

Statistical bulletin

# Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 1 July 2021

Early experimental data and analysis on economic activity and social change in the UK. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources, and experimental methods.

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# 1 . Main points

- In the week to 26 June 2021, overall retail footfall in the UK remained broadly unchanged at 75% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019 (Springboard). See [Section 3](#).
- In the week to 24 June 2021, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 2 percentage points from the previous week to 93% of its February 2020 average level; both "staple" and "delayable" spending saw week-on-week increases of 4% and 3%, respectively (Bank of England CHAPS data). See [Section 4](#).
- In the last two weeks, currently trading businesses reported that 11% of their workforce have moved from furlough or fully homeworking to a hybrid model of working (Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)). See [Section 5](#).
- On 25 June 2021, the total volume of online job adverts remained unchanged compared with a week ago and above the level seen before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic at 129% of its February 2020 average (Adzuna). See [Section 6](#).
- In the week to 28 June 2021, the seven-day rolling average estimate of UK seated diners fell by 4 percentage points compared with the previous week, to 124% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019 (OpenTable). See [Section 7](#).
- The volume of motor vehicle traffic on Monday 28 June 2021 was at 98% of the level seen in the first week of February 2020, broadly unchanged from a week ago (Department for Transport (DfT)). See [Section 8](#).
- The proportion of working adults in Great Britain who in the past seven days travelled to work (either exclusively or in combination with working from home) remained broadly unchanged from the previous week at 63% (Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) 23 to 27 June 2021). See [Section 9](#).
- There were 13,380 company incorporations in the week to 25 June 2021, a 2% decrease from the previous week (13,658), but 10% higher than the equivalent week in 2019 (12,203) (Companies House). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There were 5,830 voluntary dissolution applications in the week to 25 June 2021, a 10% decrease from the previous week (6,494) but 31% higher than the equivalent week of 2019 (4,441) (Companies House). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- In the week ending 27 June 2021, average counts of traffic camera activity for all vehicle types and pedestrians increased in London but decreased in the North East when compared with the previous week; in London, car traffic increased by 4% and in the North East it decreased by 5% (Transport for London, North East Traffic Cameras). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- The overall price of items in the online food and drink basket was unchanged in the latest week ending 27 June 2021; the main upward contribution came from "mineral waters, soft drinks and juices", which was driven by higher prices for fizzy drinks and energy drinks, and was offset by price decreases in "wine", "oils and fats", and "fruit" (online price collection). See the [accompanying dataset](#).

Results presented in this bulletin are experimental and may be subject to revision.

## 2 . Latest indicators at a glance

Notes:

1. For the indicator “Proportion of workforce working at their normal pre-pandemic place of work”, the response to this question was changed from “Working at their normal place of work” to “Mainly working at the same place they were working before the pandemic” from Wave 33 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

## 3 . Retail footfall

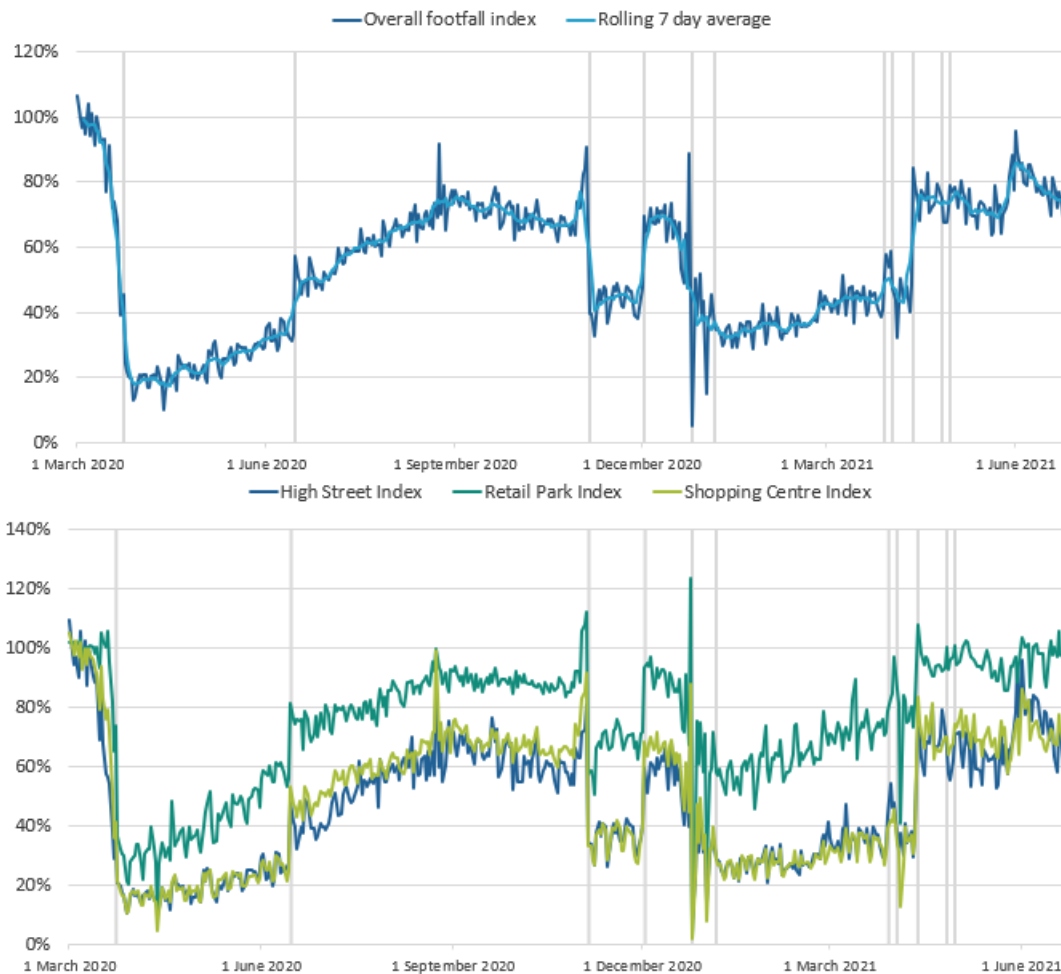
### National retail footfall

National footfall figures are supplied by [Springboard](#), a provider of data on customer activity. It measures the following for overall UK retail footfall, as well as by high street, retail park, and shopping centre categories:

- daily retail footfall as a percentage of its level on the same day of the equivalent week of 2019; for example, Saturday 26 June 2021 is compared with Saturday 22 June 2019
- total weekly retail footfall as a percentage of its level in the equivalent week of 2019
- the percentage change in weekly footfall compared with the previous week; for example, Week 25 of 2021 is compared with Week 24 of 2021
- Springboard's weekly data are defined over a seven-day period running from Sunday to Saturday; Week 25 of 2021 therefore refers to the period Sunday 20 June 2021 to Saturday 26 June 2021

**Figure 1: In the week to 26 June 2021, UK retail footfall was at 75% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019**

Volume of overall daily retail footfall, percentage compared with the equivalent day of the equivalent week of 2019, 1 March 2020 to 26 June 2021



Source: Springboard and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

**Notes:**

1. The vertical lines indicate notable events. In order, the events are: first national lockdowns begin; restrictions begin to ease across the UK; circuit-breaker lockdown in England; circuit breaker replaced with regional restrictions; Christmas; lockdown begins in England; "stay at home" rule ends in England; Easter; reopening of non-essential retail in England and Wales; reopening of non-essential retail in Scotland; reopening of non-essential retail in Northern Ireland.
2. Prior to 3 January 2021, overall and regional daily footfall indices were generated by comparing footfall against its level on the same day of the equivalent week the year before. From this date onwards they were generated by comparing footfall against its level on the same day of the equivalent week in 2019. For a two-day period, from 1 January 2021 to 2 January 2021 daily indices were therefore generated using a 2021 versus 2020 comparison.

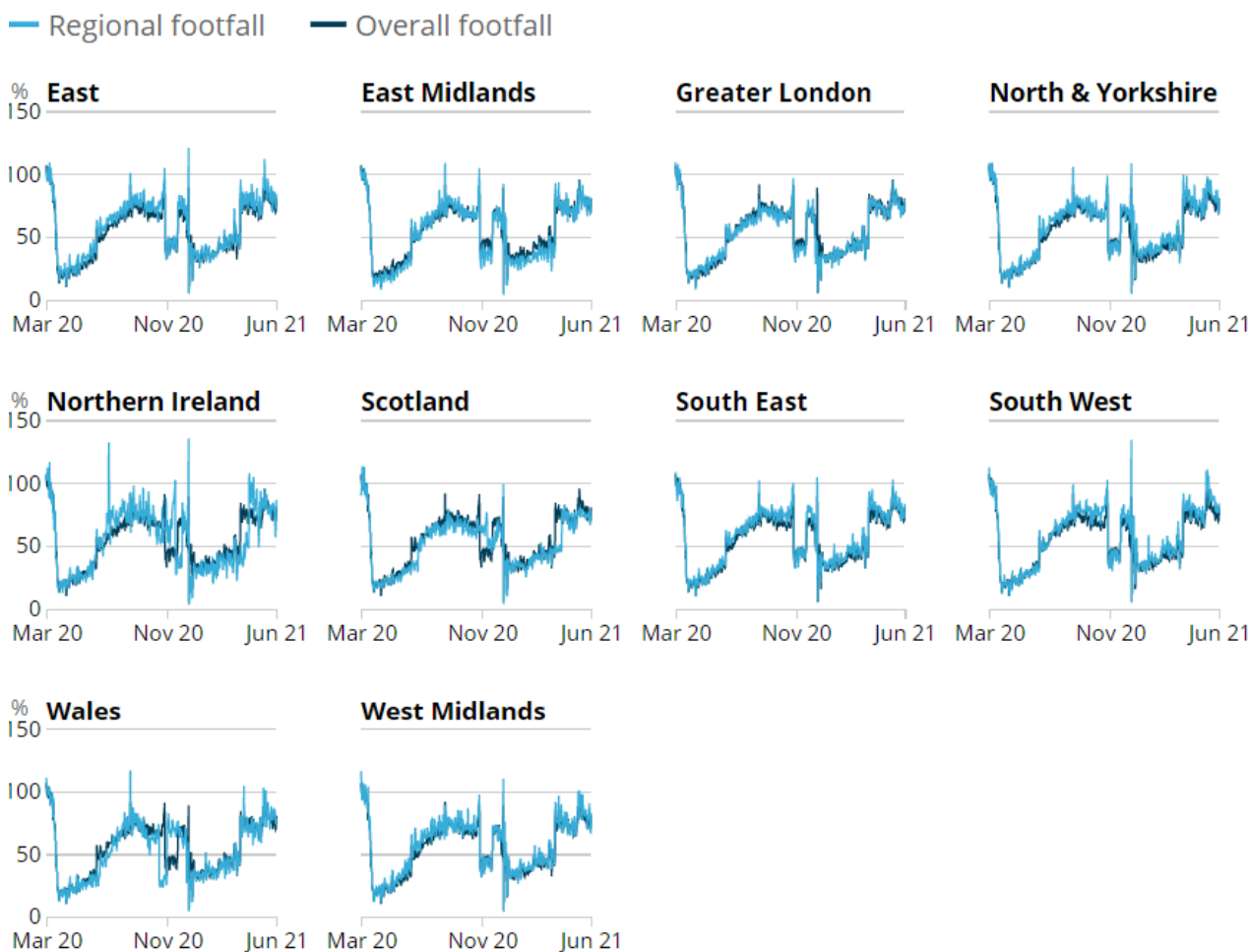
According to Springboard, overall retail footfall in the week to 26 June 2021 remained broadly unchanged compared with the previous week (week to 19 June 2021).

Comparing retail locations, in the same week to 26 June 2021, retail park footfall was at 95% of its equivalent week in 2019, whereas the corresponding figures for shopping centres and high streets were 70% and 68%, respectively. Compared with the previous week (week to 19 June 2021), footfall at retail parks saw a week-on-week decrease of 2%, whereas footfall on high streets and at shopping centres was broadly unchanged.

## Regional retail footfall

**Figure 2: In the week to 26 June 2021, retail footfall was strongest in South West England compared with other UK regions for a fourth consecutive week, at 80% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019**

Volume of daily retail footfall, percentage of the level recorded on the same day of the equivalent week of 2019, UK countries and English regions, 1 March 2020 to 26 June 2021



Source: Springboard and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

According to Springboard, in the week to 26 June 2021, retail footfall saw week-on-week percentage decreases in five of the ten UK countries and English regions. The largest weekly percentage decrease in retail footfall was in the North and Yorkshire, where it fell by 3%. Meanwhile, Greater London saw the largest weekly percentage increase, with a week-on-week increase of 3%. The remaining four UK countries and English regions remained broadly unchanged in the week to 26 June 2021.

In the same week, retail footfall when compared with levels seen in the equivalent week of 2019 was strongest in South West England, Wales and the West Midlands at 80%, 79%, and 78%, respectively.

In contrast, retail footfall was weakest in Northern Ireland, Greater London and Scotland. Their retail footfall levels in the week to 19 June 2021 were at 72%, 73% and 74% of the equivalent week of 2019, respectively.

## 4 . UK spending on debit and credit cards

## Daily CHAPS-based indicator

These data series are experimental faster indicators for estimating UK spending on credit and debit cards. They track the daily CHAPS payments made by credit and debit card payment processors to around 100 major UK retail corporates. These payments are the proceeds of recent credit and debit card transactions made by customers at their stores, both via physical and via online platforms.

More information on the indicator is provided in the accompanying [methodology article](#).

Companies are allocated to one of four categories based on their primary business:

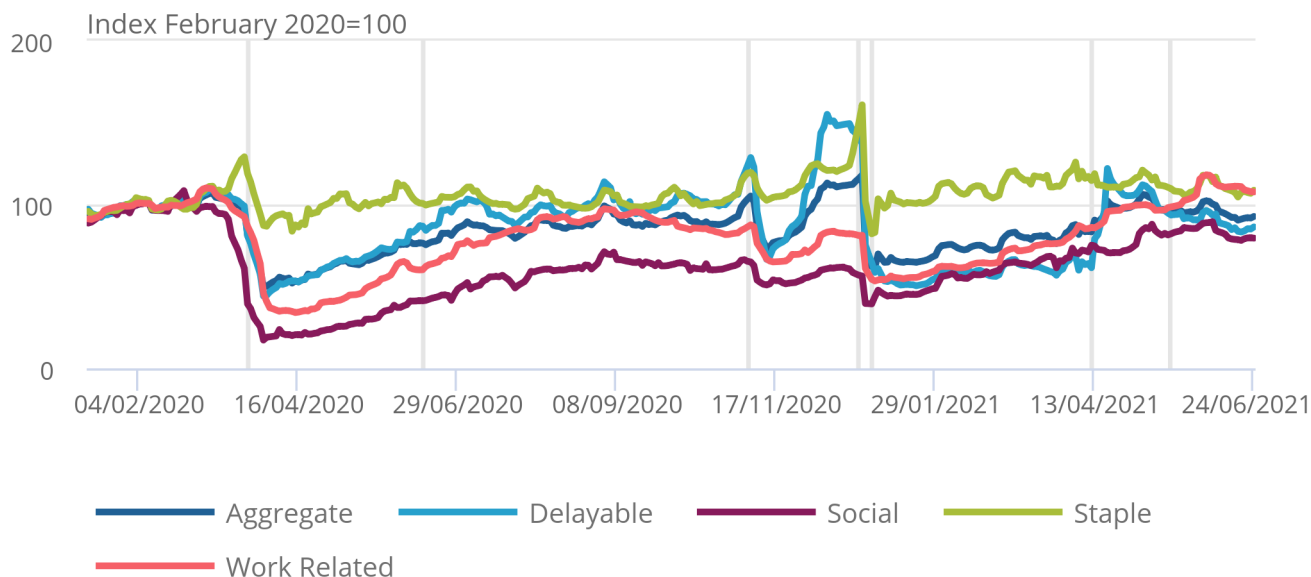
- "staples" refers to companies that sell essential goods that households need to purchase, such as food and utilities
- "work-related" refers to companies providing public transport or selling petrol
- "delayable" refers to companies selling goods whose purchase could be delayed, such as clothing or furnishings
- "social" refers to spending on travel and eating out

**Figure 3: In the week to 24 June 2021, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 2 percentage points from the previous week, to 93% of its February 2020 average**

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 24 June 2021, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices

Figure 3: In the week to 24 June 2021, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 2 percentage points from the previous week, to 93% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 24 June 2021, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices



Source: Office for National Statistics and Bank of England calculations

**Notes:**

1. Users should note the daily payment data is the sum of card transactions processed up to the previous working day, so there is slight time lag when compared with real-life events on the chart.
2. The vertical lines indicate key events. In order, the events are: first national lockdown begins; some non-essential shops allowed to reopen; regional restrictions begin in England; Christmas period; lockdowns announced in England and Scotland; reopening of non-essential shops, and outdoor pubs and restaurants in England; further easing of lockdown restrictions, including re-opening of indoor pubs and restaurants in England.
3. Percentage point difference is derived from current week and previous week index before rounding.
4. Data for one sub-sector with a 15% weight in the "social" spending category has had to be imputed in the latest week due to data availability issues.

Figure 3 shows changes in the value of CHAPS payments received by large UK corporates from their credit and debit card processors, "merchant acquirers".

In the week to 24 June 2021, the CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases in aggregate increased by 2 percentage points from the previous week to 93% of its February 2020 average level. Two of the four spending categories increased in this latest week:

- "staple" increased by 4 percentage points
- "delayable" increased by 3 percentage points
- "social" was broadly unchanged
- "work-related" decreased by 3 percentage points

In the latest week, "staple" and "work-related" spending remained above their February 2020 average levels, at 109% and 108%, respectively. Conversely, "delayable" and "social" spending were at 86% and 79% of their February 2020 average levels, respectively.

Having fallen in recent weeks, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator has decreased to below levels seen just before further restrictions eased in England on 17 May 2021. The aggregate indicator was down by 4 percentage points in the week to 24 June 2021 compared with that seen in the week to 13 May 2021. All consumption categories except for "work-related" have seen a decrease in spending over this period. "Delayable" spending has seen the largest decrease, falling by 10 percentage points while "staple" and "social" spending saw relatively smaller decreases of 3 and 2 percentage points, respectively. Meanwhile, "work-related" spending has increased by 10 percentage points since the week to 13 May 2021.

The full data time series available for data on UK spending on debit and credit cards can be found in the [accompanying dataset](#).

## 5 . Business impacts and insights

For the first time in the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) asked businesses about hybrid working arrangements. In the last two weeks, currently trading businesses reported that 11% of their workforce have moved from furlough or fully homeworking to a hybrid model of working.

Final data for Wave 33 (reference period 31 May to 13 June 2021) of BICS can be found at [Business insights and impacts on the UK economy: 1 July 2021](#).

Further information can also be found in the [Business insights and impact on the UK economy dataset](#).

## 6 . Online job adverts

### Job adverts by category

These figures are experimental estimates of online job adverts provided by Adzuna, an online job search engine, by category, by UK country and English region. The number of job adverts over time is an indicator of the demand for labour. The Adzuna categories used do not correspond to Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) categories, so these values are not directly comparable with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Vacancy Survey.

**Figure 4: On 25 June 2021, the total volume of online job adverts was unchanged compared with a week ago, remaining at 129% of its February 2020 level**

Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 4 January 2019 to 25 June 2021, non-seasonally adjusted



## Notes:

1. Further category breakdowns are included in the [Online job advert estimates dataset](#) and more details on the methodology can be found in [Using Adzuna data to derive an indicator of weekly vacancies](#).
2. Users should note that week-on-week changes in online job advert volumes are outlined as percentages, rather than as percentage point changes. Percentage change figures quoted in the commentary will therefore not necessarily match the percentage point changes observed in the charts and accompanying dataset.

## [Download the data](#)

On 25 June 2021, the total volume of online job adverts in the UK remained unchanged compared with the previous week (18 June 2021). This is the fourth consecutive week where online job adverts have broadly stabilised (since 4 June 2021). It follows a period since 9 April 2021, just before the easing of lockdown restrictions in England, where online job adverts increased in most categories.

Compared with the previous week, and excluding the "unknown" category, the volume of online job adverts had increased in 18 out of the 28 categories, decreased in seven categories, and remained unchanged in three categories.

The largest weekly increase was in "other/general", which saw an increase of 13%. This is the third consecutive week that has seen an increase in this category. Another notable increase was in "wholesale and retail", which increased by 10% from last week. The largest week-on-week fall was in "travel/tourism", which fell by 13%. On 25 June 2021, the total volume of online job adverts remained substantially higher than pre-pandemic levels at 129% of its February 2020 average level. Of the 28 categories, only three were below pre-pandemic levels: "legal", "graduate" and "energy, oil and gas", which were at 97%, 95% and 92% of their February 2020 levels, respectively. "Catering and hospitality" fell slightly by 3%, compared with last week to 135% of the volume seen in February 2020 and is the second consecutive week where online job adverts have decreased in this category.

Online job adverts in "transport, logistics & warehouse" remained broadly unchanged compared with last week, at 309% of its February 2020 average. However, this category has increased substantially since the start of the year, having increased by 158% since 8 January 2021 and is the strongest category relative to its February 2020 average.

## Job adverts by region

### **Figure 5: On 25 June 2021, the volume of online job adverts remained broadly stable across all UK countries and regions**

**Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 7 February 2020 to 25 June 2021, non-seasonally adjusted**

## Notes:

1. Users should note that week-on-week changes in online job advert volumes are outlined as percentages, rather than as percentage point changes. Percentage change figures quoted in the commentary will therefore not necessarily match the percentage point changes observed in the charts and accompanying dataset.

## [Download the data](#)

On 25 June 2021, the volume of online job adverts remained broadly unchanged across all UK countries and regions, when compared with last week (18 June 2021). This follows a period of increase across all UK countries and regions since early 2021.

The volume of online job adverts remained above their February 2020 average levels in all UK countries and English regions on 25 June 2021. They were strongest, when compared with pre-pandemic levels, in the North East and the East Midlands, where online job adverts stood at 174% and 164% of their February 2020 average level, respectively. Meanwhile, relative to its February 2020 average level, the volume of online job adverts was weakest in London, where the corresponding figure was 107%.

## 7 . OpenTable Seated Diners

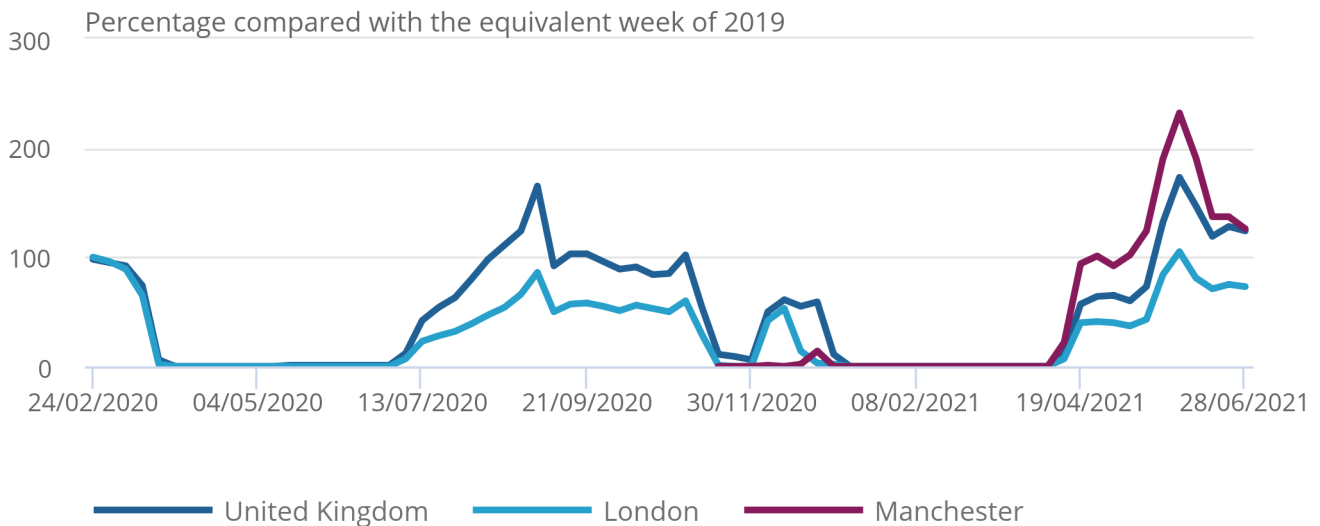
OpenTable is a provider of data for online restaurant reservations, with daily data for the UK, London and Manchester being publicly available in its [The state of the industry dashboard](#). These data show the impact of recent events and restrictions on the hospitality industry using a sample of restaurants on the OpenTable network across all channels, that is, online reservations, phone reservations, and walk-ins.

**Figure 6: In the week to 28 June 2021, the seven-day rolling average estimate of UK seated diners fell by 4 percentage points compared with the week before, to 124% of its level in the same week of 2019**

Seated diners, seven-day average, percentage compared with the equivalent week of 2019, week ending 24 February 2020 to week ending 28 June 2021, UK, London and Manchester

Figure 6: In the week to 28 June 2021, the seven-day rolling average estimate of UK seated diners fell by 4 percentage points compared with the week before, to 124% of its level in the same week of 2019

Seated diners, seven-day average, percentage compared with the equivalent week of 2019, week ending 24 February 2020 to week ending 28 June 2021, UK, London and Manchester



Source: OpenTable

**Notes:**

1. Data show the percentage of seated diners when compared with the same week in 2019. For example, Week 25 2021 is compared with Week 25 2019.
2. Please note that data for Manchester are only available from week ending 16 November 2020.

According to OpenTable, in the week to 28 June 2021, the seven-day rolling average estimate of UK seated diners fell by 4 percentage points compared with the previous week, to 124% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019. In London the seven-day rolling average estimate of seated diners remained broadly unchanged from the week before. In contrast, in Manchester it fell by 10 percentage points, where on 28 June 2021, the seven-day rolling average estimate of seated diners stood at 126% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019.

The seven-day rolling average estimates of seated diners for the UK, London, and Manchester have fallen substantially since 31 May 2021, which was shortly after customers were permitted to dine indoors in England. For the UK as a whole, it fell by 49 percentage points between 31 May and 28 June 2021, whereas it decreased by 32 and 106 percentage points in London and Manchester respectively.

## 8 . Road traffic in Great Britain

According to Department for Transport (DfT) non-seasonally adjusted road traffic data, the volume of all motor vehicle traffic on Monday 28 June 2021 was at 98% of the level seen on Monday of the first week of February 2020. This is broadly unchanged from Monday 21 June 2021, but 14 percentage points higher than 29 March 2021 when the "stay at home" restrictions ended in England.

Compared with the previous week, the volume of road traffic on Monday 28 June 2021 for light commercial vehicles, heavy goods vehicles and cars remained broadly unchanged at 110%, 108% and 94% of their levels in the first week of February 2020, respectively.

**Figure 7: The volume of motor vehicle traffic on Monday 28 June 2021 was at 98% of the level seen in the first week of February 2020, broadly unchanged from a week ago**

**Daily road traffic index: 100 = same traffic as the equivalent day of the week in the first week of February 2020, 1 March 2020 to 28 June 2021, non-seasonally adjusted**

### Notes:

1. The blue shaded areas refer to periods when restrictions across the UK were in effect. In order, these were: first national lockdown in the UK (23 March 2020) to easing of restrictions with non-essential shops reopening in England (15 June 2020); second lockdown in England (5 November 2020) to lockdown being replaced with three-tier system in England (2 December 2020); third lockdown announced in Scotland and England (4 January 2021) to "stay at home" restrictions ending in England (29 March 2021).

[Download the data](#)

The daily DfT estimates are indexed to the first week of February 2020 and the comparison is with the same day of the week. The data provided are useful as an indication of traffic change rather than actual traffic volumes. More information on the methods, quality and economic analysis for these indicators can be found in the [DfT methodology article](#).

## 9 . Social impact of coronavirus (COVID-19)

This section includes some provisional results from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) covering the period 23 to 27 June 2021. The survey went out to 6,025 adults in Great Britain and had a response rate of 68%.

Further information to help understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households, and communities in Great Britain will be available in [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#) due to be published on 2 July 2021.

### Travelling to work

In the period 23 to 27 June 2021, the proportion of working adults in Great Britain who in the past seven days:

- travelled to work (either exclusively or in combination with working from home) remained similar to the previous week (16 to 20 June) at 63% (64% in the previous week)
- worked exclusively from home was similar to the previous week at 23% (22% in the previous week)
- neither travelled to work, nor worked from home was similar to the previous week at 13% (14% in the previous week)

## Shopping

Of the 95% of adults who reported leaving home in the past seven days, the proportion that did so to shop for food and medicine remained similar to the previous week at 83% (82% in the previous week).

The proportion of these adults who shopped for things other than food and medicine in the last seven days was slightly lower than the previous week at 42% (44% in the previous week).

## 10 . Data

### [UK spending on credit and debit cards](#)

Dataset | Released 1 July 2021

Experimental indicator for monitoring UK retail purchases derived from the Bank of England's Clearing House Automated Payment System (CHAPS) data.

### [Shipping indicators](#)

Dataset | Released 17 June 2021

Experimental weekly and daily ship visits dataset covering UK ports.

### [Traffic camera activity](#)

Dataset | Released 1 July 2021

Experimental daily traffic camera counts data for busyness indices covering the UK.

### [Online job advert estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 1 July 2021

Experimental job advert indices covering the UK online job market.

### [Company Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolutions](#)

Dataset | Released 1 July 2021

The number of weekly Companies House Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolution applications accepted.

### [Online weekly price changes](#)

Dataset | Released 1 July 2021

Experimental estimates of online price changes for a selection of food and drink products from several large UK retailers.

### [Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#)

Dataset | Released 1 July 2021

Responses from the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

## 11 . Glossary

## Faster indicator

A faster indicator provides insights into economic activity using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys or Experimental Statistics, which represent useful economic and social concepts.

## Company incorporations

Incorporations are when a company is added to the Companies House register of limited companies. This can also include where an existing business applies to become a limited company, where it was not one before.

## Voluntary dissolution applications

A voluntary dissolution application is when a company applies to begin dissolution proceedings. As such, they effectively chose to be removed from the Companies House register. For a company to be eligible to voluntarily dissolve, it should not have completed any trading activity for a period of three months.

# 12 . Measuring the data

## UK coronavirus restrictions

A full overview of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions for each of the four UK constituent countries can be found here:

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)

These restrictions should be considered when interpreting the data featured throughout this bulletin.

# 13 . Strengths and limitations

Information on the strengths and limitations of the indicators in this bulletin is available in the [Coronavirus and the latest indicators of the UK economy and society methodology](#).

## 14 . Related links

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Webpage | Updated as and when data become available

Latest data on the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 2 July 2021](#)

Bulletin | 2 July 2021

Latest indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 18 June 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 29 June 2021

Provisional counts of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving COVID-19, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey, UK: 2 July 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 2 July 2021

Initial data from the COVID-19 Infection Survey (delivered in partnership with IQVIA, Oxford University and UK Biocentre).