

Statistical bulletin

# Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 11 May 2023

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.

Contact:  
Tom Williams  
realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk  
+44 1633 455932

Release date:  
11 May 2023

Next release:  
18 May 2023

## Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Latest indicators at a glance](#)
3. [Data](#)
4. [Glossary](#)
5. [Measuring the data](#)
6. [Strengths and limitations](#)
7. [Related links](#)
8. [Cite this statistical bulletin](#)

# 1 . Main points

- The total number of online job adverts fell by 1% on 5 May 2023 compared with the previous week and was 18% lower than the equivalent period of 2022, with 11 of the 12 UK countries and English regions and 24 of the 28 job categories showing a decrease in the number of online job adverts compared with a year ago (Adzuna).
- The number of daily ship visits increased by 5% in the week to 7 May 2023 rising from 218 to 228 visits, while they were 26% lower compared with the equivalent period in 2022 (309 visits); cargo and tanker ships fell by 7% in the week to 7 May 2023 and were 18% lower compared with the equivalent period in 2022 (exactEarth).
- Consumer behaviour indicators have shown mixed levels of activity in the latest week, with aggregate debit and credit card purchases increasing by 11 percentage points (Bank of England CHAPS data), while retail footfall fell to 98% of the level of activity seen in the previous week (Springboard); both were at a higher level when compared with the equivalent period in 2022.
- In the week to 7 May 2023, the System Average Price (SAP) of gas fell by 8% when compared with the previous week, and was 25% lower than the equivalent period last year and 82% lower than the peak seen in August 2022; the SAP of gas remains 257% higher than the pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) baseline of February 2020 (National Gas Transmission).

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. The gaps in the shipping timeline data are caused by technical issues.

## 3 . Data

### [Automotive fuel spending](#)

Dataset | Released 11 May 2023

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.

### [Company incorporations, voluntary dissolutions and compulsory dissolutions](#)

Dataset | Released 11 May 2023

The number of Companies House incorporations and voluntary dissolutions accepted, and companies placed into compulsory dissolution: weekly dataset.

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

Dataset | Released 11 May 2023

Experimental job advert indices covering the UK job market.

### [System Average Price \(SAP\) of gas](#)

Dataset | Released 11 May 2023

Daily and rolling average System Average Price (SAP) of gas traded in Great Britain over the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM).

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

Dataset | Released 11 May 2023

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.

### [Weekly shipping indicators](#)

Dataset | Released 11 May 2023

Experimental weekly and daily ship visits dataset covering UK ports.

This section lists a selection of the data available in this publication. For the full list of available datasets, please see our [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 our [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, well-being and shortages of goods 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.

### [Cost of living latest insights](#)

Interactive tool | Released weekly

The latest data and trends about the cost of living. Explore changes in the cost of everyday items and how this is affecting people.

## 8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 11 May 2023, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 11 May 2023](#)