

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 12 December 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

- Overall retail footfall decreased by 6% in the week to 8 December 2024 when compared with the previous week, falling across high streets, shopping centres and retail parks by 7%, 4% and 3%, respectively; this is possibly because of the adverse weather from Storm Darragh (MRI OnLocation). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- Total Revolut debit card spending increased by 10% in the week to 8 December 2024, when compared with the equivalent week of 2023 (Revolut). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% in November 2024 compared with the previous month and was 7% higher than in November 2023 (Vocalink and Pay.UK). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- Initial findings from our latest Business Insights and Conditions Survey shows that the three main challenges affecting turnover among trading businesses during November 2024 were: economic uncertainty (26%), competition (17%) and cost of materials (17%) (initial results from Wave 122 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey).
- In our latest Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), most people reported that their cost of living had increased (56%) or stayed the same (42%) during November 2024, when compared with the previous month, with only 2% reporting a decrease (initial findings for November 2024 from our OPN, which will be published on 20 December 2024).
- When asked about ways in which their cost of living had increased over the past month, around 9 in 10 (92%) reported increases in the price of their food shop and around 7 in 10 (72%) reported increases in gas or electricity bills (initial findings for November 2024 from our OPN, which will be published on 20 December 2024).
- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas was broadly unchanged at 4.014 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) in the week to 8 December 2024 when compared with the previous week; over the same period, the System Price of electricity decreased by 14% to 8.799 p/kWh, when compared with the previous week (National Gas Transmission, Elexon). [Section 5: energy](#).
- The number of ship visits to major UK ports decreased by 11% in the week to 8 December 2024 when compared with the previous week and decreased by 17% when compared with the equivalent week of 2023, potentially because of Storm Darragh; the number of UK flights was broadly unchanged in the most recent week but decreased by 1% against the equivalent week of 2023 (exactEarth, EUROCONTROL). [Section 6: Transport](#).

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 10: data sources and quality](#).

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

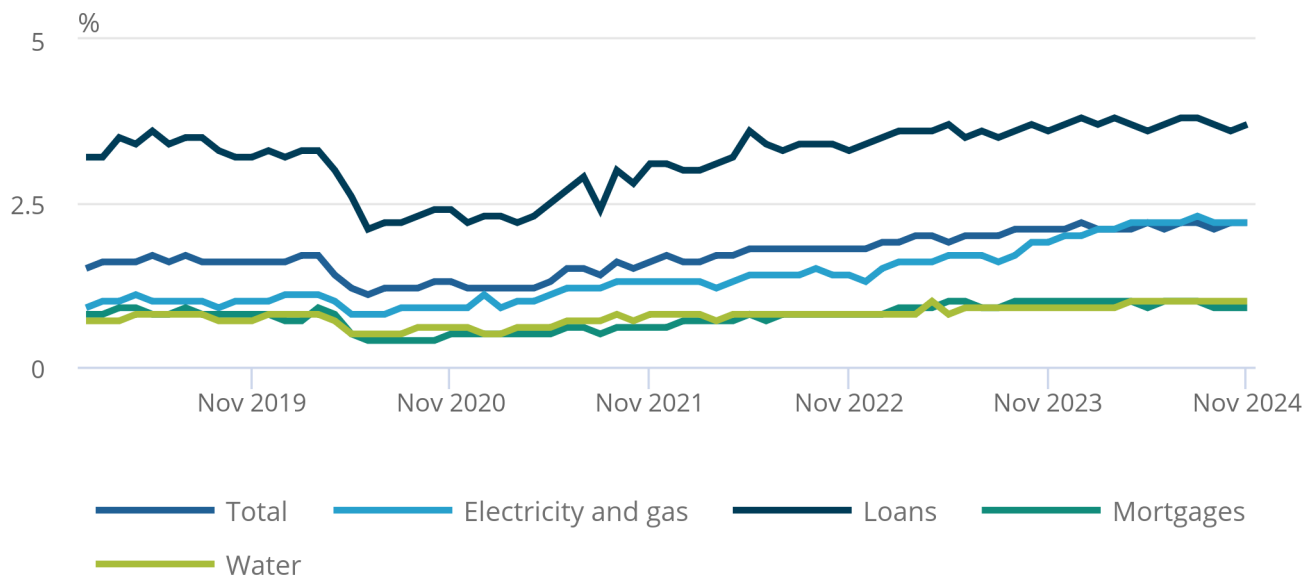
Monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount and failure rate

Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% in November 2024, compared with October 2024, and increased by 7%, compared with November 2023

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to November 2024, seasonally adjusted

Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% in November 2024, compared with October 2024, and increased by 7%, compared with November 2023

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to November 2024, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit failure, including data beyond the five categories published in our [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#).
3. The underlying failure rates are low, so month-to-month volatility is expected within this series.

In November 2024, the seasonally adjusted "Total" Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% when compared with October 2024. This rise was a result of a 2% increase in failure rates for "Electricity and Gas", "Loans", and "Water".

When compared with November 2023, the seasonally adjusted "Total" Direct Debit failure rate rose by 7%. Year-on-year, the failure rate for "Electricity and Gas" and "Water" increased by 16% and 13%, respectively. Meanwhile, the failure rate for "Mortgages" saw a decrease of 5%.

The "Total" average Direct Debit transaction amount remained broadly unchanged in November 2024, after seasonal adjustment, when compared with October 2024. This was primarily the result of "Electricity and Gas" and "Water" remaining broadly unchanged.

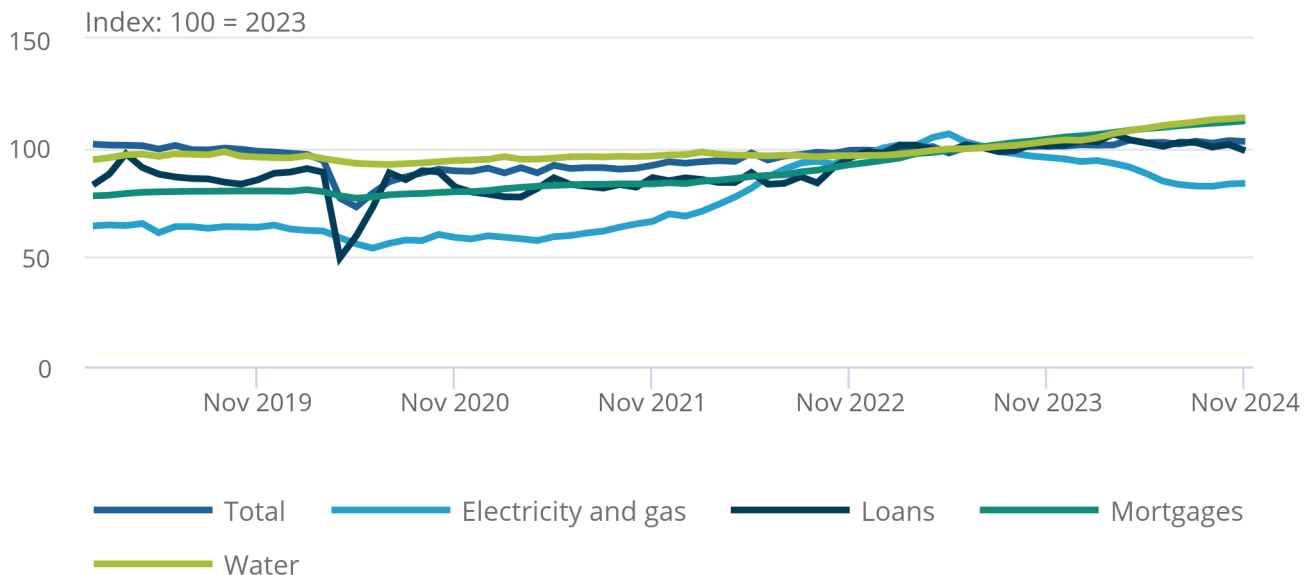
When compared with October 2023, the seasonally adjusted "Total" average Direct Debit transaction amount increased by 2%. Year-on-year, the transaction amount for "Water" and "Mortgages" saw increases of 11% and 8%, respectively, while "Electricity and Gas" and "Loans" saw decreases of 12% and 2%, respectively.

Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction remained broadly unchanged when compared with October 2024 but increased by 2% when compared with November 2023

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2019 to November 2024, seasonally adjusted

Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction remained broadly unchanged when compared with October 2024 but increased by 2% when compared with November 2023

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2019 to November 2024, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit transactions, including data beyond the five categories published in our [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#).
3. Data are not adjusted for inflation.

The monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount are anonymised and aggregated datasets made available to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) by Pay.UK and Vocalink. The data are unadjusted for inflation and reflect economic activity in nominal terms.

For further details on what is covered within this indicator, see our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#).

Our accompanying [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#) is available.

Revolut spending on debit cards

Total Revolut debit card spending increased by 10% in the week to 8 December 2024 when compared with the equivalent week of 2023. Increases were seen across all age groups, with the largest being in the 55 years and over age group, at 15%.

Our accompanying [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset](#) is available.

National retail footfall

High street, shopping centre and retail footfall decreased in the week to 8 December 2024 by 7%, 4%, and 3%, respectively when compared with the previous week. When compared with the equivalent week of 2023, high street and shopping centre footfall decreased by 3% and 2%, respectively, while retail park footfall increased by 2%.

When compared with the previous week, overall retail footfall decreased in 10 of the 12 UK countries and English regions. The largest week-on-week decreases were in Wales, the West Midlands and East Midlands where retail footfall decreased by 11%, 8% and 8%, respectively. However, Scotland remained broadly unchanged while Yorkshire and The Humber increased by 1% when compared with the previous week.

The decreases in footfall seen in the latest week may be because of the adverse weather conditions across the UK from Storm Darragh.

Automotive fuel spending

The annual growth rate in average fuel price increased by 2 percentage points in the week to 1 December 2024, compared with the previous week, and was 2 percentage points higher than the equivalent week of 2023.

The annual growth rate in the estimated fuel demand per transaction decreased by 4% in the week to 1 December 2024 when compared with both the previous week and the equivalent week of 2023.

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

4 . Business and workforce

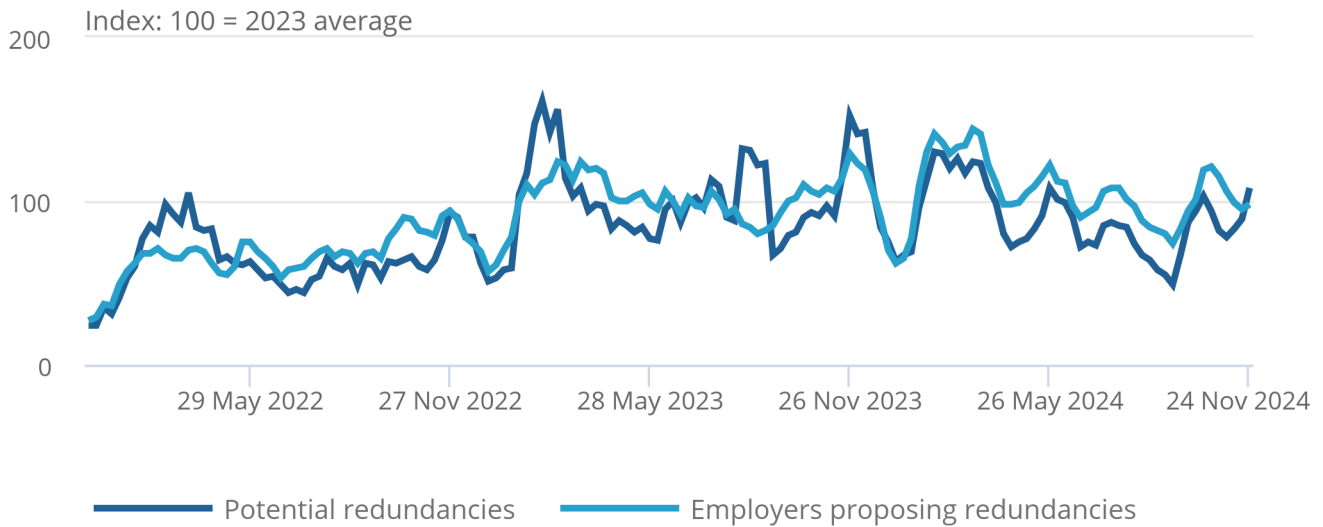
Advanced notification of potential redundancies

Figure 3: The number of potential redundancies decreased by 29% in the four weeks to 24 November 2024, compared with the same period of 2023

Number of potential redundancies and employers proposing redundancies, four-week rolling average, UK, 2 January 2022 to 24 November 2024, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 3: The number of potential redundancies decreased by 29% in the four weeks to 24 November 2024, compared with the same period of 2023

Number of potential redundancies and employers proposing redundancies, four-week rolling average, UK, 2 January 2022 to 24 November 2024, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: HR1 forms from the Insolvency Service

The number of potential redundancies in the four weeks to 24 November 2024 was 29% lower than the equivalent period of 2023 and the number of employers proposing redundancies was 24% lower.

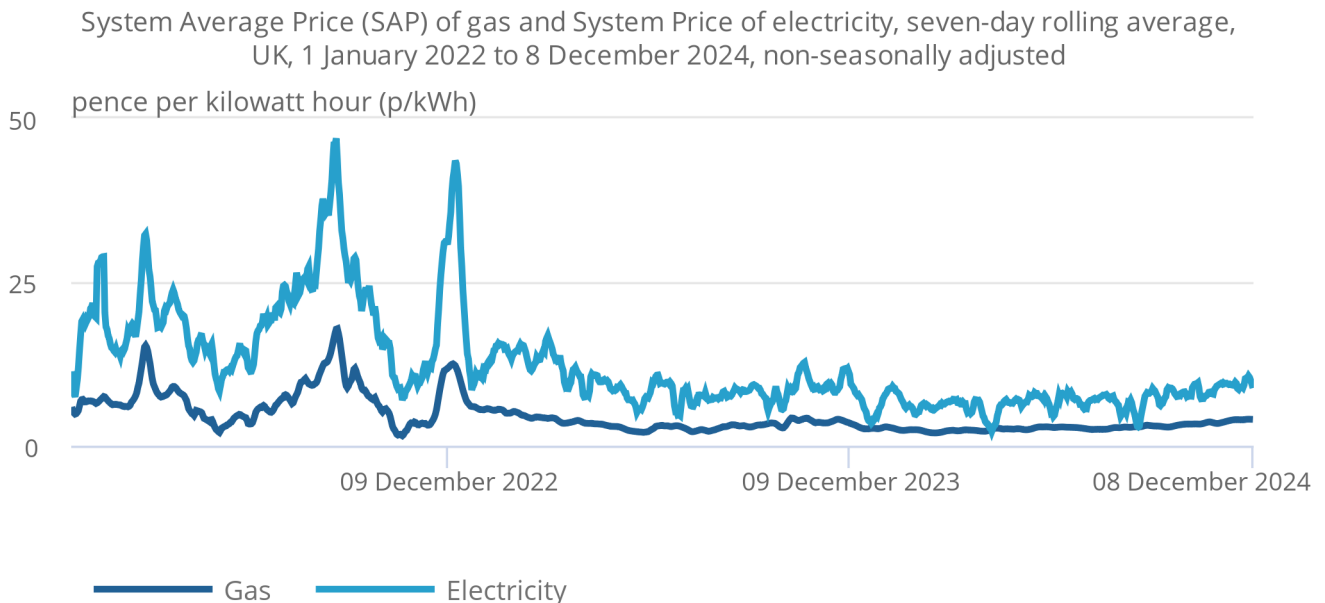
Comparisons with the equivalent period a year ago help account for any seasonal impacts. For more information, our accompanying [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#) is available.

5 . Energy

Figure 4: The System Average Price of gas was broadly unchanged in the week to 8 December 2024, compared with the previous week, while the System Price of electricity decreased by 14%

System Average Price (SAP) of gas and System Price of electricity, seven-day rolling average, UK, 1 January 2022 to 8 December 2024, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 4: The System Average Price of gas was broadly unchanged in the week to 8 December 2024, compared with the previous week, while the System Price of electricity decreased by 14%



Source: Elexon and National Gas Transmission

Gas and electricity prices

In the week to 8 December 2024, the System Average Price (SAP) of gas was broadly unchanged when compared with the previous week, at 4.014 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh). However, it increased by 21% when compared with the equivalent week of 2023, which had a seven-day average price of 3.309 p/kWh.

The System Price of electricity decreased by 14% in the week to 8 December 2024 compared with the previous week, from a seven-day average price of 10.252 p/kWh to 8.799 p/kWh. This was 4% lower than the equivalent week of 2023, which had a seven-day average price of 9.211 p/kWh.

Our accompanying [System Average Price of gas dataset](#) and [System Price of electricity dataset](#) are available.

6 . Transport

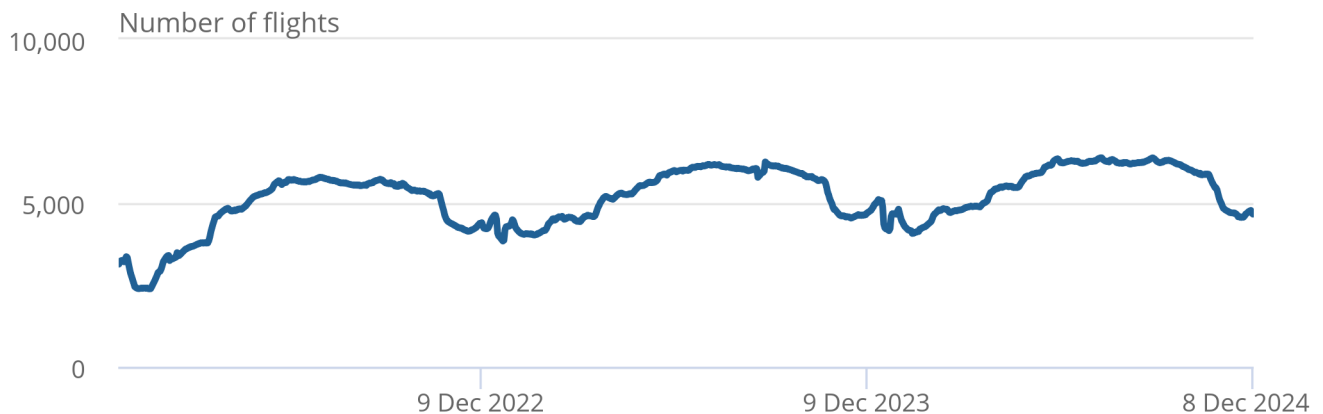
Daily UK flights

Figure 5: The number of flights were broadly unchanged in the week to 8 December 2024, compared with the previous week

Number of flights, seven-day rolling average, UK, 1 January 2022 to 8 December 2024, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 5: The number of flights were broadly unchanged in the week to 8 December 2024, compared with the previous week

Number of flights, seven-day rolling average, UK, 1 January 2022 to 8 December 2024, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: EUROCONTROL

In the week to 8 December 2024, the daily average number of UK flights was broadly unchanged when compared with the previous week but decreased by 1% compared with the equivalent week of 2023. Flight numbers decreased by 13% on Saturday 7 December, coinciding with widespread disruption caused by Storm Darragh.

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

Weekly shipping indicators

The weekly count of total ships visiting selected UK ports decreased by 11% in the week to 8 December 2024 when compared with the previous week. For this period, the weekly count of cargo and tanker ship visits decreased by 17%.

When compared with the same week of 2023, the total number of ship visits decreased by 17%, while visits from cargo and tanker ships decreased by 19%.

Again, decreases in ship visits may have been caused by the recent adverse weather conditions seen across the UK.

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

7 . Housing

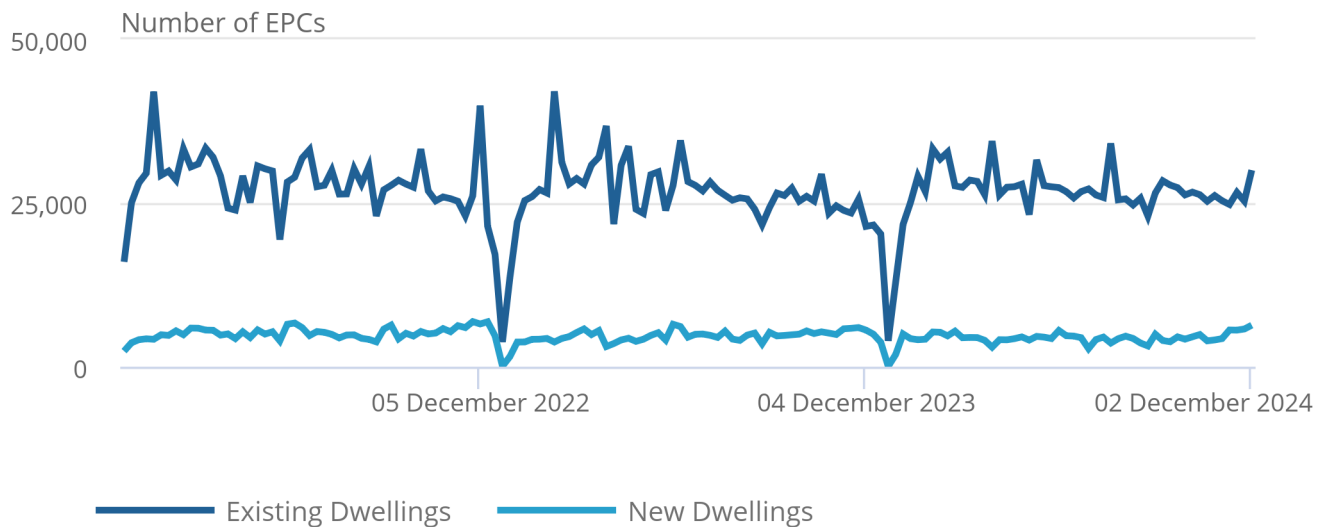
Energy Performance Building Certificates

Figure 6: The number of Energy Performance Building Certificates increased by 13% for new dwellings and 40% for existing dwellings, compared with the same period of 2023

Number of Energy Performance Building Certificate (EPC) lodgements, 3 January 2022 to 2 December 2024, England and Wales, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 6: The number of Energy Performance Building Certificates increased by 13% for new dwellings and 40% for existing dwellings, compared with the same period of 2023

Number of Energy Performance Building Certificate (EPC) lodgements, 3 January 2022 to 2 December 2024, England and Wales, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The total number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) in the week to 8 December 2024 increased by 10% when compared with the previous week for new dwellings across England and Wales. It was also 19% higher for existing dwellings.

The largest week-on-week increases in EPCs for new dwellings were in London and the West Midlands, which rose by 94% and 60%, respectively. The largest decreases were in the East and the North West of England, which fell by 12% and 8%, respectively.

For EPCs in existing dwellings, the East of England was the only contributor to week-on-week growth, with an increase of 251%. Meanwhile the remaining regions experienced flat or negative growth, with the largest decreases being in the North East, South East, and South West of England, which fell by 22%, 16%, and 16%, respectively.

When compared with the equivalent period of 2023, the total number of EPCs for new dwellings was 13% higher, while the number of EPCs for existing dwellings was 40% higher.

A weekly ["EPCs for domestic properties" dataset](#) produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is available.

8 . Data

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

Dataset | Released 12 December 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 12 December 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 12 December 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 data available in this publication. Please note that because of our data sharing agreement with MRI onLocation, we are unable to provide a dataset for our footfall metric. For the full list of available datasets, please see our [accompanying dataset page](#).

9 . 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.

Seasonal adjustment

Seasonal adjustment is the identification and removal of consistent and systematic variation in time series associated with the time of year. For more information on seasonal variation, and how we implement seasonal adjustment, see Section 2 of our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology article](#).

10 . Data sources and quality

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. Find out 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 if the statistics are of sufficient quality and value to be published as official statistics, or if 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. If you would like to get in touch, please email realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk.

Dataset release dates and intended release frequency

Latest release dates and intended release frequency of our associated datasets are available in this section. Please note that there may be some change to the intended release frequency for a variety of reasons, such as data availability. If you would like further information about any of these datasets, or previous release dates, please email realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk.

Weekly data release

- [UK credit and debit card payments](#); last updated on 5 December 2024.
- [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.
- [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.
- [Company incorporations, voluntary dissolutions and compulsory dissolutions dataset](#); last updated on 5 December 2024.
- [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.
- [System Average Price of gas dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.
- [System Price of electricity dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.
- [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.
- [Daily UK flights dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.

Monthly data release

- [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.
- [Value Added Tax \(VAT\) flash estimates dataset](#); last updated on 17 October 2024.
- [Renter affordability for new tenancies dataset](#); last updated on 12 December 2024.

Quarterly data release

- [Sales and jobs in small businesses dataset](#); last updated on 7 November 2024.

Discontinued data series

- [Transactions at Pret A Manger dataset](#); last updated on 31 October 2024 with a fortnightly data release; please note these estimates are no longer being updated because of cessation of our data sharing agreement.
- [Online job advert estimates dataset](#); last updated on 24 October 2024 with a weekly data release; please note these estimates are no longer being updated and alternative data from [Textkernel](#) with regional and occupational breakdowns will be provided in early 2025.

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.

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

[Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#)

Methodology | Last updated 2 April 2024

Methodology for the data collection, aggregation, analysis and presentation for the real-time indicators bulletin.

[GDP monthly estimate, UK](#)

Bulletin | Released monthly

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK. It estimates the size of and growth in the economy.

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain](#)

Bulletin | Released monthly

Social insights on daily life and events, including important issues, cost of living and artificial intelligence 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, including financial performance, workforce, trade and business resilience.

12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 12 December 2024, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 12 December 2024](#)