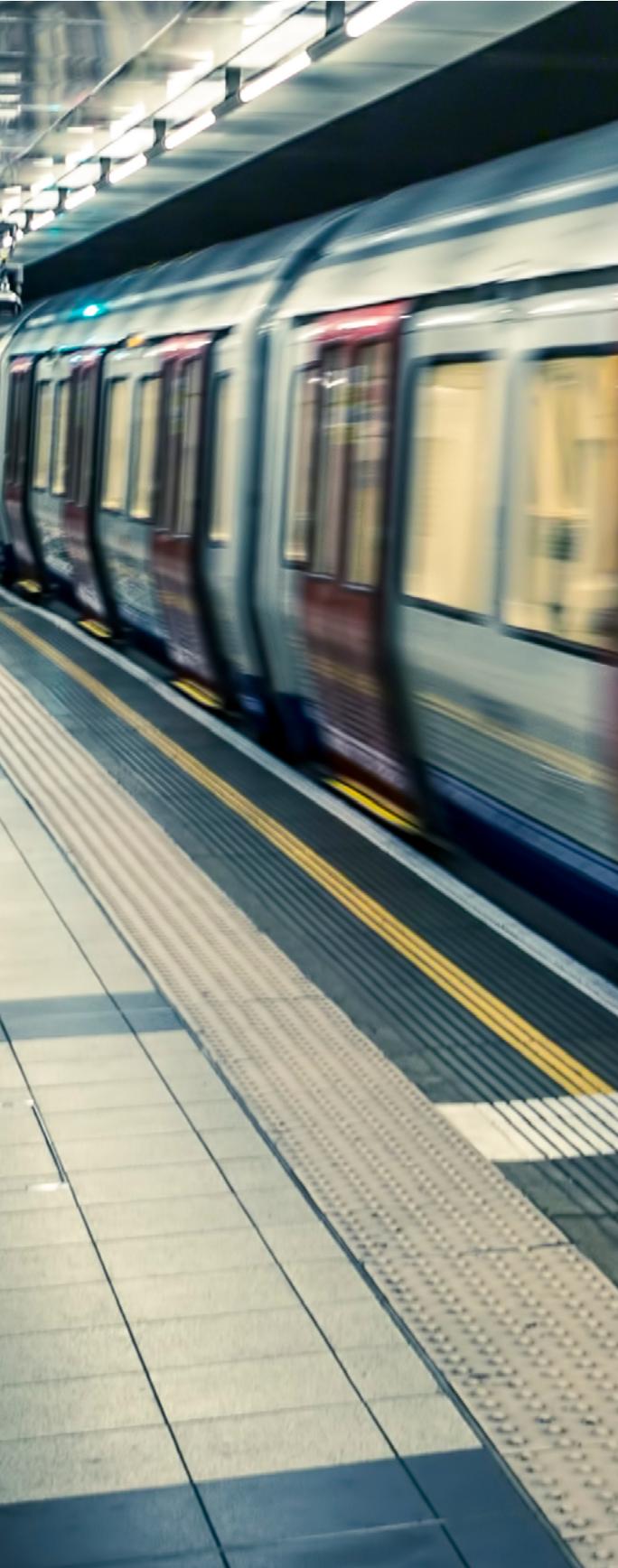
5.3 Industry

Despite the negative sentiment at an individual and organisation level, senior decision-makers believe that their respective industries responded well to the challenges of the last 12 months. As with the change experienced in their organisations, changes at an industry level were felt to have occurred much quicker than anticipated.

Again, from an industry perspective, the main changes flagged were disruptions in working patterns. This was much more likely to be the case for Financial Services than Critical Infrastructure, perhaps reflecting Financial Services organisations' traditional focus on office culture. Demand for Government's services was also found to have increased while those of Critical Infrastructure decreased (perhaps driven by a decline in consumer demand).

Further disruption is anticipated – again through changes to work brought about by the pandemic, but also by the as yet unforeseen effects of Brexit.





6 The research findings detail and implications

We have broken down the analysis of our first pulse of 2021 into the following 12 key findings and implications.

6.1 2020 was a tough year for senior decision-makers, both personally and for their organisations

The majority of respondents (63%) felt that 2020 had been a negative year for them personally. This was perhaps unsurprising given the level of change and disruption many experienced.

“ I had a baby late in 2019 and so was on maternity leave in 2020. It was very hard being away from family with a new baby, and I think my mental health suffered.”

Senior Manager, Government

However, not all respondents viewed 2020 negatively. Surprisingly, a smaller, but not insignificant proportion (21%) reported feeling positive about the last 12 months. Analysis of qualitative responses showed that improvements in work / life balance were behind many of these responses.

“ I have adapted to remote working better than expected.”

Senior Manager, Financial Services

It's clear that the impact across respondents has been varied, and that for many juggling multiple responsibilities across the different aspects of their lives has been exhausting. Many individuals reported that they have had to work harder than before to both support their organisations and run their personal lives, and that this has taken its toll.

63% of respondents felt that the events of 2020 had been a negative experience.

71% of respondents felt that the events of 2020 had a negative effect on their organisation.

“ My personal productivity, initiative and mental health have all suffered through isolation from my team.”

Senior Manager, Financial Services

Managing the impact on all aspects of individuals' health – mental and physical – will be an important consideration as we move out of the crisis.

“ Growth plans torn up, reduced headcount, uncertain business landscape.”

C-Suite, Critical Infrastructure

From a positive perspective, for some the opportunity to combine work and homelife in a more flexible manner was a welcome opportunity and has heralded calls for organisations to engage more closely with their employees to plan and implement more flexible ways of working.

“ The events of the last twelve months have made us realise we can do things differently and still deliver.”

Senior Director, Critical Infrastructure

From an organisational standpoint, the majority of respondents felt that their organisations had suffered as a result of the events of 2020.

“ Some of the effects of the events of 2020 were positive and some were negative. We experienced immense disruption, but my organisation has worked hard to adapt.”

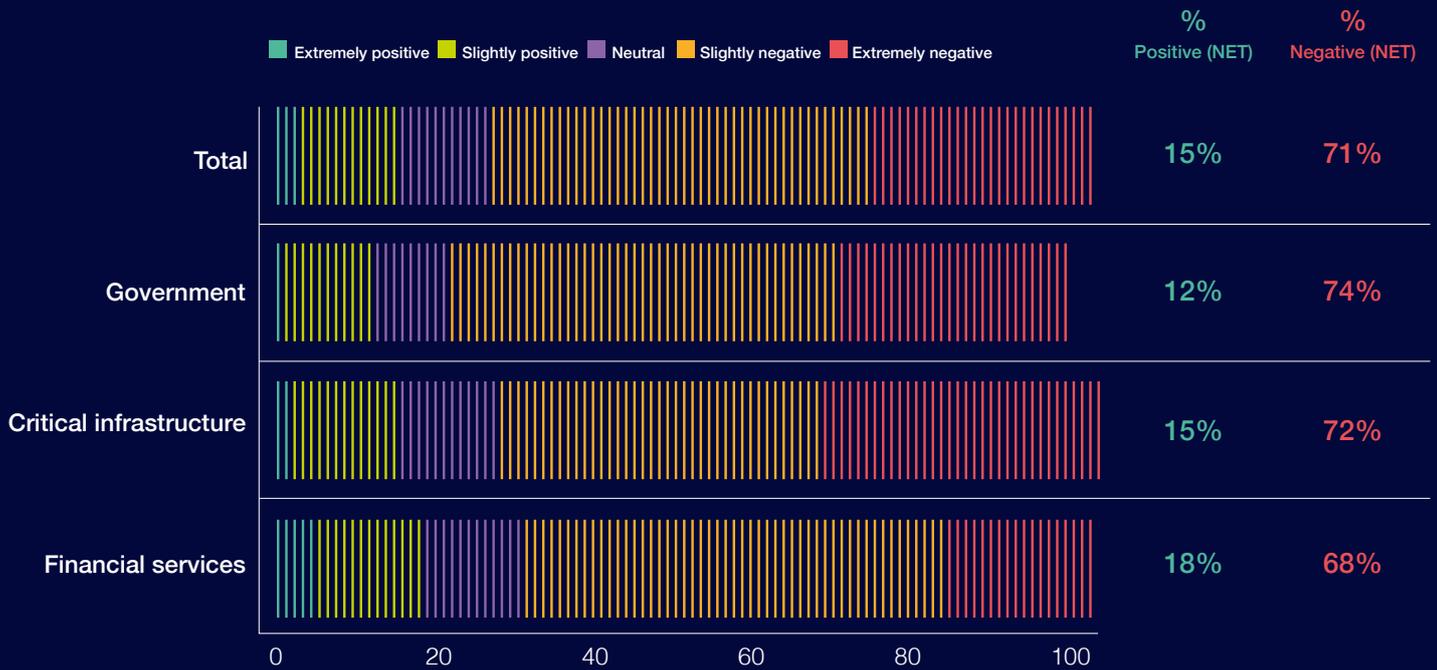
Senior Director, Critical Infrastructure

There were still a small proportion (around one-in-ten), however, who reported seeing some positives for their organisations.

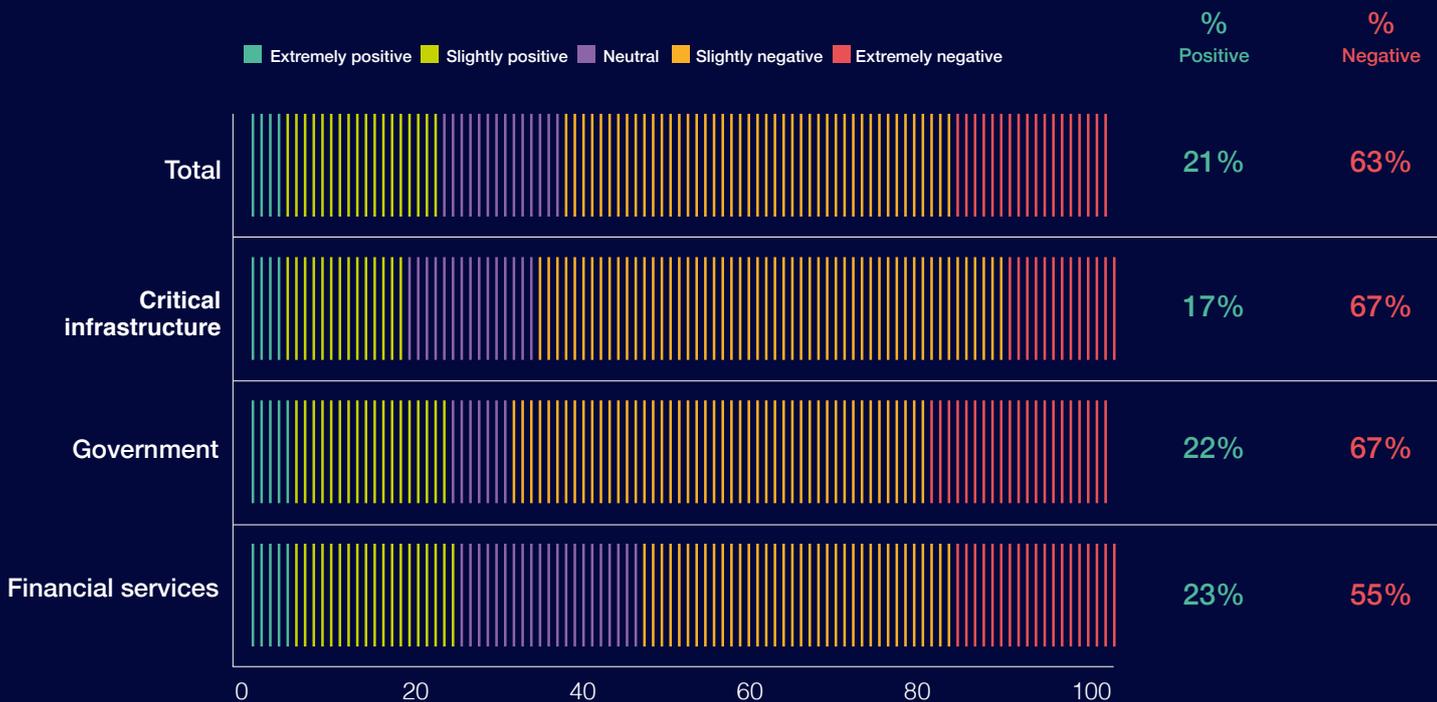
For many the crisis may well be an inflection point that sees them recalibrate their organisations, especially in terms of how they manage their workforces.

Thinking through which trends and behaviours will have long term impact and what this means for how they operate should be high on the agenda.

| What has been the effect, if any, of the events of 2020 on your organisation?



| Please rate the level of impact you feel you've experienced as an individual overall in 2020:



6.2

The shift to remote working was the factor with the most impact on organisations over the last 12 months

The biggest organisational impact felt by respondents was the move to remote working, closely followed by operational / structural changes as a result of adjusting to operating in the pandemic regime.

The change in working locations and patterns had the most impact on organisations, with over 60% of respondents highlighting this as the biggest change for them.

“ Remote working has been a major adjustment... and proved difficult for many to cope with the resultant social isolation.”

Senior Director, Government

Brexit preparations, supply chain disruption and the Black Lives Matter movement, another significant event during 2020, ranked as having had less of an overall impact on organisations as a whole.

There were some differences by industry, with those working in Critical Infrastructure seemingly less affected by the move to remote working (46% ranked it in their top three reasons). Perhaps those operating in transport, telecommunications, utilities and oil and gas may have had more of their workforces in the field versus the office meaning that an 'office-to-home' shift was less impactful. In contrast, 66% of Financial services, and 69% of Government respondents put the move to remote working in their top three biggest events that most impacted their organisations in 2020.

“ Covid created a burning platform to necessitate new ways of working.”

Senior Director, Government

Clearly the shift that saw almost half of people in employment do some of their work from home in 2020 represents a significant change in attitudes and opportunities relating to flexible work. According to the ONS the vast majority (86%) reported that this shift was because of Covid-19³³. A potential new paradigm is emerging for those who previously assumed that Monday to Friday in an office would be the norm.

Many organisations have already been busy adjusting policies and re-sizing office estates, and there is no shortage of debate regarding the pros and cons of such a shift. A 'hybrid model' would appear to be the direction many organisations are moving in, although there are clearly many details to be worked through, ranging from workforce planning to contractual implications.

However, is there a risk of failing to adapt workforce models to be truly flexible, versus just remote? Location is just one part of the shift. In a survey conducted in the second lockdown, the recruitment agency Timewise found that less than 22% of roles currently advertised offered any element of flexibility³⁴.

Flexible roles allow people to manage their lives better – whether that be in support of those with caring responsibilities, those who want to continue their education, those with health issues, or those who live in more remote areas and may have struggled with long commutes. Flexible roles can be more inclusive and more diverse – and can promote more progressive thinking and create opportunities for a wider pool of talent. They can also furnish organisations with access to the latest skills and provide much needed agility in times of disruption and change.

33 ONS (2020), "Coronavirus and homeworking in the UK: April 2020", July 8th

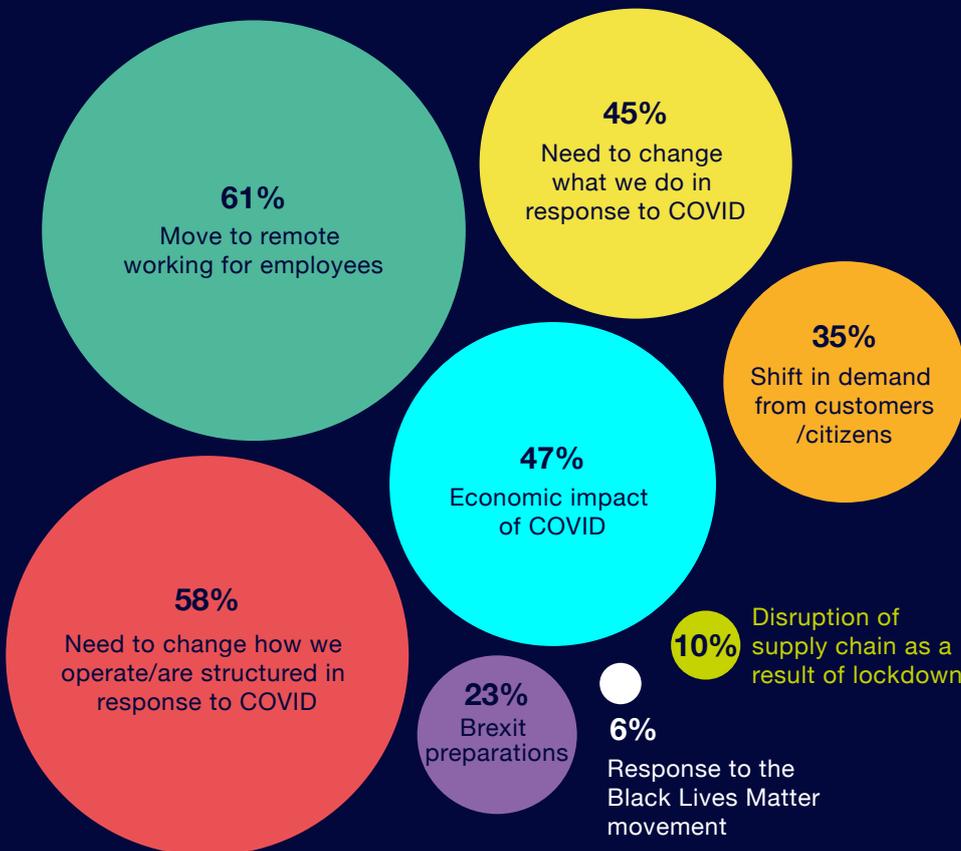
34 Timewise (2020), "If flex is the new normal, where are all the flexibly advertised jobs?", Flexible Jobs Index

“ I can foresee, and indeed discussions are already ongoing, structural changes to working patterns and locations. It has become apparent that we no longer need a large, centralised workforce. A majority of staff that can function from a home location are performing very well. We now have the infrastructure in place to accommodate this necessity and indeed many are already showing a reluctance to return to commuting.”

Senior Director, Financial Services

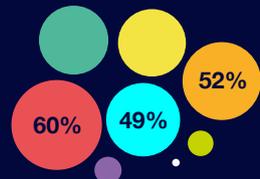
For businesses to ignore the chance offered by the pandemic to radically change how they approach sourcing talent would be short-sighted. Individuals and managers need to be supported to manage flexible workforces and see the value of that flexibility. It would be a missed opportunity for organisations to tap into new sources of talent and adjust to the new skills they will need to fuel recovery and growth during what is likely to be an economically turbulent time ahead.

Looking back on the events of 2020, please rank the following events in relation to the impact these have had on your organisation as a whole?

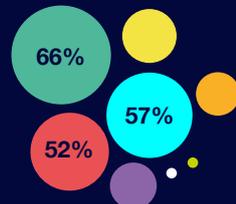


Industry breakdown showing top 3:

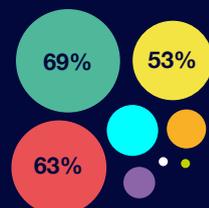
Critical infrastructure



Financial services



Government



6.3 The majority expect further disruption ahead – for their organisations, for their industries and for themselves

The majority of respondents expect there to be significant or moderate disruption to their organisations over the next 12 months. Around three-in-ten anticipate more of an evolution and just a tiny proportion believe there will be no change at all. The unknowns associated with Brexit and the continued disruption caused by Covid-19 ranked high as reasons behind this sentiment.

70% of respondents expect significant or moderate disruption to their organisation over the next 12 months.

“Our single biggest challenge will be growth in face of ongoing disruption from Covid and Brexit.”

C-Suite, Critical Infrastructure

On a personal level, around two-thirds anticipate seeing their role disrupted over the next 12 months. Around a quarter believe this will be more incremental, i.e., more likely to be a minor change, versus transformational, i.e., likely to be a significant adjustment.

“Personally, my biggest challenge is Endurance. My team has shrunk and acquired more responsibility simultaneously. It is not sustainable without more resource, but we have a recruitment freeze.”

Senior Director, Government

When asked about their industries, 78% of senior decision-makers foresee disruption to their industry over the next 12 months, and this proportion is fairly consistent across all sectors.

“Continued uncertainty, anticipated volatility, and continued absence of true clarity, leadership, and consistency in Government guidance. Added together, this spells UNPREDICTABILITY.”

C-Suite, Government sector

It's clear that on all levels there is still a long way to go in terms of assessing the impact of the crisis. The extension of the furlough scheme is one example of an initiative that could be masking another period of significant disruption on the horizon for organisations and industries that have been propped up throughout the crisis. The Chancellor recently extended the scheme to September 2021 in the hope that an economic recovery will have taken root by then, but the end of furlough is likely to be another testing time.

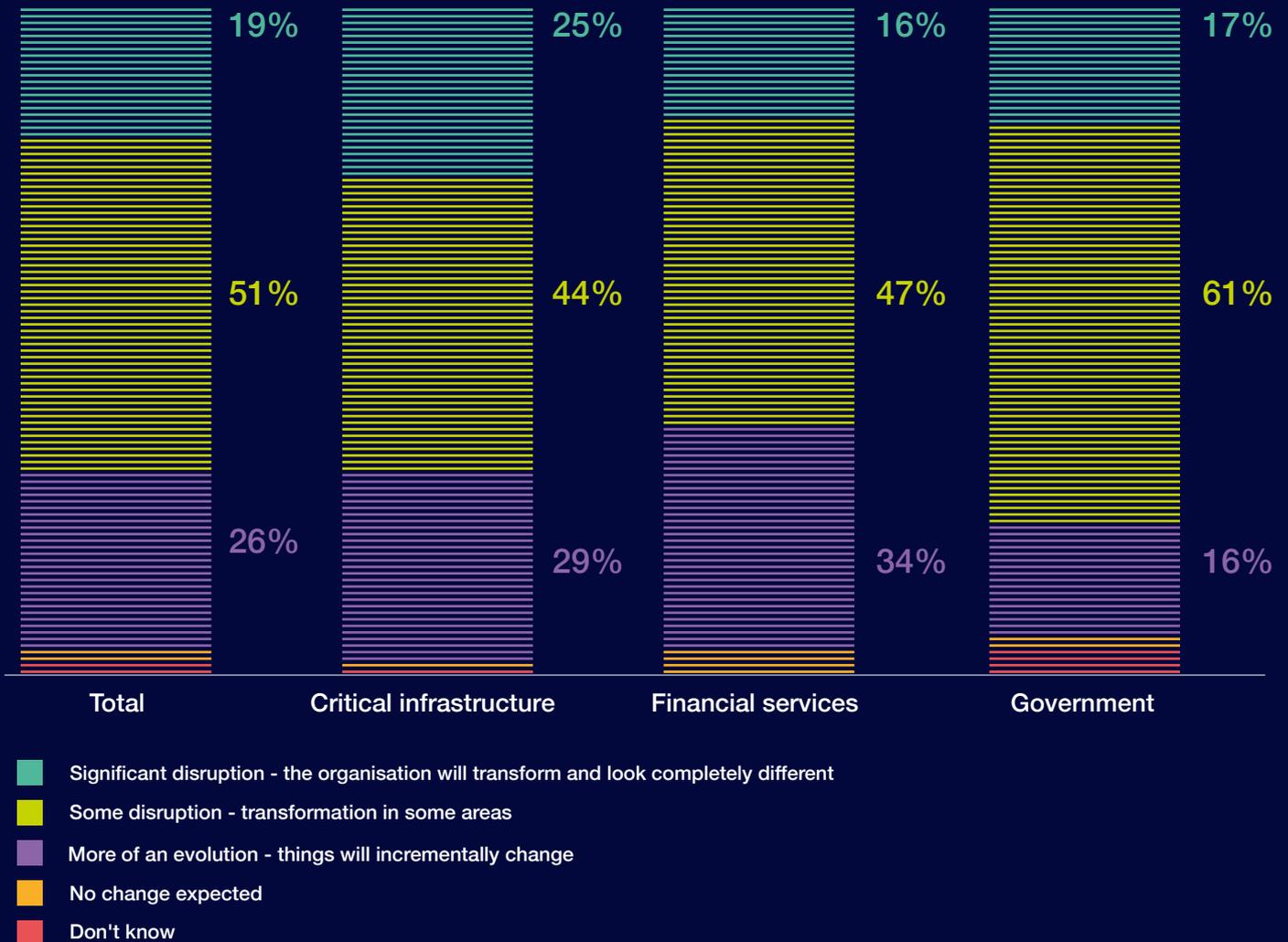
around **2/3** anticipate seeing their role disrupted over the next 12 months.

However, disruption can also be positive. For individuals this may be the chance to rethink career plans and training opportunities. For organisations who may have lacked a strategic imperative to deliver transformational change, there is unlikely to be a better time in which to be bold and seize the initiative, and similarly for industries who may have resisted or denied structural changes in their competitive environments, reassessing and reimagining what a new paradigm could look like should be high on the agenda.

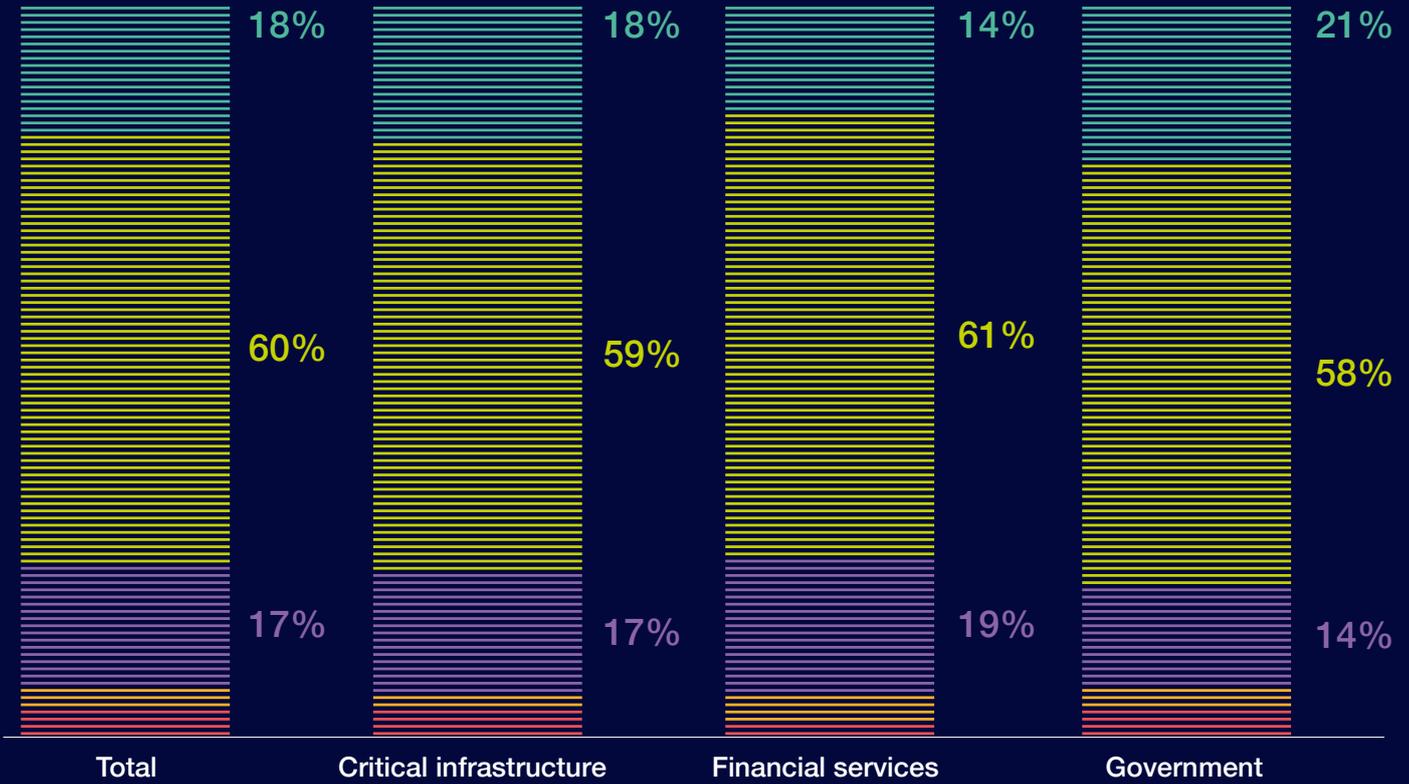
“Positive and negative. Immense disruption but the organisation has worked hard to adapt.”

Senior Director, Critical Infrastructure

What level of disruption, if any, do you foresee for your organisation over the next 12 months?

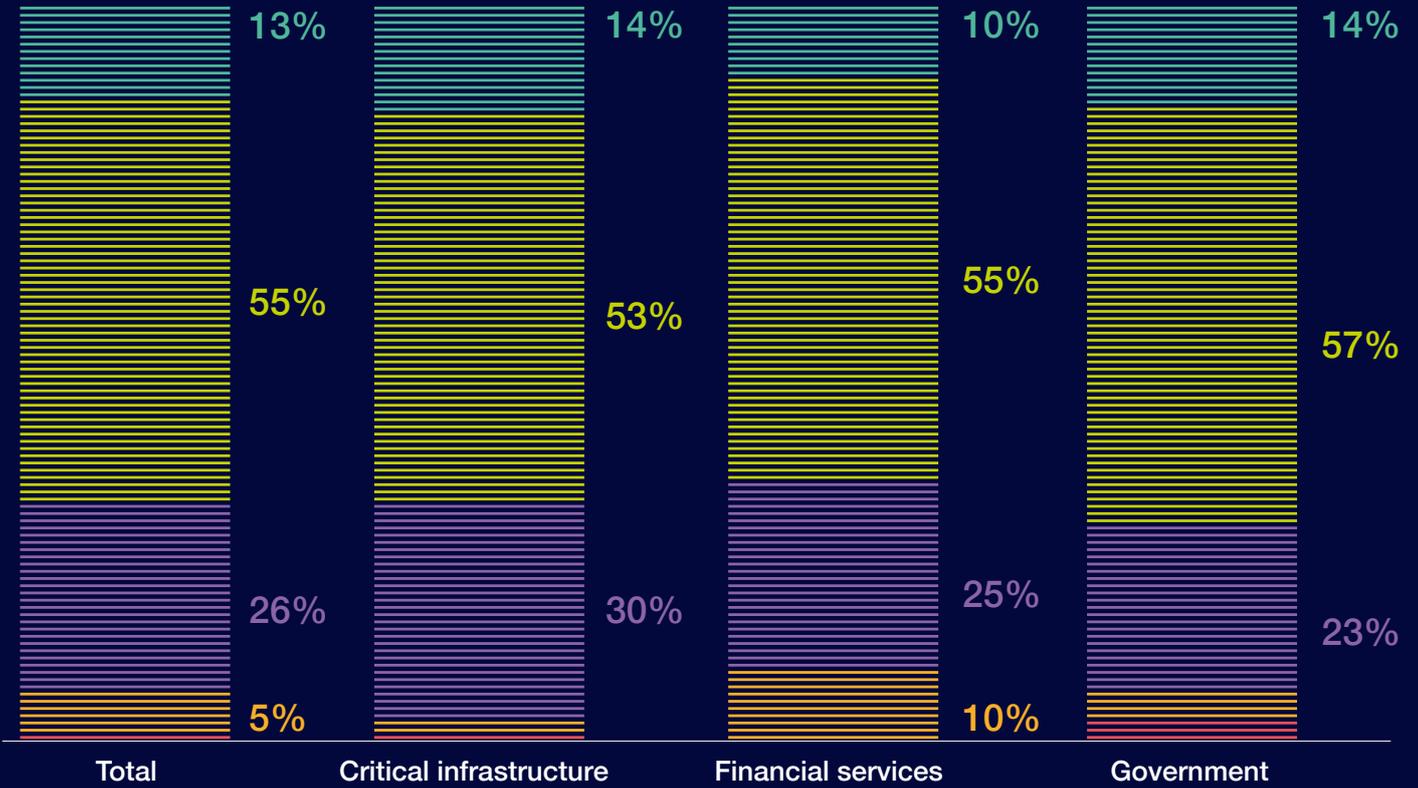


| What level of disruption, if any, do you foresee for your industry over the next 12 months?



- Significant disruption - the industry will transform and look completely different
- Some disruption - transformation in some areas
- More of an evolution - things will incrementally change
- No change expected
- Don't know

| What level of disruption do you foresee for your role personally over the next 12 months?



- Significant disruption - my role will transform and look completely different
- Some disruption - transformation in some areas of my role
- More of an evolution - things will incrementally change for me
- No change expected
- Don't know

6.4

Almost all respondents experienced change, and the majority experienced it faster than they anticipated

The vast majority of respondents said that they had seen change within their organisation over the last 12 months, and of those that reported change, four-in-five said it had happened faster than they expected.

There are some variances across sectors when it comes to the speed of change experienced, with those working in Government much more likely to say that their industry had changed faster than expected over the last year.

“Local government has had to change the way it operates, but this has had only a minor negative impact on the organisation.”

C-suite, Government (Local)

96% of respondents said that they had seen some level of change in their organisations over the last 12 months, with over half reporting considerable levels of change.

As highlighted earlier, one of the biggest changes was the move to remote working, especially within the Financial Services sector and Government. Managing the impact on customers and citizens was high on the agenda, particularly within Financial Services.

“The financial services industry was quick to respond and put the customer first.”

Senior Director, Financial Services

83% of those respondents working in Government said that the rate of change they'd seen in their organisations over the last 12 months was faster than expected.

Change appeared to happen for almost everyone much faster than was expected, both for their organisations and to their industries. Leaders around the world expressed surprise at how quickly things had shifted. Early on in the pandemic, CEO of Microsoft, Satya Nadella, commented that “We’ve seen two years’ worth of digital transformation in two months,”³⁵ whilst a study by McKinsey & Company reported that “We have vaulted five years forward in consumer and business digital adoption in a matter of around eight weeks”³⁶. The pace of change we’re experiencing today may well be the slowest we are likely to experience for some time.

This presents some major challenges to organisations more used to a slower pace of evolution. Becoming more adaptable and agile will be increasingly important in order to cope with future disruptions, whether another unforeseen crisis or the rapid pace of technological advancement that characterises many industries.

“A big challenge has been trying to keep up with the pace of change in a disrupted world with burnt out people.”

Senior Director, Critical Infrastructure

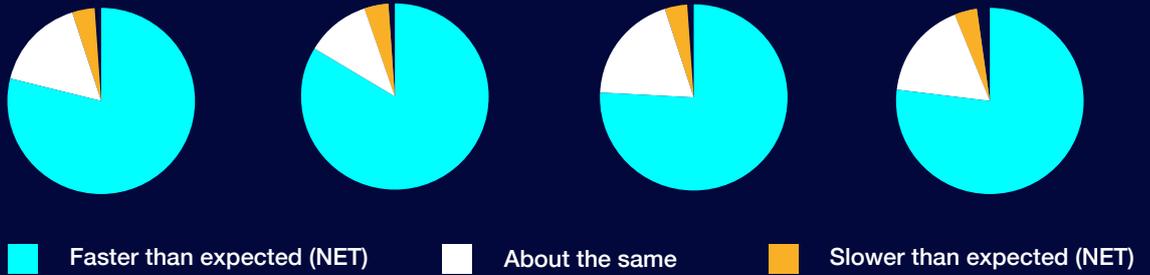
35 Spataro, J. (2020), “2 years of digital transformation in 2 months”, Microsoft, April 30th

36 McKinsey & Company (2020), “The Covid-19 recovery will be digital: A plan for the first 90 days”, May 14th

To what extent do you think your organisation has changed over the last 12 months?

	Total	Government	Critical infrastructure	Financial services
% experienced change	96%	98%	97%	93%

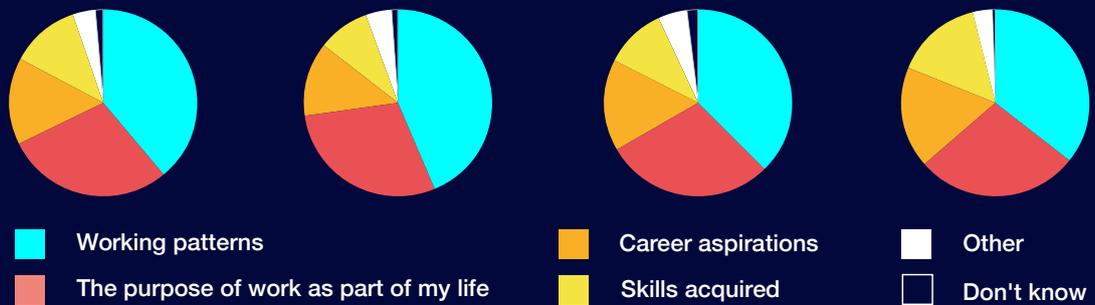
Of those who experienced change, was this faster or slower than you expected?



To what extent do you think you as an individual have changed over the last 12 months?

	Total	Government	Critical infrastructure	Financial services
% experienced change	87%	86%	88%	86%

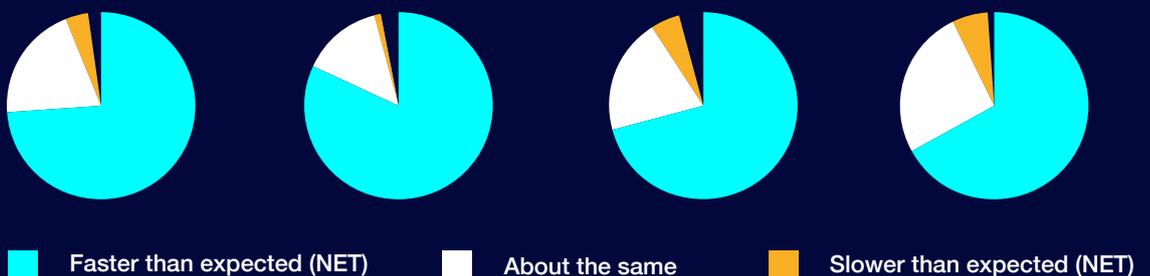
Of those who experienced change, Which of the following things have changed the most for you?



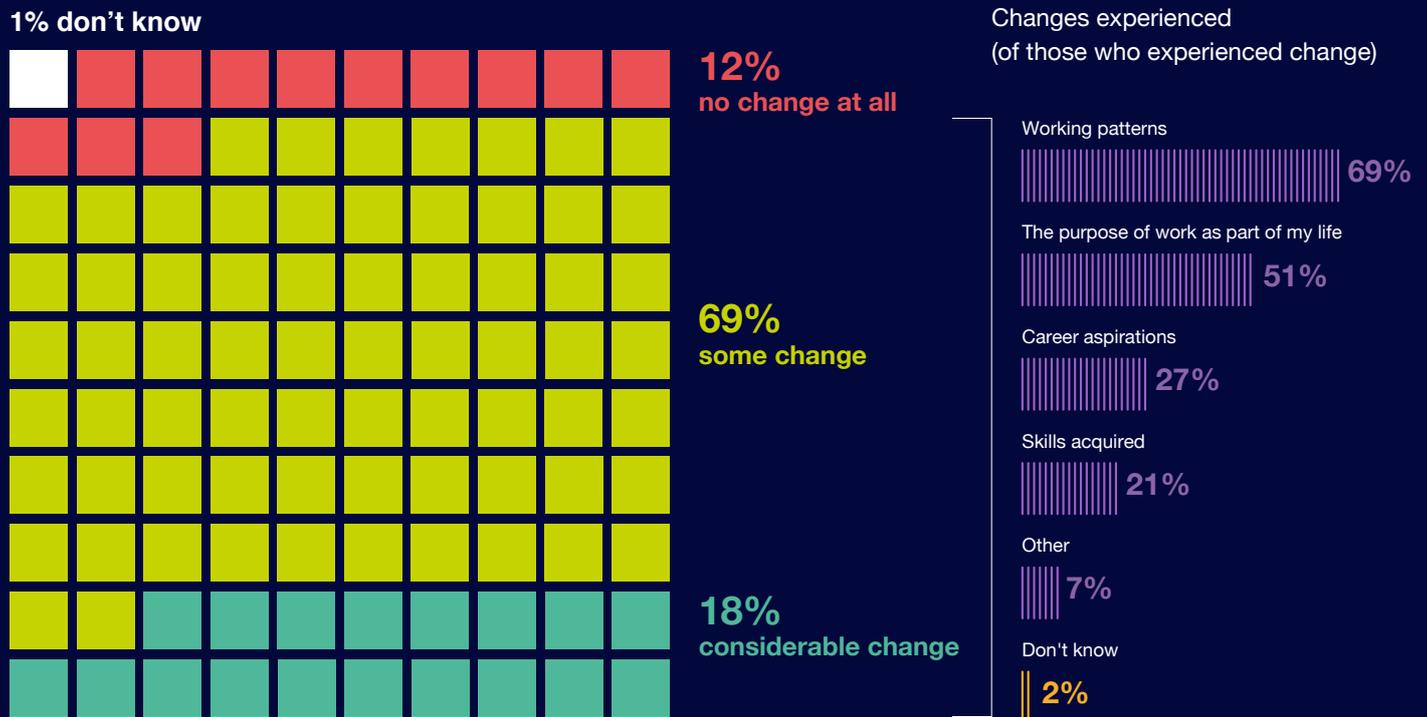
To what extent do you think your industry has changed over the last 12 months?

	Total	Government	Critical infrastructure	Financial services
% experienced change	92%	93%	94%	89%

Of those who experienced change, was this faster or slower than you expected?



To what extent do you think you as an individual have changed over the last 12 months?



6.5 Despite this, many respondents reported that levels of change felt sustainable, and some even said they could go faster

Of those that indicated that they had experienced organisational change, the majority believed – perhaps surprisingly given the negative skew on overall sentiment towards the last 12 months – that it was sustainable for their organisations, and some even reported that they could go faster.

Those working in Financial Services ranked highest in terms of believing that their organisations could sustain the change (62%) and go faster (13%).

53% of respondents felt that their organisations could sustain the levels of change they had experienced over the last 12 months, and 11% felt they could go faster.

“The financial sector reacted very quickly and adopted a flexible approach to customer needs from the outset.”

Senior Director, Financial Services

Those working in Government were the least likely to think that they could sustain the pace of change (44%) and had the most respondents reporting that their organisation either needed to slow down (25%) or stop altogether in order to recharge (15%).

“It will be a challenge to sustain this level of activity... while watching the expenditure.”

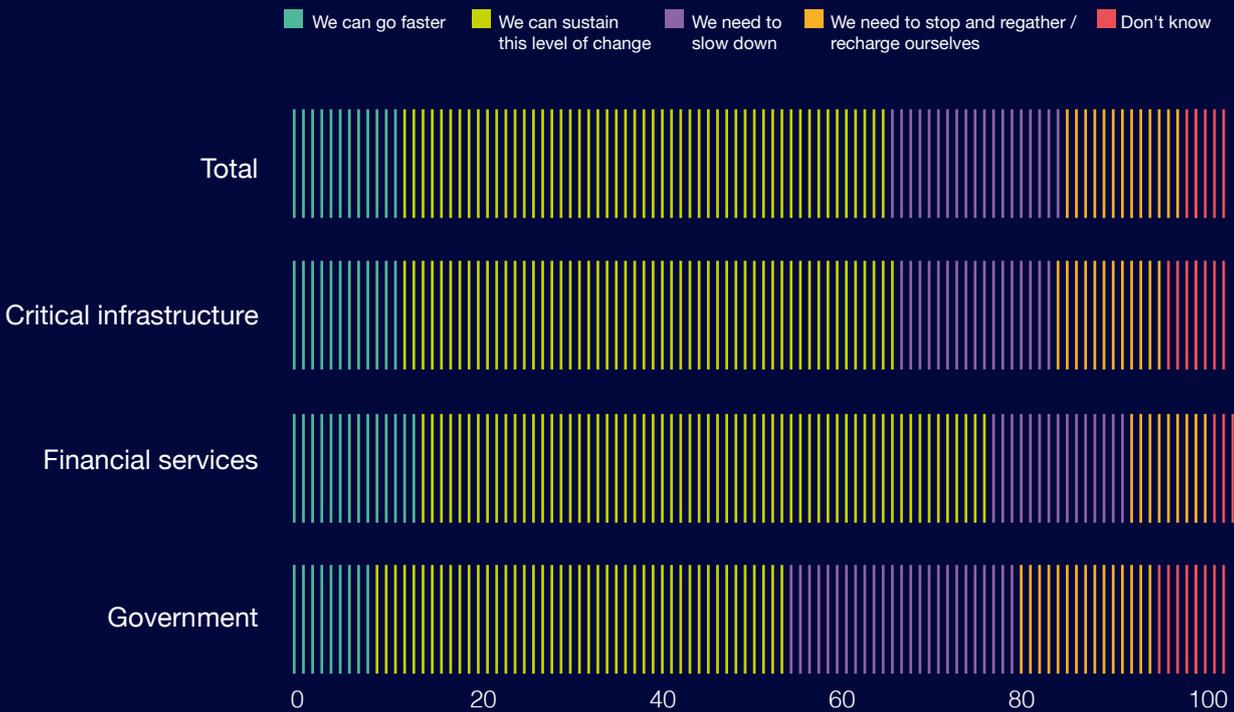
C-Suite professional, Gover

“We are investing in addressing the short-term risks taken to affect change so that the transformed organisation is sustainable.”

Senior Manager, Financial Services

Of the few who felt they could go faster, interestingly they were more likely to be senior males with decision-making responsibilities in management and business transformation. Female decision-makers were much less likely to think that either they or their organisation can sustain this level of change.

| Can your organisation sustain the levels of change it is going through over the next 12 months?



6.6 Decisions were being taken faster

Just over half of respondents reported that their organisations made decisions faster during the pandemic period than beforehand.

56% of Government and 59% of Critical infrastructure respondents reported making faster decisions. The Financial Services sector saw a more even split than other sectors between faster decision-making (45%) and maintaining the same pace (44%), perhaps suggesting that decision-making was more 'business as usual' for those in this sector than others.

“ Decision making has become faster and increasingly open to public scrutiny at a time resources have become tighter.”

Senior Director, Government

“ The events of 2020 hastened the move from delivering letters to delivering parcels and made the management make necessary decisions which should have been made a while ago.”

Senior Manager, Critical Infrastructure

Whilst faster decision-making does not necessarily mean better decision-making, it does imply that management both recognised the urgency of the shifting environment.

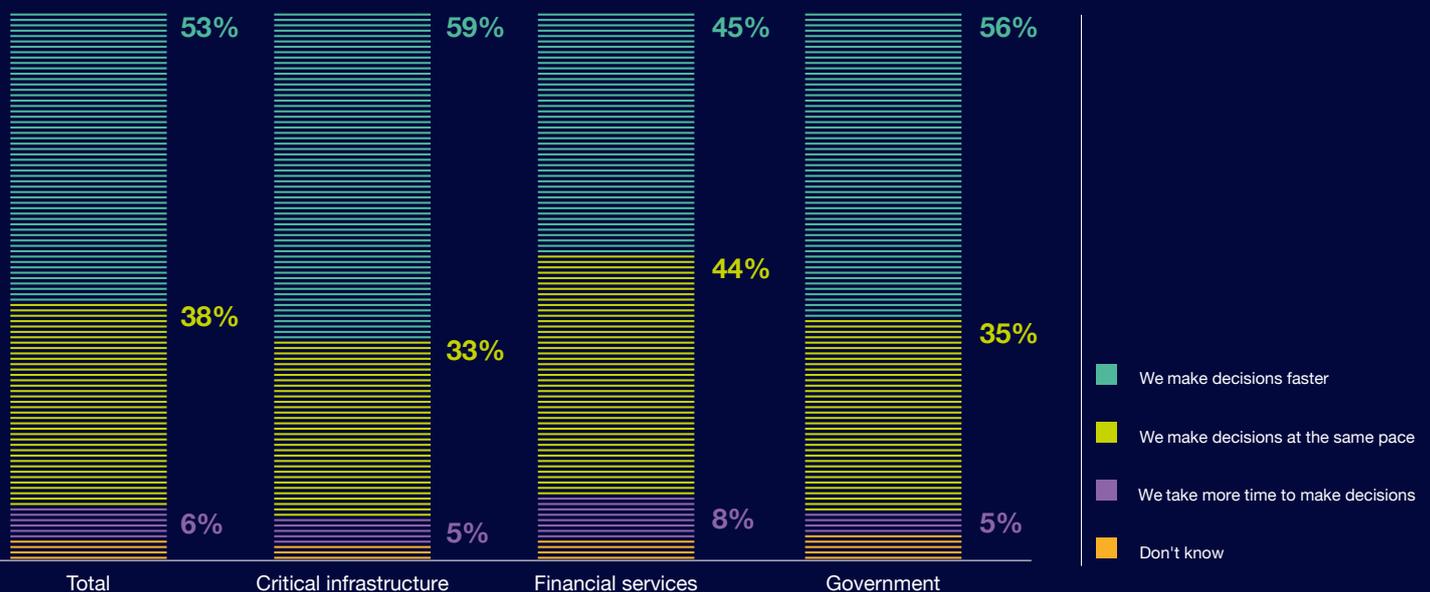
Previous studies of crisis scenarios have shown that these types of events often provide a sudden and real sense of urgency³⁷. For example, the Apollo 13 mission to the moon was famously plunged into near catastrophe by an explosion. This event forced NASA engineers to take urgent action in order to save the crew. Under a now famous leadership dictate, “Failure is not an option,” the team designed and built a makeshift device that was able to scrub the air of carbon dioxide, so the astronauts had enough oxygen in order to survive the trip home.

Perhaps the crisis forced priority calls regarding the allocation of resources and instilled a bias for action.

37 Clark, L. (2020), “Innovation in a Time of Crisis”, Harvard Business Corporate Publishing, March 26th

53% of respondents reported that their organisations were making decisions faster since the beginning of the pandemic, compared to the period prior.

How has your organisation’s approach to decision-making changed since the beginning of the pandemic, compared with prior to it?



6.7 Greater levels of collaboration

There was a range of between just under a third (29% in Financial Services) and over half (52% in Government) of respondents who said that they'd seen greater levels of collaboration. Government as a sector in particular reported evidence of significantly greater levels of collaboration. Very few respondents reported that their organisations were less collaborative as a result of the pandemic.

“Our industry has experienced better collaboration and agile thinking over the last 12 months.”

Senior Manager, Critical Infrastructure

Crisis situations can create a singular focus on a shared problem. Collaboration emerges as a result of adopting a position that it's 'everybody's job' to come together to solve the problem.

“In my industry there was an uplift in the use of unified communications to work collaboratively.”

Senior Director, Critical Infrastructure

40% of respondents reported they are collaborating more with other organisations as a result of the pandemic.

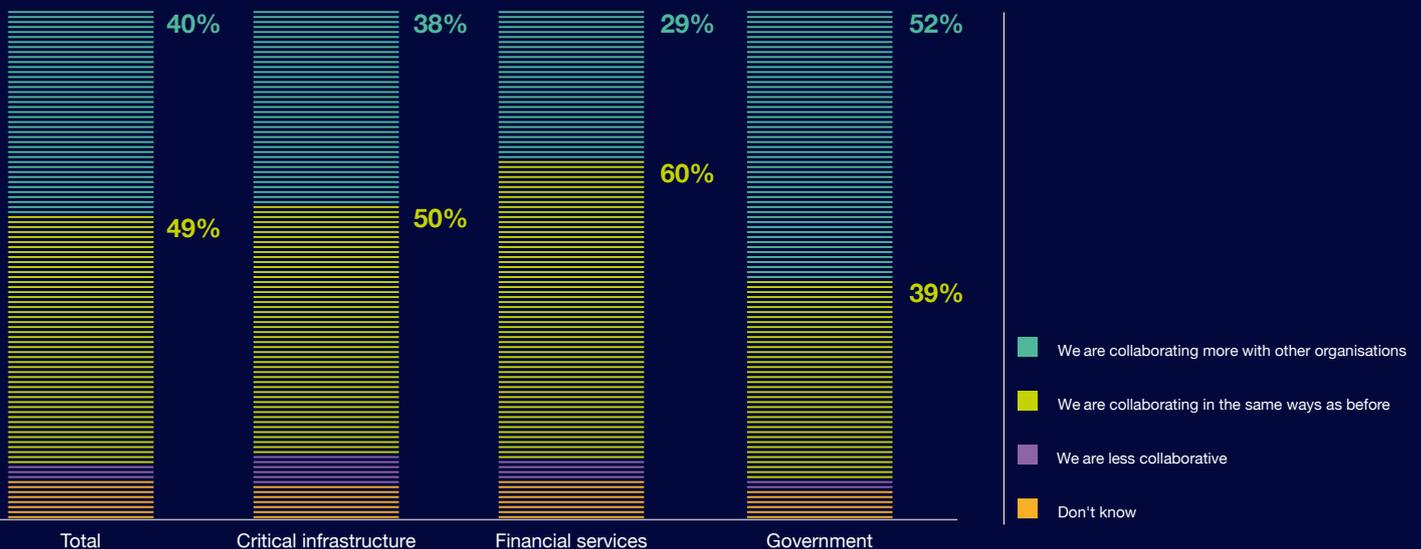
Previous research has found that these situations also bring a diversity of viewpoints and perspectives, which can deliver better results compared to relying on problem solving by homogenous groups³⁸. There can still be friction, but it's usually directed towards the goal of finding a solution versus displays of ego.

There was evidence of this type of collaborative behaviour in abundance as part of the response to the ventilator challenges, which saw a diverse array of organisations swarm around the challenge of creating solutions to a lack of availability of life saving equipment³⁹.

38 Johnson, E. and Murray, F. (2020), "What a Crisis Teaches Us About Innovation", MIT Sloan Management Review, Winter 2021 issue, November 30th

39 The Engineer, (2021), "Comment: the lessons learned from industry's ventilator push", February 3rd

How has your organisation's approach to collaboration with other organisations to achieve outcomes changed since the beginning of the pandemic, compared with prior to it?



6.8 Greater levels of innovation

More than half of respondents believed that their organisations became more open to creating and testing new ideas during the pandemic. This was particularly evident in Government, where two-thirds (67%) of respondents reported being more open to creating and testing new ideas over the last 12 months.

A brief look back over the last 100 years suggests that moments of genuine crisis have also been accelerants for new perspectives, ideas and experiments. In the late 1920s and 30s during the Great Depression, companies such as Disney emerged. Mickey Mouse was created to provide uplifting entertainment to those suffering during the economic crisis, and technologies such as radio become mainstream entertainment when going out and spending money became out of the question for many. (As an aside, it's interesting to see parallels with the growth in content streaming and the surge in popularity of services such as Netflix and Disney+ as a response to the restrictions of this crisis.) Companies such as DuPont, who were prepared to invest boldly in R&D, also prospered. DuPont created new materials such Neoprene (synthetic rubber), a component that would eventually end up in almost every car and plane during this era.

“The events of 2020 have had a significant effect on innovation – we’ve been driven to respond and change for the better.”

Senior Manager, Government

The Second World War saw many new innovations relating to radar, including the forerunner to Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tagging, as a way of identifying ally planes, and penicillin went mainstream saving millions of lives. During the space race, set against the backdrop of the Cold War, many of the advancements now common to laptop computing emerged, and satellite technologies provided the foundations for Global Positioning Systems (GPS).

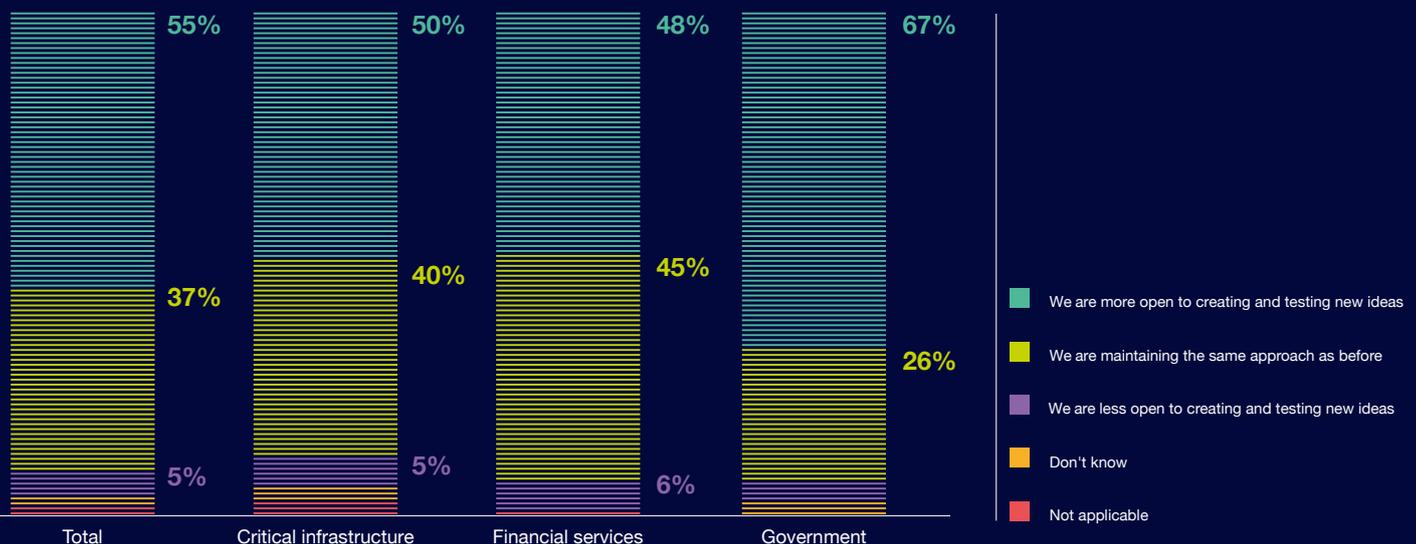
More recently the financial crisis saw the emergence of a raft of new business models, such as Airbnb, originally created to provide cheap accommodation. Other sharing economy businesses such as Uber, Dropbox, Slack and Stripe, and venture capital firms such as Google Ventures and Andreessen Horowitz, also thrived.

We saw examples of amazing feats of innovation during the pandemic, including the mobilisation of diverse groups of scientists as part of the quest to accelerate discovery of a vaccine.

Could the sense of urgency, and perhaps a larger risk appetite given some of the existential challenges organisations have faced over the last 12 months, be fertile breeding ground for new perspectives and ideas? Could a different attitude to failure in terms of a willingness to experiment and learn take hold as individuals and organisations explore new opportunities? Post pandemic we may well see another era of innovative start-ups and breakthrough technologies.

67% of respondents in Government reported being more open to creating and testing new ideas since the beginning of the pandemic.

How has your organisation’s approach to innovation changed since the beginning of the pandemic, compared with prior to it?



6.9 Success at adopting new technologies

The majority of respondents thought that they had been quick to adopt new technologies. More than four-fifths of senior decision-makers rated their organisation’s adoption of new technologies as good or very good, with a consistent picture across the sectors surveyed.

Perhaps one technology above all others, video-telephony, will come to be recognised as synonymous with the last 12 months. Whether you spent your time on Teams, Zoom, Hangouts or another platform, there’s no denying that video-conferencing enabled organisations across all sectors to continue operations. Underpinned by Cloud-based infrastructure, schools, courtrooms, conference rooms and even dinner tables were redefined through the screen as the video call became the de facto method of communication.

“ We need to move and make decisions much faster and adopt new technologies.”

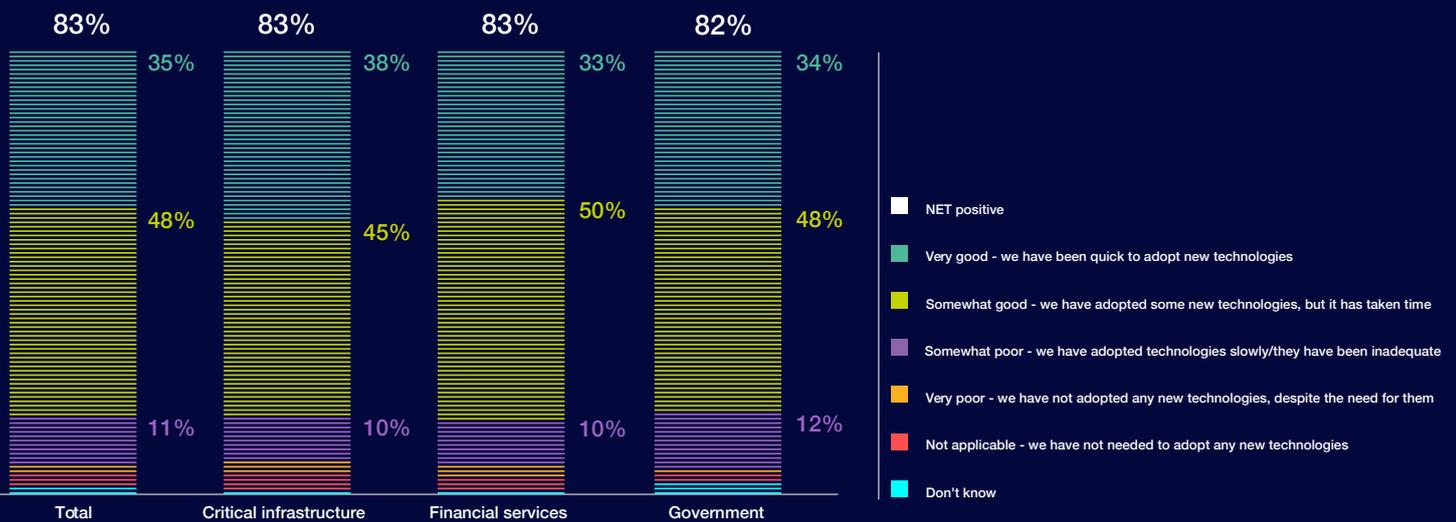
Senior Manager, Government

“ The situation expedited modern working and operating practices that would have otherwise taken years.”

Senior Director, Financial Services

83% of respondents rated their organisation’s adoption of new technologies as somewhat good or very good.

How would you rate your organisation’s adoption of new technologies to support changes in work since the beginning of the pandemic, compared with prior to it?



6.10 More productive during lockdown?

A sizeable number of respondents reported that their organisations had been more productive since the start of the pandemic.

'Productivity' is a somewhat loaded term, open to interpretation. The replacement of commuting with earlier starts and later finishes, and the 'always-on' nature of working remotely may have contributed to a short-term boost to the productivity for some organisations. Harvard Business Review published research suggesting that knowledge workers saw a short-term boost to productivity as a result of home working⁴⁰, whilst BCG reported that "Productivity at companies that have shifted to remote work is as good or even better than before—increasing as much as 15% to 40% in some organizations"⁴¹.

45% of respondents see their organisations as being more productive since the start of the pandemic.

Those who believed that they were personally more productive were much more likely than those who reported themselves as less productive to be working at organisations that are were making decisions faster, collaborating with others and more open to new ideas.

40 Birkinshaw, J., Cohen, J. and Stach, P. (2020) "Research: Knowledge Workers Are More Productive from Home", Harvard Business Review, August 31st

41 BCG (2020) "Remote Work Works—Where Do We Go from Here?", June 30th

“The effects of 2020 created a realisation that home working for many can still be productive.”

Senior Director, Government

The events of the last year have had a much less negative impact on them and they were also more likely to believe that they could sustain current levels of change.

The 'more productive' were also more likely to be working in industries that saw an increase in demand, and a shift in the types of skills and talent required. Technology was seen to be driving change and they were more likely to expect this change to continue. At an individual level, they were more likely to have acquired new skills, and more likely to feel more positive about 2020.

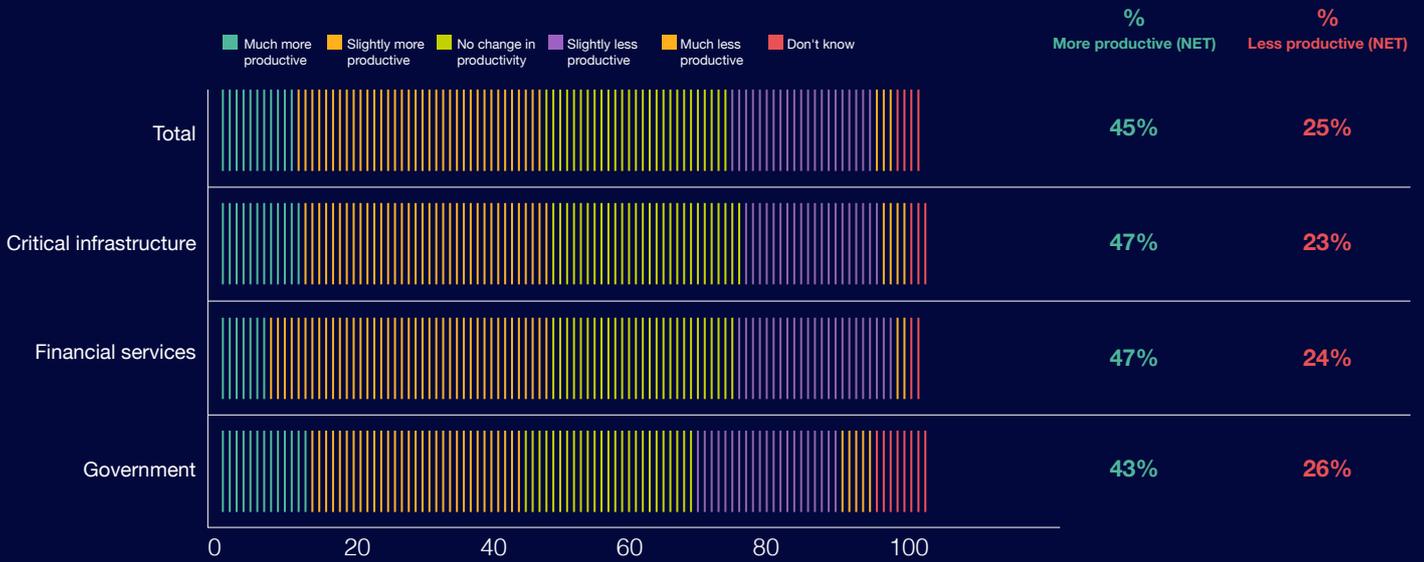
However, others have reported that reduced worker wellbeing during lockdown may have produced 'false gains' as work hours increased, but the quality of work decreased.

“The solitude and quiet has made me more productive but my mental state has deteriorated as time has gone by.”

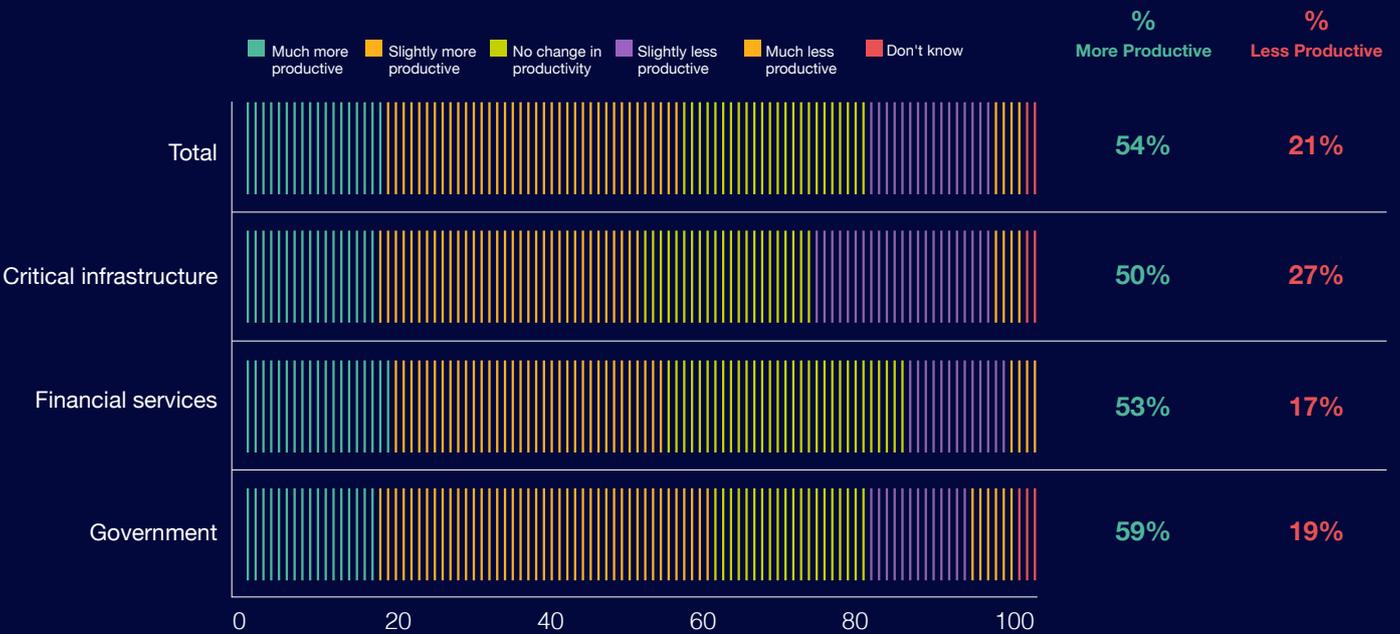
Senior Manager, Financial Services

There is a cautionary note that short-term productivity may not result in longer-term productivity. Many have reported feeling exhausted by the competing demands placed on them during the last 12 months.

How would you assess your organisation's productivity since the beginning of the pandemic, compared with prior to it?



How would you assess your own productivity since the beginning of the pandemic, compared with prior to it?



6.11 Women were disproportionately impacted

Female respondents reported that they were more likely to have experienced change over the last 12 months, more likely to feel more negative about the year as a whole and more likely than men to envisage further disruption ahead. The factor that changed most for them was their working patterns. They were less likely to think the purpose of work as part of their life has changed.

Female decision-makers were much less likely to think that they and their organisation can sustain this level of change.

72% of female respondents felt that the events of 2020 had a negative effect on them as individuals, compared to **59%** of those who identify as male.

“ I feel exhausted working from home and juggling home-schooling with no break.”

Senior Manager, Critical Infrastructure

Females were not the only group to be disproportionately impacted. The young, lower income groups and racial and ethnic minorities were also all hit hard⁴². The pandemic has surfaced many significant inequalities in our societies and workplaces. Shining the spotlight on these is a first step – seizing the opportunity to take action is a must.

⁴² Razai, M.S. et al. (2021), “Mitigating ethnic disparities in covid-19 and beyond”, BMJ, 372, January 15th



6.12 Brexit / leaving the EU still a concern, in addition to how to work through the current lockdown

There were more than 90 spontaneous mentions of Brexit / Britain leaving the EU, and 50 mentions of the pandemic – with the latter, many mentioned factors such as office infrastructure, staff mental health and wellbeing, and support throughout restructures.

“As an industry, our biggest challenge in the next 12 months is dealing with the economic uncertainty on the back of Covid-19 and Brexit.”

Senior Manager, Financial Services

“As an industry, our biggest challenge in the next 12 months is Brexit.

We’ve been cut off from customers and opportunities so we will either relocate back to the EU or go out of business.”

C-Suite professional, Financial Services

“Covid and Brexit have been really damaging. We’re concerned about the economic impact of Brexit and Covid on our clients impacting their ability to spend with us.”

Senior Director, Financial Services

Those in Government are most concerned with the ability to continue working despite the lockdowns, whilst the other two sectors are more focused on consumer spend, and how the pandemic / Brexit might impact the wider economy.

7 In conclusion

Reflecting back on the results of this research, and the wider context for the great opportunity discussion, we highlight the following conclusions.

7.1.

Early signs of recovery, but we need to be cautious

Early economic forecasts suggest that, provided the downside risks do not materialise, a recovery could well begin in the second half of this year. However, there is understandably significant caution required, given the unknowns, and the fact that several events, such as the end of the furlough scheme, are likely to bring further challenges. Whilst the economic scars may start to heal, the longer-term impacts on areas such as mental and physical health and education, are still unknown.

7.2.

We have been able to adapt and flex to a new environment at a pace few would have imagined possible 12 months ago

There are plenty of examples to evidence both individual and organisational resilience. Individuals have adapted and learnt how to cope in lockdown, and many organisations have displayed 'anti-fragile' qualities, flexing and reshaping in response to difficult circumstances and new constraints – that in itself shows that great things are possible if this momentum can be sustained.

“Banks, as well as Government, were able to act fast, cut through the red tape and bureaucracy like never before, and we now have confidence about how well we can mobilise and respond.”

Solange Chamberlain, Chief Operating Officer, Commercial Bank at NatWest

7.3

Suggestions of improved productivity, but time will tell at what cost and whether this is sustainable

There are arguments both for and against whether we have truly become more productive. However, we have been able to challenge the assumption that work should always require a commute, a flight or five days a week in an office. Perhaps that time can be repurposed, perhaps we can be more productive and create more space for our wider lives?

“I think one of the biggest opportunities will be access to talent – we're free to hire people regardless of their physical location.”

Kevin Nicholas, Head of Government at Capita Consulting

7.4

We have embraced new technologies and ways of working

Technology has facilitated the shift we have experienced over the last 12 months. Five years ago, this might not have been possible. We have been able to use technology to switch to different ways of working for organisations, different ways of learning in education, different ways of delivering healthcare and justice and many other services. Perhaps technology will continue to be the key to better outcomes for individuals.

“Life is going to fundamentally change, and people won't want to give up the working habits they've developed. The pandemic will fundamentally change what we feel about what an acceptable life is.”

Natascha McIntyre Hall, Assistant Director Strategic Developments at Portsmouth City Council

7.5.

We are more ready to collaborate than before

There have been great examples of the value of collaboration. Alongside the tools we have picked up during the last 12 months, an openness to build relationships to solve problems could be a critical ingredient for the recovery.

“The organisations that will thrive in this new era will be the ones that are willing to collaborate. You can progress a lot quicker and be a lot more agile and be more resilient if you are part of an overall ecosystem.”

Chris Cartwright, Head of Critical Infrastructure at Capita Consulting

7.6.

We have shown great ability to innovate during a crisis

We've also seen great examples of rapid ideation and a willingness to take calculated risks. If longer term shifts in behaviour can be met with an appetite to experiment then a new era of invention, ideas and opportunities could be ahead.

“Innovation isn't a side-line activity, and it can't be confined to a programme. The entire organisation needs to be set up to foster innovation.”

Ismail Amla, Chief Growth Officer Capita

7.7.

There has been a disproportionate impact on females and many other groups, and this needs to be recognised and addressed as we design future ways of working

The pandemic has shone a spotlight on the gaps that still exist between the haves and have-nots. Unfortunately, if anything it appeared to widen. Recognising these inequalities is just the first step to more open and transparent debate, and critically a commitment to show leadership and deploy the resources to close the gaps.

“Prior to the pandemic, a lot of businesses were innovating in order to create a competitive edge. Now businesses are innovating to survive.”

Chris Cartwright, Head of Critical Infrastructure at Capita Consulting

7.8.

We need to start to look beyond the pandemic

As a final thought we need to start to devote greater time to discussion and debate about future challenges. There are existing issues that will become more and more relevant over the next decade, with far reaching implications for individuals, for corporations, for society and for governments and public institutions. Amongst the many that need to be addressed, we highlight two here.

The first is longevity. Whilst not a new trend, we must acknowledge that in developed societies we are getting older. Europe is on track to become the oldest continent in the world, with significant implications for how we evolve as economies and societies. In the developed world, people are also having fewer children. There are also transformative implications for areas such as savings and pensions and rethinking how we reskill our workforces. Meanwhile, developing economies are skewed in the opposite direction – 60% of Africa's 1.25bn people are under the age of 25, for instance. A new wave of energetic entrepreneurs is emerging from this continent, with fresh and unconstrained thinking.

The second is climate change. Again, not a new trend. But what is different in the last couple of years is that we now have institutional investors, the big money, moving to shape this global issue. These institutions have issued stark warnings to organisations, highlighting that no issue ranks higher than climate change. The current pandemic serves as a stark reminder of the need to drastically combat climate-related risks. We believe we will also see an acceleration of innovation across the environmental and broader social and governance (ESG) agendas, as organisations tackle the boardroom debate on climate change and wider societal agenda.

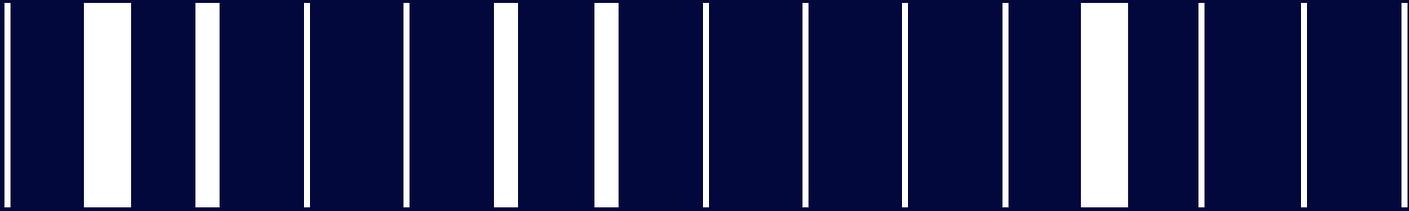
Both issues deserve significant attention and serve as a reminder that we must prepare ourselves for future challenges as part of the post-pandemic frontier.

8 Additional methodology notes

The survey structure focused on senior decision makers' perceptions of 2020, first looking at how organisation and industry have responded before measuring an individual view. It targeted senior decision-makers working in Critical Infrastructure, Financial Services and Government in the UK, with decision-making responsibilities across the following categories: management, business development, IT, finance, business transformation, procurement, innovation, data analytics. They were asked to complete a 10-12 minute online quantitative survey. Responses were collected between 14th – 31st January 2021.

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 354 business leaders in large businesses in the UK. Fieldwork was undertaken between 14th – 31st January 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have not been weighted.





 **Capita** | **YouGov**[®]