Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 21 December 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

21 December 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

Users should note that some of these indicators will have been affected by adverse weather conditions and industrial action observed in the latest period.

- In the week to 15 December 2022, the provisional aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases was broadly unchanged from the previous week and increased by 6 points compared with the same week in 2021; "work-related" spending, which includes spending on road fuel, increased by 16 points compared with the same week in 2021 (Bank of England CHAPS data).

- Overall retail footfall decreased in the week to 18 December 2022, falling to 94% of the level seen in the previous week and 77% of the level reported in 2019, with footfall in high streets experiencing the largest week-on-week decrease at 88% of the level of the previous week (Springboard).

- The number of in-store transactions at Pret A Manger decreased at most location categories in the week to 15 December 2022 compared with the previous week, with the largest decrease being a 32 percentage point fall in regional station stores, followed by London station and London city worker stores both decreasing by 27 percentage points (Pret A Manger).

- The total number of online job adverts fell by 5% on 16 December 2022 compared with the previous week and was 16% lower than the level seen in the equivalent period of 2021; adverts have been trending downwards throughout most of this year since reaching a high in mid-February (Adzuna).

- In the week to 11 December 2022, traffic camera activity for cars in London decreased by 2% from the previous week to 113% of its pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) level; pedestrian and cyclist activity in London fell by 11% compared with the previous week and was 103% of its pre-coronavirus level (Transport for London).

- In the week to 18 December 2022, the number of UK seated diners decreased by 10 percentage points from the previous week but was 113% of the level seen in the equivalent period of the previous year and 101% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019 (data from OpenTable).

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 they are representative and relevant, which may mean indicators change at short notice.

2 . Latest indicators at a glance

Notes:

1. 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.

2. Data for the CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases are provisional from 5 December 2022 onward.

Download the data

.xlsx

3 . Data

Automotive fuel spending
Dataset | Released 21 December 2022
Estimated quantity of automotive fuel demand per average transaction is an experimental indicator used to isolate real demand after adjusting for growth in fuel prices.

Online job advert estimates
Dataset | Released 21 December 2022
Experimental job advert indices covering the UK job market.

Traffic camera activity
Dataset | Released 21 December 2022
Busyness indices using traffic camera data to monitor flows of cars, pedestrians, cyclists, buses and commercial vehicles for selected cities and regions of the UK. Experimental Statistics.

Transactions at Pret a Manger
Dataset | Released 21 December 2022
Weekly transactional data from approximately 400 Pret A Manger stores around the UK.

UK spending on credit and debit cards
Dataset | Released 21 December 2022
These data series are experimental real-time indicators for monitoring UK spending using debit and credit cards. They track the daily CHAPS payments made by credit and debit card payment processors to around 100 major UK retail corporates, based on data supplied by the Bank of England.

This section lists a selection of the data available within this publication. For the full list of available datasets, please see the accompanying dataset page.

4 . 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.

5 . 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.

6 . 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.

7 . Related links

Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain
Bulletin | Released fortnightly
Social insights on daily life and events, including the cost of living, working arrangements 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 fortnightly 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.

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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