Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 24 November 2022

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

Notice

24 November 2022

This week the bulletin contains a reduced suite of indicators as we assess our future publication schedule. This will continue to be a weekly release, but the frequency of some indicators may change. If you have any questions or comments regarding this, please contact realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk.

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1 . Main points

- Consumer behaviour indicators showed mostly increased activity in the latest week, with UK credit and debit card purchases increasing by 2 percentage points (Bank of England CHAPS data), the number of in-store transactions increasing at most Pret A Manger locations, and the number of seated diners increasing by 3 percentage points (Pret A Manger, OpenTable). Section 3: Consumer Behaviour.

- The number of UK online job adverts increased in 20 of the 28 categories and all 12 UK countries and English regions compared with the previous week (Adzuna). Section 4: Business and workforce.

- Of businesses that had not permanently stopped trading, 13% reported experiencing global supply chain disruption in October 2022 (initial results from Wave 70 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)). Section 4: Business and workforce.

- In the week to 20 November 2022, the seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 85% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019 (EUROCONTROL). Section 5: Transport.

- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas rose by 2% in the week to 20 November 2022; this value was 53% below the level of the equivalent week of 2021 and 80% below the peak seen in August 2022 (National Grid).

Results presented in this bulletin are experimental and may be subject to revision. Data sources used to compile these indicators are regularly reviewed to ensure representativity and relevance, which may mean indicators change at short notice.

2 . Latest indicators at a glance

Notes:

1. Revolut adjustments to user count are at an aggregate level and as such age bands may not adjust evenly.

2. Users should note that card spending over time is pushed upwards by the impacts of both inflation on value of transactions and cash-to-card conversion.

3 . Consumer behaviour

In the week to 13 November 2022, the estimated demand for fuel per transaction was unchanged from the previous week and at 90% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2021. Average fuel prices were 122% of the level in the equivalent week of 2021, and broadly unchanged from the previous week. Our accompanying dataset: Automotive fuel spending is available.

The number of in-store transactions at Pret A Manger increased at eight location categories in the week to 17 November 2022, compared with the previous week. The largest increase was in regional stations, where transactions increased by 25 percentage points, followed by London stations with an increase of 21 percentage points. These categories had also exhibited the largest decreases in the number of transactions in the previous week, coinciding with disruption because of Tube worker strikes on 10 November 2022 and the late cancellation of other rail worker strikes due to be held on 5, 7, and 9 November 2022. Our accompanying dataset: Transactions at Pret A Manger is available.

Revolut debit card transaction data showed decreased spending in all reported sectors in the week to 20 November 2022, with "travel and accommodation" having the largest decrease of 11 percentage points. However, all categories except "travel and accommodation" were up on the level of spending in the equivalent period of last year, with "automotive fuel" recording the largest increase of 28 percentage points, followed by "food and drink" and "retail", which increased by 17 and 15 percentage points, respectively. Total spending was 22 percentage points above the pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) baseline, while "entertainment" and "Pubs, restaurants and fast food" were the only categories below that baseline, with decreases of 26 percentage points and 9 percentage points, respectively. Users should note that this data is not adjusted for potential effects of inflation on the value of transactions. Our accompanying dataset: Revolut spending on debit cards is available.

According to data from OpenTable, the number of UK seated diners increased by 3 percentage points in the week to 20 November 2022, to 116% of the level in the equivalent pre-coronavirus week of 2019. In London the number increased by 7 percentage points but was 10 percentage points lower than the equivalent week of 2019 (90%).

UK Spending on debit and credit cards

Daily CHAPS-based indicator

These data series are experimental real-time 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 through physical and 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, these are:

- "staples", which refers to companies that sell essential goods that households need to purchase, such as food and utilities

- "work-related", which refers to companies providing public transport or selling petrol

- "delayable", which refers to companies selling goods whose purchase could be delayed, such as clothing or furnishings

- "social", which refers to spending on travel and eating out

Figure 1: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 2 percentage points in the week to 17 November 2022 to 105% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 17 November 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices

Figure 1: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 2 percentage points in the week to 17 November 2022 to 105% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 17 November 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices
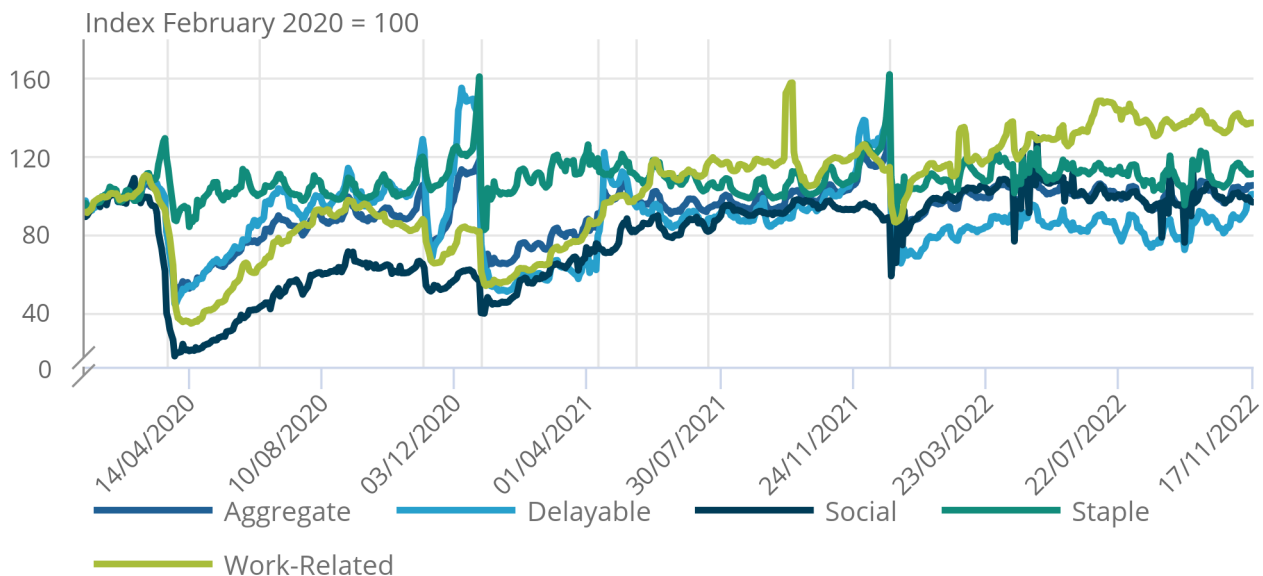
Source: Office for National Statistics and Bank of England calculations

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 a slight time lag when compared with real-life events on the chart.

2. The vertical lines indicate notable events and coronavirus (COVID-19) restriction changes.

3. Percentage point difference is derived from current week and previous week index before rounding.

Figure 1 shows changes in the value of CHAPS payments received by large UK corporates from their credit and debit card processors, "merchant acquirers".

The spending categories recorded the following changes in the latest week:

- "delayable" increased by 10 percentage points

- "work-related" was unchanged

- "staple" decreased by 1 percentage point

- "social" decreased by 2 percentage points

"Work-related" and "staple" spending were above their February 2020 average levels at 137%, and 111%, respectively. "Delayable" spending was unchanged when compared with its February 2020 average level. Social spending remained below its February 2020 average level at 96%.

National retail footfall

National retail footfall figures are supplied by Springboard, a provider of data on customer activity. The breakdowns in this indicator are as follows:

- overall footfall, which is the sum of the average footfall in each destination type weighted by their respective footfall volumes

- shopping centre, which is a space that does not form part of the public highway, and is owned and managed by a single landlord

- high street, which is the central part of the main business and commercial area of a town

- retail parks and shopping parks, which comprise of retail warehouse units, wholly owned and managed by a single landlord

Springboard's weekly data are defined over a seven-day period running from Monday to Sunday. Week 46 of 2022 refers to the period Monday 14 November to Sunday 20 November 2022. All quoted figures have been rounded to the nearest integer.

Figure 2: In the week to 20 November 2022, overall weekly retail footfall was 89% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

Volume of daily retail footfall, percentage compared with the equivalent week of 2019, 1 January 2020 to 20 November 2022, UK

Download the data

.xlsx

According to Springboard, in the week to 20 November 2022, the volume of overall weekly retail footfall for:

- the overall springboard index was 100% of the previous week and 89% of the equivalent week of 2019

- retail parks were 101% of the previous week and 96% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

- high streets were 99% of the previous week and 89% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

- shopping centres were 102% of the previous week and 82% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

In the week to 20 November 2022, 5 of the 12 UK countries and English regions saw increases in week-on-week retail footfall, another five saw decreases, and two were unchanged. The largest week-on-week increase in retail footfall was in Wales, reporting 105% of the level in the previous week; the largest decreases were in Yorkshire and The Humber, and the North East of England, which were both at 95% of the level in the previous week.

4 . Business and workforce

The number of employers proposing redundancies in the week to 13 November 2022 was 143% of the level in the equivalent week of 2021, while the number of potential redundancies reported was 144% of last year's equivalent level. Our [accompanying dataset: Advanced notification of potential redundancies](#) is available.

Online job adverts

These figures are experimental estimates of online job adverts provided by Adzuna, an online job search engine, by category and 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 3: The total number of online job adverts rose by 3% on 18 November 2022 but was 14% down on the equivalent period of 2021; this is an increase from the previous week being 17% below the equivalent week of 2021

Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 4 January 2019 to 18 November 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, UK

Notes:

1. Further category breakdowns are included in the [Online job advert estimates dataset](#) and more details on the methodology can be found in our [Using Adzuna data to derive an indicator of weekly vacancies: Experimental Statistics methodology](#).

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

[.xlsx](#)

On 18 November 2022, the total number of online job adverts had increased by 3% from the previous week, with increases in 20 of the 28 categories. The largest week-on-week increase was in the "part-time and weekend" category, which rose by 27% but was in line with expected seasonal trends, followed by "education", which rose by 21%. The category recording the largest weekly decrease was "charity and voluntary" (7%). The total number of online job adverts decreased by 14% when compared with the equivalent week of 2021; this is an increase from the previous week being 17% below the equivalent week of 2021.

In the latest week, all 12 UK countries and English regions saw increases in the number of online job adverts. Our [accompanying dataset: Online job advert estimates](#) is available.

Business impact and insights

Initial results from Wave 70 of the [Business Insights and Conditions Survey](#) (BICS) were collected from 14 November to 22 November 2022, with a response rate of 24.1% (9,416 responses).

Table 1: 13% of UK businesses that had not permanently stopped trading reported experiencing global supply chain disruption in October 2022

Businesses experiencing supply chain disruption, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, August to October 2022

	August 2022	**September 2022**	**October 2022**
Yes	11.7%	13.4%	12.7%
No	41.8%	40.1%	38.1%
Not sure	10.4%	10.3%	11.5%
Not applicable	36.1%	36.3%	37.7%

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)

Notes

1. Initial weighted results Wave 70 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

2. Table may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.

Table 2: Of those businesses that had not permanently stopped trading and needed materials, goods or services from the EU, two-thirds (66%) were able to obtain them in October 2022

Business ability to obtain materials, goods or services, businesses not permanently stopped trading that needed materials, goods or services from the EU and/or UK, weighted by count, UK, 1 October to 31 October 2022

	Yes, the business was able to get the materials, goods or services it needed	**Yes, but the business had to change suppliers or find alternative solutions**	**No, the business was not able to get the materials, goods or services needed**
Materials, goods or services from the EU	66.4%	22.4%	11.2%
Materials, goods or services from within the UK	71.2%	20.4%	8.4%

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)

Notes

1. Initial weighted results Wave 70 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

2. Table may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.

3. For presentational purposes, businesses that responded "Not Applicable" have been removed from these percentage calculations.

5 . Transport

UK flight data

These data are daily flight figures from the [European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL)](#). Daily flight numbers for the UK alongside other countries are available in [EUROCONTROL's dashboard](#). EUROCONTROL is a pan-European, civil-military organisation dedicated to supporting European aviation. Its Aviation Intelligence and Performance Review Unit provides independent collection and validation of air navigation services' performance-related data and intelligence gathering.

The flights data include international arrivals and departures to and from the UK (including Crown dependencies) and domestic UK flights but exclude overflights (flights that pass over UK territory). They capture all flight movements that operate under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), where the pilot uses instruments in the flight deck to control, guide and adjust the plane. This includes commercial flights carrying passengers and cargo as well as non-commercial flights such as private and military flights.

Data from EUROCONTROL do not include information on the number of passengers or volume of cargo carried on UK flights. For various reasons, flights may not be operating at full capacity, and therefore trends in passengers and cargo may differ from trends in flights presented here.

Figure 4: In the week to 20 November 2022, the seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 85% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019, and has remained broadly around this level since April 2022

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 20 November 2022, UK

Figure 4: In the week to 20 November 2022, the seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 85% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019, and has remained broadly around this level since April 2022

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 20 November 2022, UK
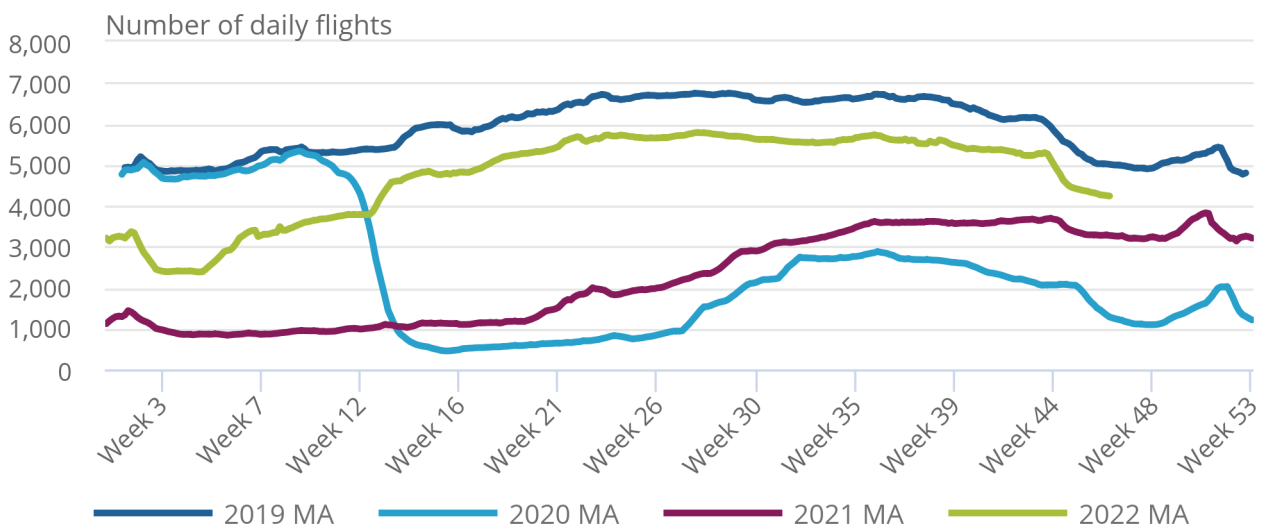
Source: European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL)

The full data time series available for UK flights can be found in [our accompanying dataset: Daily UK flights](#), which contains daily flight numbers and the rolling seven-day averages.

6 . Data

This section lists a selection of the data available with this publication. For the full list of available datasets please see the [accompanying dataset page](#).

7 . Glossary

Real-time indicator

A real-time 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.

8 . Measuring the data

Information on the methodology used to produce the indicators in this bulletin is available in the [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#).

9 . Strengths and limitations

These statistics have been produced to provide timely indicators of the effect of developing world events on the UK economy and society, using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys or Experimental Statistics.

The data presented in this bulletin are reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis. Indicators are swapped in and out of the publication based on their suitability and availability.

UK coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions

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

Seasonality

Seasonal fluctuations are likely to be present in many of these indicators so caution must be applied when interpreting changes in series that are not seasonally adjusted.

10 . Related links

Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain
Bulletin | Released fortnightly
Social insights on daily life and events, including the cost of living, location of work, health and well-being from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

Business insights and impact on the UK economy
Bulletin | Released fortnightly
The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses. Based on responses from the voluntary business survey (BICS) to deliver real-time information to help assess issues affecting UK businesses and economy, including financial performance, workforce, trade and business resilience.

11 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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