

**Research Briefing**  
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By Georgina Hutton,  
Andrew Powell  
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# UK supply chain problems

**This is a fast-moving issue and should be read as correct as at the time of publication.**

Queues at petrol stations in September 2021 were a very visible consequence of disruption caused to supply chains during the pandemic. The phrase 'supply chain crisis' has been used to describe disruption to businesses from to a myriad of issues from shortages of materials and/or workers, transport disruptions and price rises.

Here we look at some of the cross-cutting themes that are causing these pinch points, how UK businesses and the economy are being affected and the Government's response.

## 1

### Why are there supply chain problems?

Broadly, the UK's current supply chain issues stem from global shortages of materials, staff shortages and transport delays occurring at the same time as sharp spikes in demand, particularly for consumer goods and construction materials.

Supply chain disruptions have been exacerbated in the last few months as major shipping ports and manufacturing facilities in Asia have been affected by outbreaks of the Delta coronavirus variant, either closing or reducing

capacity.<sup>1</sup> The disruption to global supply chains has led to [longer supplier delivery times](#) for some businesses, particularly in the manufacturing and construction sectors.<sup>2</sup>

As the labour market recovers from the pandemic, several sectors are seeing temporary and persistent staff shortages (see section 2.2 below). Some businesses are affected by temporary staff absences due to Covid-19 infection or (before August) contact with someone testing positive for the virus.<sup>3</sup> Some sectors are having persistent labour supply issues and difficulty filling vacancies. A shortage of Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) drivers is an acute issue significantly affecting goods shortages (see Box 2).

While the UK is not unique in experiencing shortages of materials and workers, commentators have noted that new immigration rules post-Brexit may have exacerbated the situation.<sup>4</sup> There are [different views on the extent](#) to which Brexit-related factors are contributing to supply chain issues in the UK.<sup>5</sup>

The imbalance of (strong) demand and (disrupted) supply is leading to rising prices and higher transport costs. For example, [shipping costs](#) were at record highs in September 2021 according to the Drewry World Container Index.<sup>6</sup> [Rising energy prices](#) are affecting energy-intensive manufacturing sectors, which are important inputs to supply chains, and consumer bills.<sup>7</sup> The construction industry is particularly impacted by rising materials costs.<sup>8</sup>

These inflationary pressures are a global issue and have filtered through into rising [consumer price inflation](#), raising concerns about the cost of living.<sup>9</sup> Our [background briefing](#) to the August Budget and Spending Review has more on cost of living pressures.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Major container ports in eastern China see worsening congestion after COVID cases](#), Reuters, 12 August 2021; [Trade Risks Worsen as Delta Descends on Southeast Asia Factories](#), Bloomberg, 30 July 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Bank of England, [Minutes of the Monetary Policy Committee meeting ending on 22 September 2021](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Pinging hell: NHS Covid app causing widespread staff shortages](#), The Guardian, 15 July 2021.

<sup>4</sup> [Is Brexit or Covid to blame for Britain's supply chain crisis?](#), The Guardian, 24 September 2021; [No McDonald's milkshakes, no chicken, no gas: Why the U.K.'s supply-chain woes are so acute](#), Fortune, 26 August 2021.

<sup>5</sup> [Covid or Brexit: What's to blame for Britain's shortages?](#), The Sunday Times, 9 October 2021; [Remainer hysteria over shortages does not mean Brexit is to blame](#), Julian Jessop, The Telegraph, 26 August 2021 (subscription only, available [here via Nexis News](#)).

<sup>6</sup> Drewry [World Container Index](#), accessed 21 October 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Resolution Foundation, [Bills, bills, bills](#), 17 October 2021; [British industry warns of factory closures without help on fuel costs](#), Reuters, 9 October 2021

<sup>8</sup> ONS, [Construction output in Great Britain: August 2021](#), 13 October 2021

<sup>9</sup> [Cost of living crisis looms for Britain's poorer households](#), Chris Giles and Jim Pickard, Financial Times, 21 September 2021. Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [The impact of supply chain delays on UK businesses and consumers](#), Non-inquiry session, 19 October 2021.

<sup>10</sup> [Commons Library Research Briefing CBP-9349, Background to the Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, 21 October 2021.](#)

## Box 1 Examples of supply chain problems

Every week there is a new spotlight on supply chain problems in the UK. Here is a round-up of some high-profile cases between July-October 2021.

- **Semiconductor chips:** a global shortage of semiconductor chips has been ongoing since early in the pandemic, [affecting the car industry](#) and consumer electronics. This was caused by strong demand for consumer electronics at the start of the pandemic while demand from the car industry returning more quickly than expected. A large proportion of global chip supply is made at a small number of facilities in Asia, which have been affected by lockdowns at different stages in the pandemic.
- **Chicken and milkshakes:** fast-food outlets including [Nandos](#) and [McDonalds](#) reported some menu items were unavailable in August due to a shortage of HGV drivers impacting their supply.
- **Petrol:** a shortage of tanker drivers to deliver fuel to petrol stations, exacerbated by panic buying, led to [large queues at petrol stations](#) and shortages of fuel at some petrol stations in the UK in late September.
- **CO<sub>2</sub>:** a [carbon dioxide \(CO<sub>2</sub>\) shortage](#) was triggered in late September when fertiliser company CF Fertilisers – who produce about 60% of the UK’s supply of carbon dioxide – shut down production in response to [higher gas prices](#). As the [food sector uses](#) refined CO<sub>2</sub> in production, packaging and transportation this had the potential to cause, significant disruption to supply chains, particularly for meat and drink. CO<sub>2</sub> is also used as a coolant in [nuclear reactors](#) and in [medical care](#).
- **Pigs:** a [shortage of abattoir workers and butchers](#) has led to some pig farmers having to cull pigs due to backlogs in sending pigs for slaughter leaving no space on farms.
- **Christmas:** According to a [recent report in the Financial Times](#), industry has warned the Government that supply chain issues may last for months with Christmas supplies at risk of disruption.

## 2 What is the scale of the supply chain problem?

### 2.1 Impact on businesses and the economy

It is difficult to quantify the impact of a specific supply chain issue on a particular industry or the economy. Monthly [GDP growth slowed in July and August](#), and business surveys suggest that supply chain disruption was a factor.<sup>11</sup>

Both services and manufacturing business have reported that supply chain delays have been [constraining their output](#) since July according to IHS Markit, the publishers of a closely-watched survey of purchasing managers.<sup>12</sup> The Bank of England's [Agents' summary of business conditions](#) for quarter three of 2021 and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) also noted [ongoing labour shortages and price increases](#) are impacting business output.<sup>13</sup> For example, anecdotal evidence from construction businesses indicated that price increases and supply chain issues were the main reason for construction sector economic output falling in July and August.<sup>14</sup>

The ONS publishes a [fortnightly survey of business conditions](#). This gives an insight into businesses' stock levels and difficulty sourcing goods and services. The ONS reported that in late August, almost one in five UK businesses (18%) said they were either not able to get materials, goods or services they needed from within the UK, or had to change suppliers or find alternative solutions to doing so.<sup>15</sup> This figure was much higher for the construction industry (36%) and hospitality industry (27%).

For businesses that import or export, the ONS reported a large increase in businesses experiencing challenges importing and exporting in January 2021. Since January, around 52% of businesses have reported challenges exporting and 60% have reported challenges importing.

Additional paperwork has consistently been the most-reported challenge facing businesses – in late September, over 40% of businesses experiencing challenges exporting or importing cited this as the main challenge. The

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<sup>11</sup> ONS, [Monthly GDP Estimate, UK: August 2021](#); See Commons Library Insight, [Economic update: Summer 'bounce back' loses momentum](#), 28 September 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Markit/CIPS, UK [Manufacturing](#) and [Services](#) PMI surveys for September (1 and 5 October 2021). See also the Library's Economic Indicator briefings on [services](#) and [manufacturing](#).

<sup>13</sup> ONS, [Coronavirus and the impact on output in the UK economy: August 2021](#), 13 October 2021.

<sup>14</sup> ONS, [Construction output in Great Britain: August 2021](#), 13 October 2021

<sup>15</sup> The period 23 August to 5 September. The next release of data on stock levels and supply chains will be published on 4 November 2021. Questions on supply chains and stock levels are not asked each wave.

proportion of businesses citing importing and exporting challenges due lack of hauliers has increased to 22% in late September, up from 11% in late April. This figure was particularly high in the hospitality industry at 64% in late September.

The ONS has also surveyed [consumers' experiences of shortages](#) when shopping for food and essential supplies. 61% of adults reported that they had experienced some differences compared to usual when shopping for food in late September,<sup>16</sup> mainly that there was less variety in the shops.<sup>17</sup> 17% of adults reported that they could not buy essential food items because they were not available and 15% reported they could not buy fuel. Difficulties buying fuel was [more prevalent in the South and East of England](#) where 19-23% of adults reported being unable to buy fuel in late September.<sup>18</sup>

It is difficult to know how long these supply chain issues will last for. Ian Wright, Chief Executive of the Food and Drink Federation told the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee in October that businesses in the sector expected disruption to last [until 2023 and 2024](#).<sup>19</sup>

## 2.2 Labour market shortages

The ONS's fortnightly survey of business conditions includes a question that asks businesses whether vacancies are proving easier or harder to fill. For the period 20 September to 3 October, 41% of businesses with at least 10 staff reported that vacancies were harder to fill in the last month compared with normal expectations.<sup>20</sup>

Job vacancies reached a record high of 1.10 million in July-September 2021, which was an increase of 239,000 from the quarter before.<sup>21</sup>

There were 3.7 job vacancies per every 100 employee jobs, also the highest level since comparable records began in 2001. This ratio was particularly high in certain sectors:

- 5.9 in the accommodation and food service activities sector
- 4.9 in the information and communication sector
- 4.6 in the other service activities sector
- 4.5 in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector

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<sup>16</sup> Between 22 September and 3 October

<sup>17</sup> Between 22 September and 3 October

<sup>18</sup> ONS, [Fall in HGV drivers largest among middle-aged workers](#), 19 October 2021.

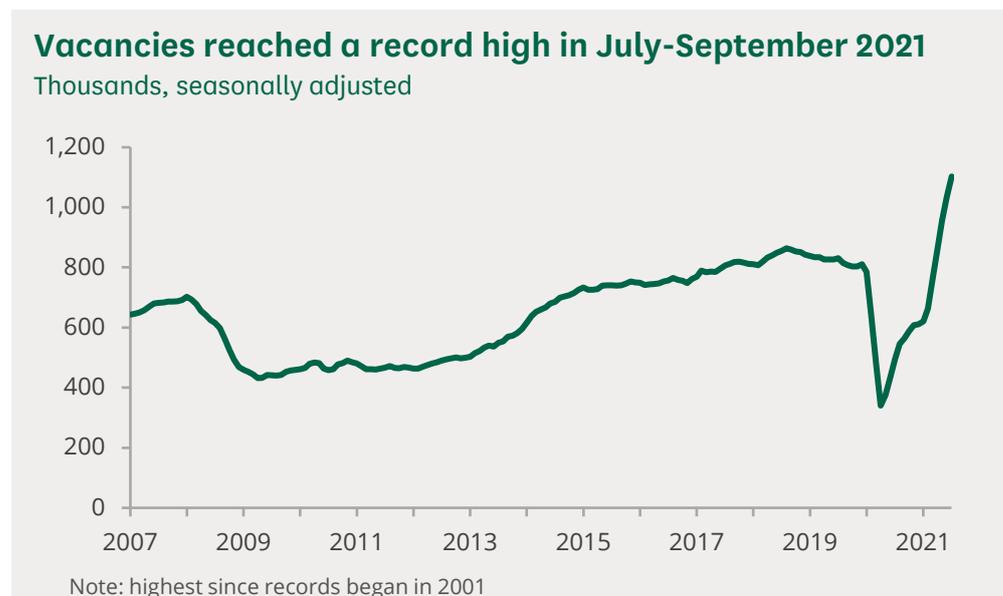
<sup>19</sup> Business Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [The impact of supply chain delays on UK businesses and consumers](#), Non-inquiry session, 19 October 2021; Q37.

<sup>20</sup> ONS, [Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#), 7 October 2021

<sup>21</sup> ONS, [Vacancies and jobs in the UK: October 2021](#), 12 October 2021

Prior to the start of the pandemic, in January to March 2020 there were 2.6 vacancies per every 100 employee jobs.

The total number of online job adverts in October 2021 were more than double the average across February 2020. The number of adverts in the transport, logistics and warehouse sector were particularly high, with the October 2021 levels almost five times higher than the February 2020 levels.<sup>22</sup>



Source: ONS, [RED01SA: Redundancies levels and rates \(seasonally adjusted\)](#), 12 October 2021

## Box 2 HGV driver shortages

In the UK, supply chain problems are particularly acute due to shortages of HGV drivers, significantly affecting food supply chains and the supply of petrol.

The shortage of HGV drivers is said to be due to a “[perfect storm](#)” of factors, including a backlog of driving tests cancelled during the pandemic which has led to a shortage of new drivers entering the market.<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, trained drivers that have left the UK due to the pandemic may not be returning, either due to pandemic restrictions or new immigration rules post-Brexit (see Box 3). Commentators have also highlighted that [long-standing structural issues](#) in the sector are also impacting shortages, including an ageing workforce, low pay and poor working conditions.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> ONS, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators](#), 14 October 2021

<sup>23</sup> [Lorry driver shortages: 'Perfect storm' causing gaps on shelves](#), BBC News, 29 July 2021.

<sup>24</sup> [UK truck driver shortage signals a broken labour market](#), Financial Times, 24 August 2021.

A shortage of HGV drivers is [not a unique issue to the UK](#) although commentators have noted that the situation is worse in the UK than other countries, in part due to post-Brexit immigration changes.<sup>25</sup>

There have been [several different claims](#) regarding the size of the HGV driver shortage.<sup>26</sup> According to the ONS, there were [39,000 fewer drivers](#) between July 2020 and June 2021 compared to the year ending 2019. Even before the pandemic, HGV driver numbers were declining, particularly for workers aged 46-55. The number of drivers from the EU increased from 2017 to 2020 but declined during the pandemic.<sup>27</sup>

## Why are there labour market shortages?

High vacancy levels are partly due to employers from sectors shut down during lockdown recruiting new staff after restrictions lifted, while the pandemic also meant that staff working in certain locked down sectors will have left for jobs in other sectors. Some non-UK nationals working in the UK will also have returned to their home countries due to the pandemic. For many sectors, the pandemic-related shortages will have exacerbated labour shortages they were already in place before the pandemic.

Other countries are experiencing pandemic-related labour shortages, with the shortage of HGV drivers, in particular, being felt globally (see Box 2 above).

1.3 million jobs remained furloughed in the UK at the end of August 2021, which includes jobs in sectors that have reported shortages. Unemployment is expected to rise due to the furlough scheme coming to a close at the end of September, and this may provide extra workers for some of the sectors experiencing shortages. However, there are concerns that this will not alleviate the shortages.

One of the reasons for this is that the skills held by those looking for employment may not match the skills needed by employers in sectors experiencing shortages. A survey by the Recruitment and Employment Confederation found that [the main factor affecting recruiters' ability to place suitable candidates](#) was skills shortages.

Brexit is seen to be another reason for the labour shortages in the UK. Post Brexit immigration rules have made it more difficult for employers to recruit new workers from the EU (see Box 3 below). There has been a fall in the

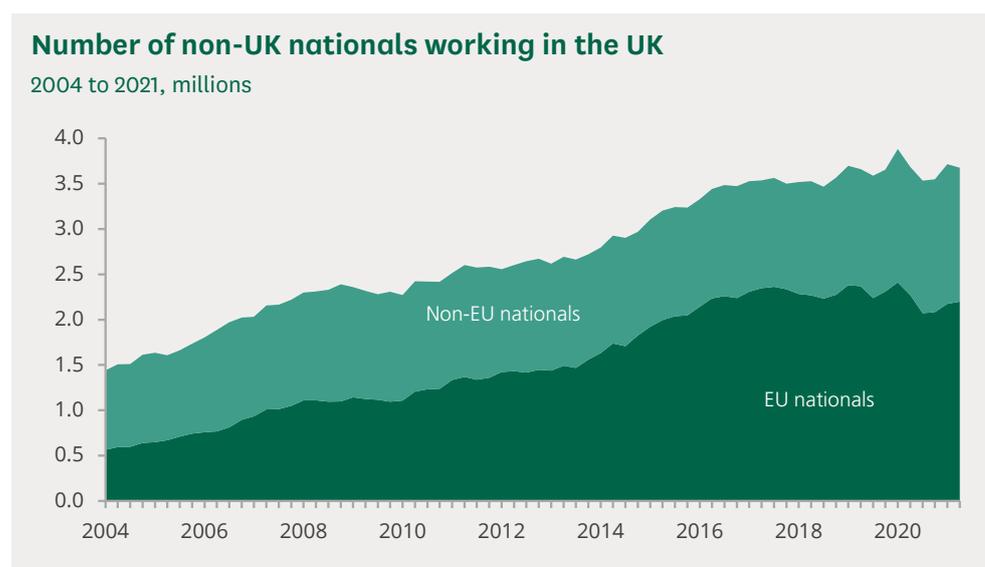
<sup>25</sup> [UK truck driver shortage signals a broken labour market](#), Financial Times, 24 August 2021; [No McDonald's milkshakes, no chicken, no gas: Why the U.K.'s supply-chain woes are so acute](#), Fortune, 26 August 2021;

<sup>26</sup> [How many more HGV drivers does the UK need?](#), Full Fact, 28 September 2021.

<sup>27</sup> ONS, [Fall in HGV drivers largest among middle-aged workers](#), 19 October 2021.

number of EU nationals working in the UK, exacerbated by some EU nationals returning to their home countries due to the pandemic.

The latest figures from the ONS show that there were 2.2 million people in employment in the UK in April-June 2021 who were EU nationals, a fall of around 170,000 from the same quarter in 2019. Over the same period the number of people in employment who were non-UK/non-EU nationals increased by 184,000.<sup>28</sup> The chart below shows how the number of non-UK nationals working in the UK has changed since 2004:



Source: ONS, [EMP06: Employment by country of birth and nationality](#), 17 August 2021

The ONS reported in September that a lack of EU applicants was affecting recruitment, particularly in the transport and storage sector. Its fortnightly business survey found that of all businesses that were experiencing recruitment challenges, 25% said that a reduced number of EU applicants was a factor. This rises to 46% for transport and storage businesses, the highest of any sector.<sup>29</sup>

Many of the supply chain sectors have been more reliant on EU nationals as part of their workforce. The Migration Observatory reported that 8% of workers were EU nationals in 2019. In comparison, 13% of workers in the transportation and storage sector were EU nationals, as were 11% of workers in the manufacturing sector and 9% of workers in the construction sector.<sup>30</sup> The Resolution Foundation has also identified the manufacture of food products sector and the warehousing and transportation sector as being two of the sectors that were more reliant on EU migrant workers.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> ONS, [EMP06: Employment by country of birth and nationality](#), 17 August 2021

<sup>29</sup> ONS, [Hospitality businesses are most likely to be struggling to fill vacancies](#), 6 September 2021

<sup>30</sup> The Migration Observatory, [Migrants in the UK Labour Market: An Overview](#), 11 January 2021

<sup>31</sup> Resolution Foundation, [Home and away The UK labour market in a post-Brexit world](#), December 2020

Industry bodies have partly blamed Brexit for labour shortages in some sectors, including [Logistics UK](#), [The Association of Labour Providers](#) and the [National Farmers Union](#).

### Box 3 Post-Brexit immigration rules

The end of EU free movement laws in the UK has made it more difficult to recruit new EU workers compared to when the UK was in the EU. The Home Office's February 2020 policy statement, [The UK's points-based immigration system](#), gave a broad indication of the Government's priorities for work-based immigration routes:

We will replace free movement with the UK's points-based system to cater for the most highly skilled workers, skilled workers, students and a range of other specialist work routes including routes for global leaders and innovators.

We will not introduce a general low-skilled or temporary work route. We need to shift the focus of our economy away from a reliance on cheap labour from Europe and instead concentrate on investment in technology and automation. Employers will need to adjust.

As an exception to the general government policy position outlined above, a bespoke [visa for seasonal agricultural workers](#) has been retained. The visa is intended to help alleviate labour shortages in the sector but is not intended to meet all of its estimated need for labour. The Government maintains that the agricultural sector should make greater use of automation and recruitment of domestic workers to meet demand.

The Government has also recently announced a relaxation of visa rules in sectors severely impacted by shortages, such as HGV drivers and poultry and pork workers (see below).

## 3 Government response

### 3.1 Summary of recent Government interventions

The Government has appointed Sir David Lewis (former CEO of Tesco) as its [expert advisor on supply chains](#) until the end of 2021. This was welcomed by business groups as a “[positive development](#)”.<sup>32</sup>

A [summary of the Government’s measures in response to HGV driver shortage](#) is provided on gov.uk and will be updated as further details are available.

The Government has introduced measures in industries that are particularly affected. For example:

- [For HGV drivers](#), the Government has made changes including introducing new training courses for drivers in England, speeding up HGV testing capacity and [simplifying the HGV licence regime](#) in Great Britain.
- In October the Government proposed temporary [changes to cabotage rules](#) to allow foreign HGV drivers to make unlimited pick-ups and drop-offs within 14-day stays in Great Britain.<sup>33</sup> The Government says this would allow “thousands more” HGV deliveries to be made. The move is [strongly opposed](#) by the UK HGV industry.<sup>34</sup> Eurostat data suggest that the extent of EU cabotage activity in the UK was rather limited. For example, in 2017 the cabotage penetration rate in the UK was about 1.5% of the total tonne-kilometres of transport, which is below the EU average of 4%.<sup>35</sup>
- To [support pig farmers](#), the Government says it will fund a private storage aid scheme in England to enable meat processors to store and safely preserve slaughtered pigs. It is also working with the industry to introduce processing of animals on Saturdays and longer working days where possible.
- Customs processes related to sanitary and phytosanitary controls of agri-foods have been postponed again till 1 July 2022.<sup>36</sup> Brexit Minister David Frost has said that this was done mostly to streamline imports of

<sup>32</sup> CBI, [CBI responds to creation of new supply chain advisory group](#), 8 October 2021; BCC, [BCC says new Industry Taskforce must listen to smaller businesses](#), 7 October 2021.

<sup>33</sup> DfT consultation, [Temporary extension to road haulage cabotage](#), 14 October 2021. Consultation closed on 21 October 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Cabotage is the transport of goods or passengers within the same country by a transport operator based in another country. Under the rules agreed in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the EU, EU drivers can perform a maximum of two cabotage operations in Great Britain within a period of seven days before returning to the EU. The same applies to UK hauliers operating within EU territory.

<sup>35</sup> Source: [Eurostat, Road freight transport statistics cabotage](#), August 2018

<sup>36</sup> [HCWS285](#), 14 September 2021

agri-foods in response to the supply chain problems, which he said were due to the pandemic.<sup>37</sup>

## Temporary visa changes

Through September and October, the Government introduced [temporary visas](#) for certain sectors experiencing severe shortages.

These were first made available in September to poultry workers and HGV drivers to drive food. On 2 October, visas for fuel drivers were made available through a concession to the immigration rules.<sup>38</sup> On 14 October, temporary visas for pork butchers were also announced.<sup>39</sup> Visas for HGV drivers to transport food will expire on 28 February 2022, visas for driving fuel will expire end of March 2022 and visas for poultry and pork workers will expire on 31 December 2021.<sup>40</sup>

The Government says that these temporary visas reflected the “[extraordinary set of circumstances](#)” affecting UK supply chains.<sup>41</sup> It said that “temporary visas are not a long term solution” and that businesses must “[make long term investments in the UK domestic workforce](#) to build a high-wage, high-skill economy, instead of relying on overseas labour”.<sup>42</sup>

Industry leaders in the food and haulage sectors told the BEIS committee that the temporary visas lasting only a few months would be [ineffective to fix shortages](#) that are a long-term and structural issue in their sectors, arguing that more emphasis was needed on training and skills.<sup>43</sup> Along with manufacturing and business leaders they said that the Government needed better coordination with businesses and more strategic planning to encourage investment.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Financial Times, [UK postpones imposing checks on EU goods until 2022](#), 14 September 2021

<sup>38</sup> Non-visa national HGV drivers could travel to the UK between 1-15 October to take-up employment as a fuel tanker driver without having to apply for a visa in advance of travel. Instead, the driver would be granted permission to enter to the UK “outside the Immigration Rules” until 31 March 2022 upon arrival at the UK border control, if the border officer is satisfied that they meet the related eligibility requirements. See: Cabinet Office, [Military finish up training to start fuel deliveries as government extends support to industry](#), 2 October 2021.

<sup>39</sup> DfT, [Government set to bolster supply chains by extending cabotage rights](#), 14 October 2021.

<sup>40</sup> Defra, DfT and Home Office guidance, [Recruit a poultry worker or HGV food driver with a temporary visa](#), 7 October 2021; Cabinet Office, [Military finish up training to start fuel deliveries as government extends support to industry](#), 2 October 2021; DfT, [Government set to bolster supply chains by extending cabotage rights](#), 14 October 2021.

<sup>41</sup> Cabinet Office, [Military finish up training to start fuel deliveries as government extends support to industry](#), 2 October 2021.

<sup>42</sup> DfT, Defra, [Government set to bolster supply chains by extending cabotage rights](#), 14 October 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [The impact of supply chain delays on UK businesses and consumers](#), Non-inquiry session, 19 October 2021, Qq15-22.

<sup>44</sup> Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [The impact of supply chain delays on UK businesses and consumers](#), Non-inquiry session, 19 October 2021, for example Qq 53 and 91.

## Financial support to companies and industries

In some cases, the Government has stepped in and provided financial support to specific companies. For example, the Government provided [financial support towards some of the operating costs](#) of fertiliser company, CF Fertilisers, for three weeks to allow immediate restart of its plant in Billingham to ensure CO<sub>2</sub> supply to UK businesses (see Box 1).<sup>45</sup>

Other energy-intensive industries have also been calling for support for energy costs.<sup>46</sup> The steel industry warned in mid-September that [some manufacturers have been pausing production](#) due to high energy costs making it unprofitable to make steel at certain times of day.<sup>47</sup> Press reports in mid-October indicated that the Chancellor and Business Secretary were [considering potential financial support](#) options for energy intensive manufacturers, such as loans.

## 4 Further reading

### 4.1 Parliamentary material

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [The impact of supply chain delays on UK businesses and consumers](#), Non-inquiry session, 19 October 2021.

Environment Food and Rural Affairs Committee, [Labour in the food supply chain inquiry](#)

Treasury Committee, Jobs, growth, and productivity after coronavirus inquiry, [Oral evidence session on 20 September 2021](#) (HC 150).

### 4.2 Reading on supply chains in general

[Supply chain problems](#), Joe Marshall, Institute for Government, 11 October 2021

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<sup>45</sup> Following this temporary arrangement, the CO<sub>2</sub> industry [came to an agreement](#) to ensure sustainable supply of CO<sub>2</sub> to UK businesses while global gas prices remain high.

<sup>46</sup> In particular, the steel industry: UK Steel, [We need fair deal for UK steel](#), 13 October 2021. [steel industry](#). Energy costs have long been an issue for the industry, further background is in our paper: [UK Steel industry: statistics and policy](#).

<sup>47</sup> [British Steel warns of 50-fold increase in power prices](#), Sylvia Pfeifer and Harry Dempsey, Financial Times, 21 September 2021.

[The government's confused communications have worsened the fuel crisis](#), Alex Thomas, Institute for Government, 30 September 2021.

[Covid or Brexit: What's to blame for Britain's shortages?](#) The Sunday Times, 9 October 2021.

[Shortage nation: why the UK is braced for a grim Christmas](#), Tim Harford, The Financial Times, 14 October 2021.

[From coffee to microchips – how the supply chain crisis is disrupting UK plc](#), The Guardian, 10 September 2021

[Three ways supply chains are evolving \(for the better\) following the pandemic](#), Ben Wright, Oxford Economics blog, August 2021.

[Keys to resilient supply chains: policy tools for preparedness and responsiveness](#), OECD policy toolkit

[US and European strategies for resilient supply chains](#), Marianne Schneider-Petsinger, Chatham House research paper, 14 September 2021

## 4.3 Supply chain disruption internationally

[The shortages hitting countries around the world](#), Daniel Kraemer, BBC News, 19 October 2021.

[How the supply chain crisis is affecting six big economies](#), The Guardian, 2 October 2021.

[Why the Pandemic Has Disrupted Supply Chains](#), The White House, Council of Economic Advisors blog, Susan Helper and Evan Soltas, 17 June 2021.

Citi, for the Institute for Fiscal Studies Green Budget, [Global Economic outlook](#), 12 October 2021.

## 4.4 Reading on specific issues

### HGV drivers

[How serious is the shortage of lorry drivers?](#), BBC Reality Check, 15 October 2021.

[The HGV Driver Shortage: Our campaigning](#), Road Haulage Association.

[Road transport operators on the front line as driver shortages and skills gaps worsen](#), International Road Transport Union, 2 June 2021

## Shipping costs and delays

[The waiting game: where are the world's worst port delays?](#), Gill Plimmer and Harry Dempsey, Financial Times, 15 October 2021.

[Shipping disruption: Why are so many queuing to get to the US?](#), Jack Goodman & Micah Luxen, BBC Reality Check, 16 October 2021

[Shipping during COVID-19: Why container freight rates have surged](#), UNCTAD, 23 April 2021.

## Food supply

[Establishing the labour availability issues of the UK Food and Drink Sector](#), Food and Drink Federation, 21 August 2021.

[U.K. Faces Food Shortages as Worker Scarcity Gets Worse](#), Agnieszka de Sousa, Bloomberg, 26 June 2021.

[Effects of COVID-19 on the food supply system](#), Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, 13 July 2020

## Energy intensive industries

[The energy price crunch 2021](#), House of Commons Library, Research Briefing, 13 October 2021

[Sunak considers rescue plan for UK sectors hit by energy crisis](#), Financial Times, 11 October 2021.

[Steel industry calls for state support to avoid 'full blown crisis'](#), Rob Davies, The Guardian, 12 October 2021

[High energy prices: most businesses don't deserve a bailout – here's why](#), Martin Lockett, The Conversation, 13 October 2021

[UK steel industry: statistics and policy](#), House of Commons Library, Research Briefing, 18 June 2021

## Semiconductor shortages

[Chip shortage deepens supply problems at global carmakers](#), Financial Times, 19 August 2021

[Chip shortage: Toyota to cut global production by 40%](#), BBC News, 20 August 2021.

[Chip shortage to last until at least mid-2022, warns manufacturer](#), Financial Times, 6 June 2021

[Ministers in urgent call to beef up Britain's microchip supplies](#), The Times, 18 July 2021.

## **Construction industry**

[Building projects hit by lack of supplies and price rises](#), BBC News, 26 May 2021

[UK construction faces 'perfect storm' as supply shortages loom](#), Financial Times, 2 August 2021

[Exodus of EU workers leaves UK construction industry facing shortages](#), Financial Times, 14 June 2021

[Construction cost inflation hits new highs](#), Construction News, 21 June 2021

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