

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 29 February 2024

Early data on the UK economy and society. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and innovative methods. These are official statistics in development.

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1 . Main points

- In the latest week, aggregate UK spending on credit and debit cards fell by 3% and retail footfall decreased to 92% of the level seen in the previous week; this reduced activity coincides with comparing with the school half-term period in the previous week for most of the UK (Bank of England CHAPS, Springboard). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The total number of online job adverts decreased by 1% when compared with the previous week and was 14% below the level seen in the equivalent period of 2023 (Adzuna). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- The number of potential redundancies fell by 23% compared with the equivalent period in 2023, while the number of employers proposing redundancies increased by 18% (HR1). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas and the System Price of electricity decreased by 6% and 3%, respectively, in the week to 25 February 2024 when compared with the previous week (National Gas Transmission, Elexon). [Section 5: Energy](#).
- Transport indicators showed reduced activity in the latest week; the average number of daily ship visits decreased by 4%, the daily average number of UK flights decreased by 2% and the average pedestrian and cyclist levels in London decreased by 1% (exactEarth, EUROCONTROL, Transport for London). [Section 6: Transport](#).

We would like your feedback on this release. [Please complete this survey to have your say on the future of this release](#).

These are [official statistics in development](#), and we advise caution when using the data. The 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. Read more in [Section 9: Measuring the data](#).

2 . Latest indicators at a glance

Notes

1. Card spending over time is pushed upwards by the impacts of both inflation on value of transactions and cash-to-card conversion.
2. Revolut adjustments to user count are at an aggregate level and as such age bands may not adjust evenly.
3. Indicators with SA in the title have been seasonally adjusted.

3 . Consumer behaviour

UK spending on debit and credit cards: weekly, seasonally adjusted CHAPS-based indicator

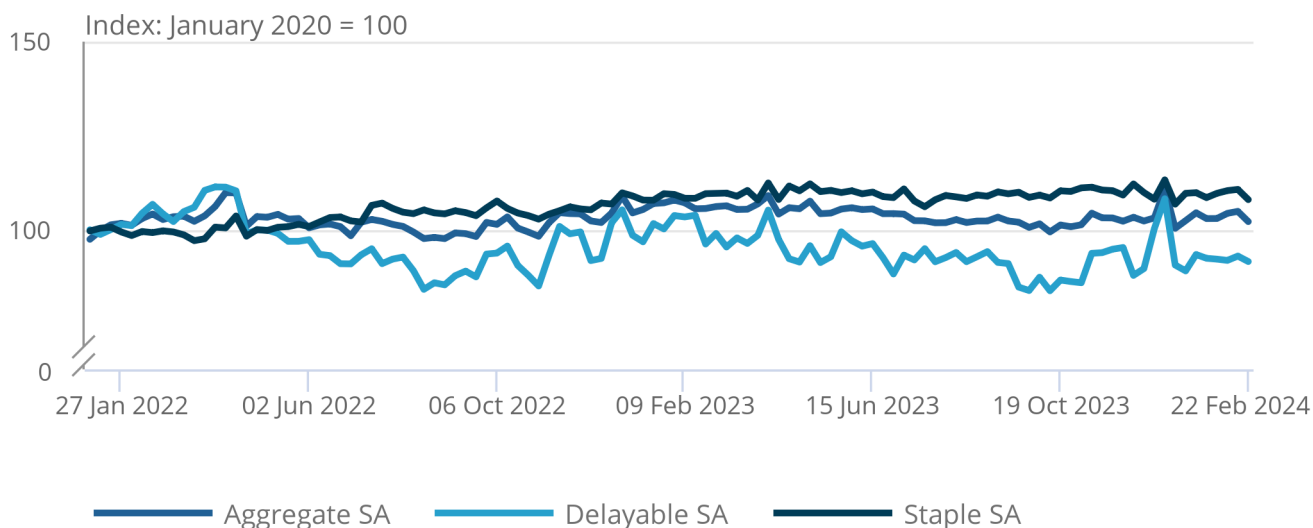
Users should note that the "work-related" and "social" CHAPS series have been withdrawn in 2024 because of sample population issues. We will continue publishing the aggregate, staple and delayable series while we are undertaking a review of the component series and will provide an update in due course. Please note that the "work-related" and "social" categories still contribute to the "aggregate" series.

Figure 1: The seasonally adjusted CHAPS aggregate index of credit and debit spending decreased by 3% in the week to 22 February 2024

Week ending 6 January 2022 to week ending 22 February 2024, UK, seasonally adjusted, nominal prices

Figure 1: The seasonally adjusted CHAPS aggregate index of credit and debit spending decreased by 3% in the week to 22 February 2024

Week ending 6 January 2022 to week ending 22 February 2024, UK, seasonally adjusted, nominal prices



Source: Calculations from the Office for National Statistics and Bank of England

Notes:

1. Users should note the weekly payment data are the sum of card transactions processed up to the previous working day, so there is a time lag when compared with real-life events on the chart.
2. Percentage difference is derived from the current and previous index value before rounding.

The spending categories, when seasonally adjusted, recorded the following changes in the latest week:

- "aggregate" decreased by 3%
- "delayable" decreased by 2%
- "staple" decreased by 2%

When compared with the same week in 2023, the spending categories, when seasonally adjusted, recorded the following changes:

- "aggregate" decreased by 3%
- "delayable" decreased by 5%
- "staple" decreased by 1%

The weekly and monthly seasonally adjusted CHAPS indices, and the daily and monthly non-seasonally adjusted CHAPS indices, are available in our accompanying [UK spending on credit and debit cards dataset](#).

Automotive fuel spending

The annual growth rate in estimated demand for fuel per transaction was 2% in the week to 18 February 2024. This is broadly unchanged from the previous week, however, this was 5 percentage points higher than the equivalent period of 2023.

In the same week, the annual growth rate in average fuel prices was at negative 7%. This is 1 percentage point higher than the previous week, but 11 percentage points lower than the equivalent week in 2023.

Our accompanying [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#) is available.

National retail footfall

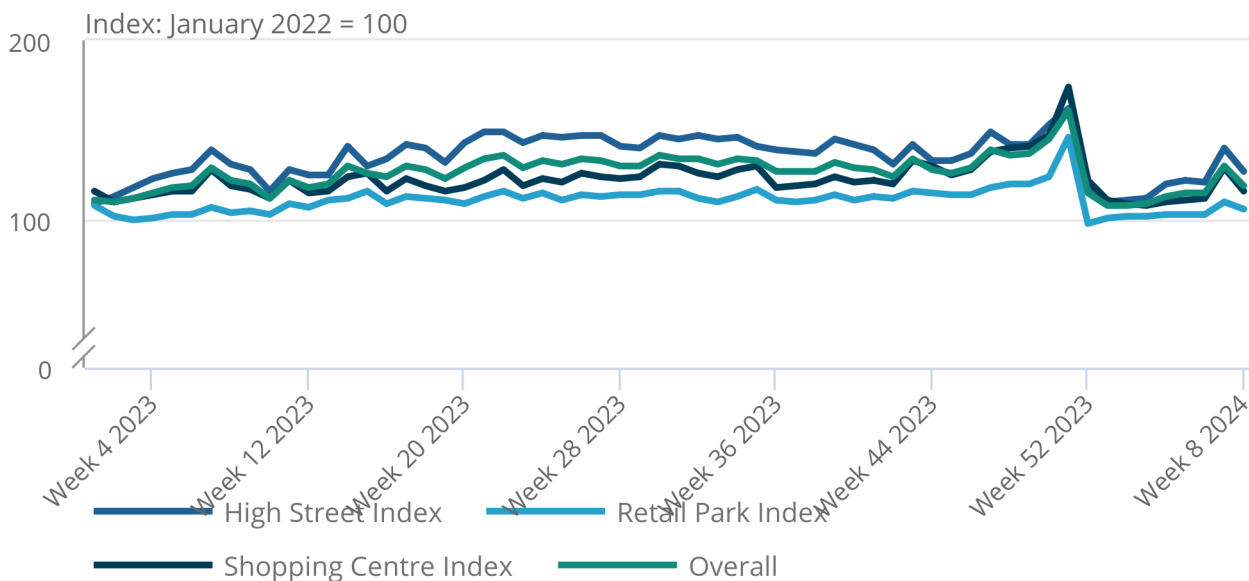
Springboard's weekly data are defined over a seven-day period running from Monday to Sunday. Week 8 of 2024 refers to the period 19 February 2024 to 25 February 2024. All quoted figures have been rounded to the nearest integer.

Figure 2: Overall retail footfall in the week to 25 February 2024 decreased to 92% of the level seen in the previous week and 97% of the level in the equivalent week of 2023

Volume of daily retail footfall, UK, 1 January 2023 to 25 February 2024 , non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 2: Overall retail footfall in the week to 25 February 2024 decreased to 92% of the level seen in the previous week and 97% of the level in the equivalent week of 2023

Volume of daily retail footfall, UK, 1 January 2023 to 25 February 2024 , non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Springboard

Notes:

1. The decrease seen in the final weeks of 2023 and early 2024 are in line with trends seen in previous years.

Overall retail footfall in the week to 25 February 2024 decreased to 92% of the level seen in the previous week and 97% of the level in the equivalent week of 2023. This week-on-week decrease follows the large increase in footfall experienced in the previous week that coincided with the school half term across much of the UK.

In the latest week, UK footfall decreased in all three location categories, with the largest falls seen in high street and shopping centre footfall, both decreasing to 90% of the level seen in the previous week. Meanwhile, retail park footfall decreased to 96% of the previous week. When compared against the equivalent week in 2023, the largest change was seen in high street footfall, which decreased to 95% of the same week in the previous year.

Overall retail footfall decreased in 10, increased in 1 and remained broadly unchanged in 1 of the 12 UK countries and regions when compared with the previous week. The largest changes occurred in Northern Ireland, Wales and the South West of England, where footfall decreased in all three locations to 87% of the level seen in the previous week. When comparing overall retail footfall to the same period of 2023, the largest change was seen in Wales, which decreased to 85% of the same week in the previous year.

4 . Business and workforce

Online job adverts

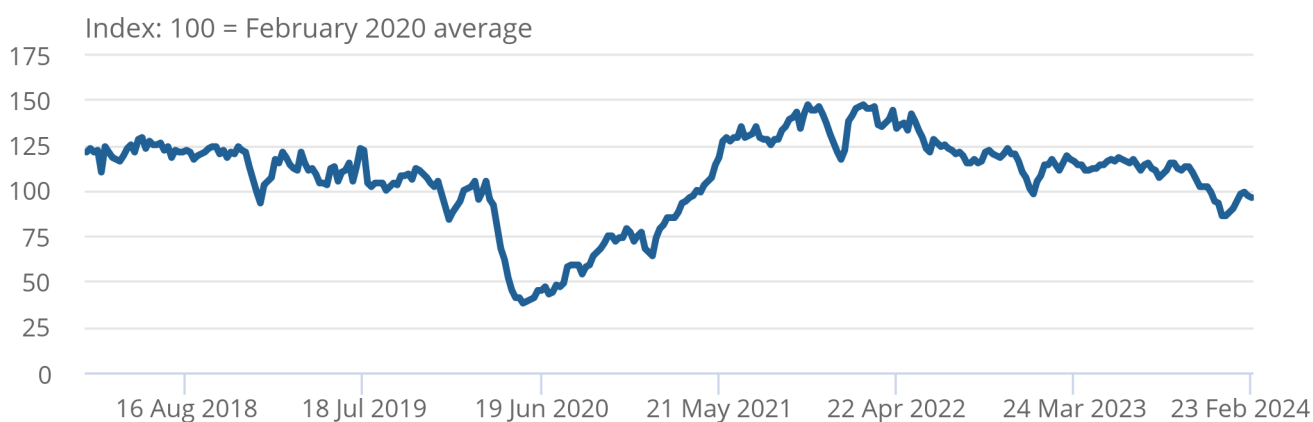
These figures are innovative estimates of online job adverts by category, UK country, and English region, provided by Adzuna, an online job search engine. The number of job adverts over time is an indicator of the demand for labour. The Adzuna categories used do not correspond to Standard Industrial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

Figure 3: The total number of online job adverts on 23 February 2024 was 14% below the level seen in the equivalent period of 2023

Volume of online job adverts, 7 February 2018 to 23 February 2024, non-seasonally adjusted, UK

Figure 3: The total number of online job adverts on 23 February 2024 was 14% below the level seen in the equivalent period of 2023

Volume of online job adverts, 7 February 2018 to 23 February 2024, non-seasonally adjusted, UK



Source: Adzuna

Notes:

1. Further category breakdowns are included in our [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 chart and our [Online job advert estimates dataset](#).

The number of online job adverts on 23 February 2024 decreased by 1% when compared with the previous week, decreasing in 4 of the 12 UK countries and English regions, increasing in 3, and remaining broadly unchanged in 5.

When compared with the equivalent period of 2023, the total number of online job adverts fell by 14%, with the largest decrease in Scotland, which fell by 27%, followed by London at 21%.

When compared with the equivalent period of 2023, the total number of online job adverts has fallen in 24 of the 28 job categories, remained broadly unchanged in 1 and increased in 3. The largest decreases were in the "Charity and volunteering" and "Domestic help" categories, falling by 47% and 45%, respectively.

Our accompanying [Online job advert estimates dataset](#) is available.

Advanced notification of potential redundancies

The number of potential redundancies in the week to 18 February 2024 was 23% below the level in the equivalent week in 2023, calculated as a four-week rolling average. However, the number of employers proposing redundancies was 18% above the level in the equivalent week of 2023.

Comparisons with the equivalent period a year ago help account for any seasonal impacts. For more information, our accompanying [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#) is available.

5 . Energy

System Average Price (SAP) of gas

The System Average Price (SAP) of gas decreased by 6% in the week to 25 February 2024 when compared with the previous week. This was 55% lower than the equivalent week of 2023.

Our accompanying [System Average Price of gas dataset](#) is available.

System Price of electricity

The System Price of electricity decreased by 3% in the week to 25 February 2024, when compared with the previous week. This was 54% lower than the equivalent week of 2023.

Our accompanying [System Price of electricity dataset](#) is available.

6 . Transport

Weekly shipping indicators

The average number of daily ship visits decreased by 4% in the week to 25 February 2024, when compared with the previous week. In the same period, the average number of daily cargo and tanker ship visits decreased by 1%.

When compared with the equivalent week in 2023, the average number of daily ship visits decreased by 2%, while the average number of daily visits from cargo and tanker ships decreased by 5%.

Our accompanying [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#) is available.

Daily UK flights

The daily average number of UK flights decreased by 2% in the week to 25 February 2024 when compared with the previous week. This is now 5% higher than the equivalent week of 2023.

Our accompanying [Daily UK flights dataset](#) is available.

Traffic camera activity

Average traffic camera activity for cars in London increased by 1% in the week to 25 February 2024. Meanwhile, average pedestrian and cyclist levels in London decreased by 1% in the same period.

Our accompanying [Traffic camera activity dataset](#) is available.

7 . Data

[Online job advert estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 29 February 2024

Weekly snapshot of online job advert indices covering the UK job market. These are official statistics in development. Source: Adzuna

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

Dataset | Released 29 February 2024

Daily, weekly and monthly data showing seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted UK spending using debit and credit cards. These are official statistics in development. Source: CHAPS, Bank of England

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

Dataset | Released 29 February 2024

Daily data showing System Average Price (SAP) of gas, and rolling seven-day average, traded in Great Britain over the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM). These are official statistics in development. Source: National Gas Transmission

[System Price of electricity](#)

Dataset | Released 29 February 2024

Daily data showing the System Price of electricity, and rolling seven-day average, in Great Britain. These are official statistics in development. Source: Elexon

[Daily UK flights](#)

Dataset | Released 29 February 2024

Daily data showing UK flight numbers and rolling seven-day average, including flights to, from, and within the UK. These are official statistics in development. Source: EUROCONTROL

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](#).

8 . 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 estimates, which represent useful economic and social concepts.

9 . Measuring the data

Official statistics in development

These statistics are labelled as "official statistics in development". Until September 2023, these were called "experimental statistics". Read more about the change in our [Guide to official statistics in development](#).

We are developing how we collect and produce the data to improve the quality of these statistics. Read more in our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology article](#).

Once the developments are complete, we will review the statistics with the Statistics Head of Profession. We will decide whether the statistics are of sufficient quality and value to be published as official statistics, or whether further development is needed. Production may be stopped if they are not of sufficient quality or value. Users will be informed of the outcome and any changes.

We value your feedback on these statistics. Contact us at realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk.

10 . 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 official statistics in development.

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.

11 . 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. These are official statistics in development.

12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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