

Statistical bulletin

# Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 19 February 2026

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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Next release:  
26 February 2026

## Notice

### 19 February 2026

From 26 March 2026, our weekly publication will be replaced by a new dashboard, changing the way we publish our real time indicators. Our full monthly publication will not be affected by this change.

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# 1 . Main points

In the UK in January 2026:

- Consumer activity slowed, compared with December 2025; total retail footfall decreased and seasonally adjusted total consumer spending remained broadly unchanged (BT Active Intelligence, Revolut). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 1%, compared with December 2025, but increased by 9%, compared with January 2025 (Vocalink and Pay.UK). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The number of potential redundancies increased by 29% compared with December 2025 and increased by 22% compared with January 2025; the January 2026 increase largely reflected a reversal of the previous month's trend (Insolvency Service HR1 forms). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- Wholesale gas and electricity prices increased compared with December 2025, coinciding with a colder than average start to the year, and supply constraints (National Gas Transmission, Elexon). [Section 5: Energy](#).
- The seasonally adjusted number of UK flights decreased by 2% compared with December 2025 and decreased by 1% when compared with January 2025 (EUROCONTROL). [Section 6: Transport](#).
- The seasonally adjusted number of new vehicle registrations decreased by 2% compared with December 2025 (The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)). [Section 6: Transport](#).
- The seasonally adjusted number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) lodged in England and Wales for new dwellings decreased by 4%, compared with the previous month, but increased by 4% when compared with January 2025 (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government). [Section 7: Housing](#).

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. Indicators with "SA" in the title have been seasonally adjusted. Indicators with "NSA" in the title have not been seasonally adjusted but do present seasonality. All other indicators do not present seasonality.

## 3 . Consumer behaviour

January 2026 saw a slowdown in consumer activity, with retail footfall falling compared with both the previous month and when compared with the same month of the previous year. Consumer spending remained flat month-on-month but was higher than a year ago (unadjusted for inflation).

## UK retail footfall

UK retail footfall decreased by 11% in January 2026, compared with December 2025, in line with seasonal expectations but was also 4% lower than January 2025.

Footfall decreased in all three site types, compared with December 2025; town and city centres decreased by 18% off a very strong December figure, retail parks decreased by 11% and local centres by 5%.

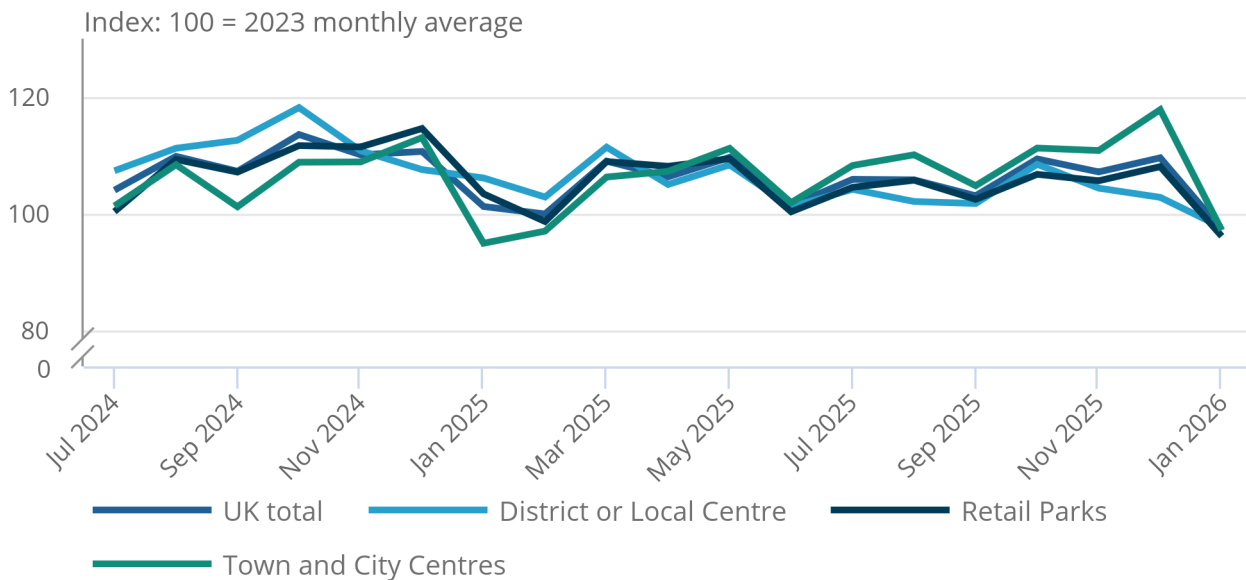
When compared with January 2025, footfall decreased in district or local centres (8%) and retail parks (7%) but increased in town and city centres (2%).

### Figure 1: UK retail footfall decreased by 4% in January 2026 compared with January 2025

Index of monthly retail footfall volumes, UK, July 2024 to January 2026, non-seasonally adjusted

## Figure 1: UK retail footfall decreased by 4% in January 2026 compared with January 2025

Index of monthly retail footfall volumes, UK, July 2024 to January 2026, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: BT Active Intelligence

#### Notes:

1. BT Active Intelligence retail footfall data are an estimate of UK retail footfall. The data exclude those who work and live in retail areas and only count visitors to these locations.
2. The data are available from July 2024 onwards. This back series is not long enough to perform seasonal adjustment of the data, so caution is advised when assessing seasonal impacts.

Retail footfall decreased in each of the 12 regions (including UK countries and English regions) in January 2026, compared with December 2025. The largest decreases were in Northern Ireland (21%) and Scotland (16%).

When compared with January 2025, retail footfall decreased in all but one region. The largest decreases over this period were in Wales (10%) and Northern Ireland (9%). The only increase over this period was in London (1%).

## Figure 2: Retail footfall decreased in all but one UK region in January 2026 when compared with January 2025

Change in retail footfall by region, UK, January 2026, non-seasonally adjusted

### Notes:

1. Details of the methods used to compile these data are available in the [BT Active Intelligence methodology](#).
2. Data are available in further detail, broken down by region and site type, in our accompanying [UK retail footfall dataset](#).

## Revolut spending on debit cards

Seasonally adjusted Revolut debit card spending was broadly unchanged in January 2026 compared with December 2025. Decreases were seen across all spend categories except “Services” and “Travel”, which increased by 6% and 2% respectively, and “Utilities”, which remained unchanged. The largest decrease over this period was in “Shopping”, which fell by 3%.

When compared with January 2025, seasonally adjusted Revolut debit card spending increased by 13%. All spend categories saw increases, with the largest being in “Services” and “Entertainment”, which increased by 23% and 22%, respectively.

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

## Monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount and failure rate

The seasonally adjusted total Direct Debit average transaction amount remained broadly unchanged in January 2026, compared with December 2025. The average transaction amounts for "Loans" and "Water" increased by 4% and 2%, respectively. The only decrease month-on-month was for "Electricity and gas", which fell by 1%.

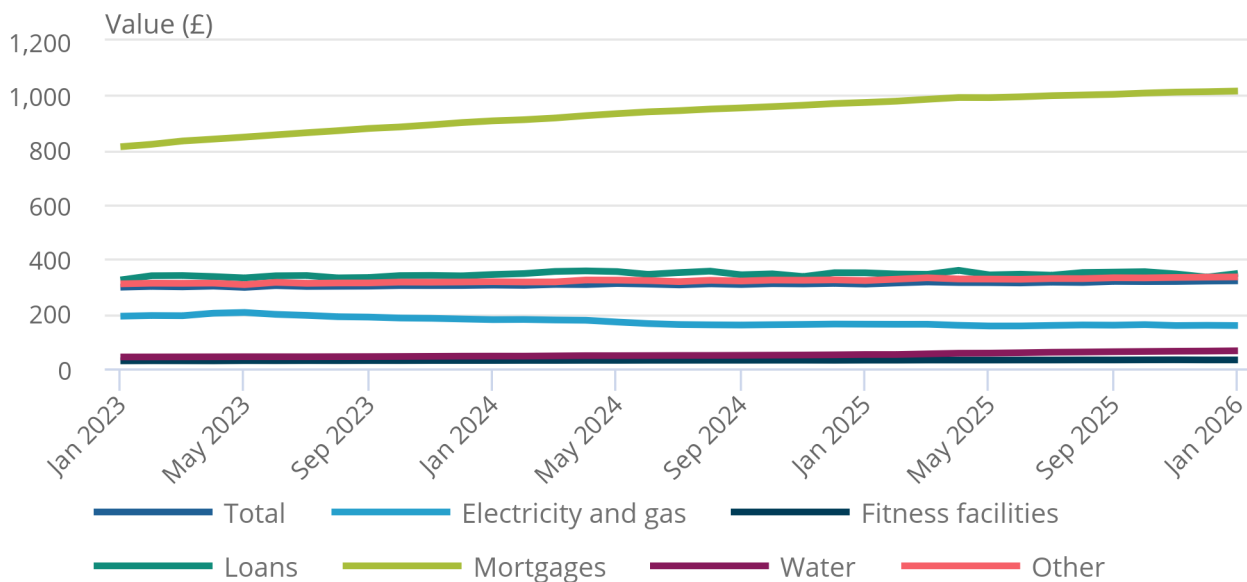
The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit average transaction amount increased by 4% when compared with January 2025. "Water" remained the category with the largest year-on-year increase, rising by 27% from January 2025. "Electricity and gas" and "Loans" decreased by 3% and 1%, respectively, over the same period.

**Figure 3: The Direct Debit average transaction amount for January 2026 remained broadly unchanged from December 2025**

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, seasonally adjusted

Figure 3: The Direct Debit average transaction amount for January 2026 remained broadly unchanged from December 2025

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. Data are not adjusted for inflation.

The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 1% in January 2026, compared with December 2025. "Fitness facilities" and "Mortgages" saw the largest decreases of 7% and 6%, respectively. Failure rates over this period increased only in "Electricity and gas", by 5%.

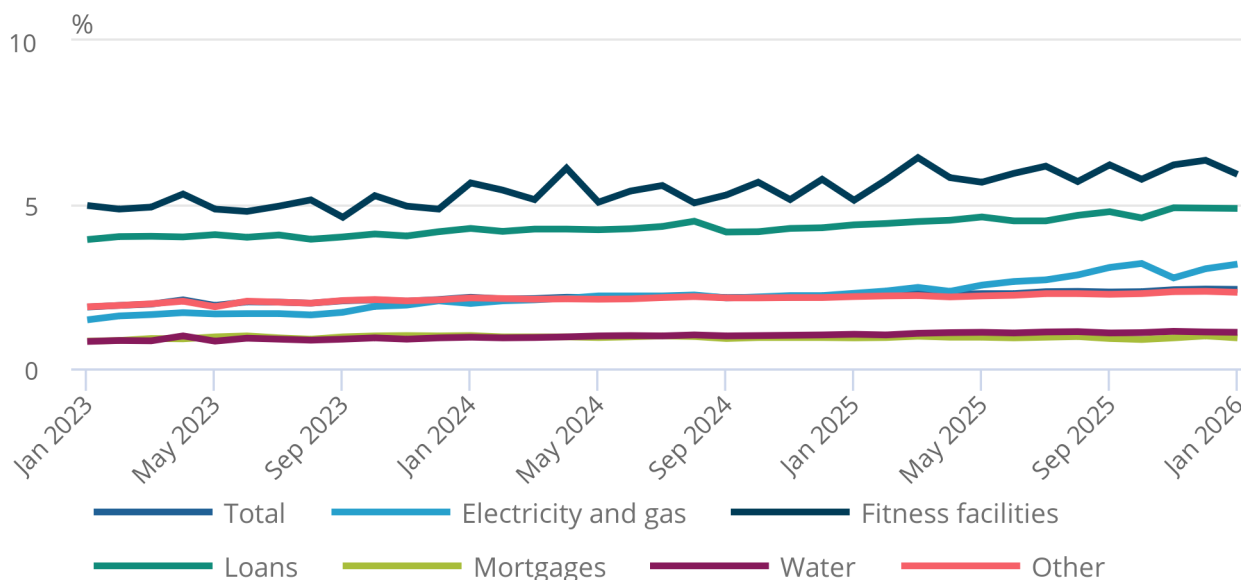
The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit failure rate increased by 9% in January 2026 when compared with January 2025. Year-on-year increases were seen across all major categories: "Electricity and gas" (39%), "Fitness facilities" (16%), "Loans" (12%), "Water" (6%), "Other" (6%) and "Mortgages" (1%).

**Figure 4: The Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 1% in January 2026 compared with December 2025**

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, seasonally adjusted

## Figure 4: The Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 1% in January 2026 compared with December 2025

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

**Notes:**

1. The underlying failure rates are low, so month-to-month volatility is expected within this series.
2. Weak evidence is found for seasonality within the Fitness Facilities failure rate series, so while the seasonally adjusted data are presented, they should be used with caution, and the raw non-seasonally adjusted series should be used where applicable.

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.

## Automotive Fuel Spending

The annual growth rate for the average price of automotive fuel decreased by 2 percentage points in January 2026, compared with the previous month. When compared with the same month of the previous year, annual growth rate for the average fuel price increased by 1 percentage point.

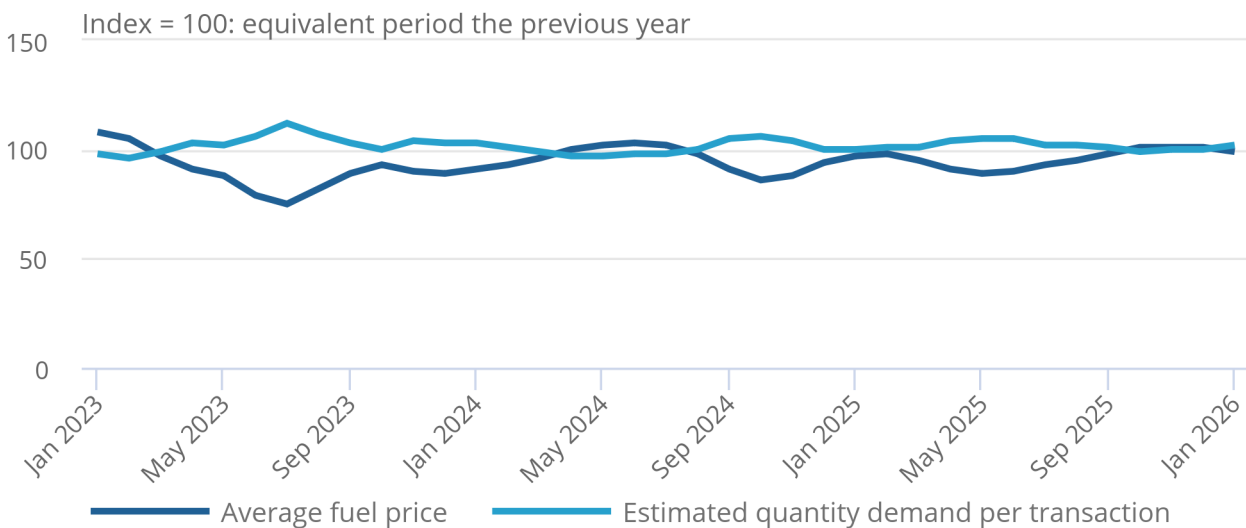
The growth rate for the average fuel demand per transaction increased by 2 percentage points in January 2026 when compared with both the previous month, and the equivalent month of 2025.

### Figure 5: The annual growth rate for average automotive fuel demand per transaction increased by 2 percentage points in January 2026 compared with the previous month

Index of year-on-year change in fuel price and estimated quantity demand, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, non-seasonally adjusted

### Figure 5: The annual growth rate for average automotive fuel demand per transaction increased by 2 percentage points in January 2026 compared with the previous month

Index of year-on-year change in fuel price and estimated quantity demand, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Aggregated anonymised card spending data from the Office for National Statistics, and Road fuel price, road fuel sales and stock levels from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

## 4 . Business and workforce

## Advanced notification of potential redundancies

The number of potential redundancies increased by 29% in January 2026 compared with the previous month. Over the same period, the number of employers proposing redundancies rose by 67%. These increases largely reflect a reversal of the previous month's trend, as corporate activity (including insolvency and redundancy planning) typically slows in December each year, which is in line with seasonal expectations.

The largest increase in potential redundancies was reported in the "Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants" industry, which rose by 272% in January 2026 compared with December 2025. The "Banking and Finance" industry also recorded a substantial increase, up 101% over the same period. These two industries accounted for 30% and 25%, respectively, of all potential redundancies reported in January 2026.

In contrast, the number of potential redundancies in the "Construction" and "Manufacturing" industries fell in January 2026 compared with December 2025, by 55% and 29%, respectively. This follows increases in both industries in the previous month.

Compared with January 2025, potential redundancies increased by 22%, while the number of employers proposing redundancies rose by 5%.

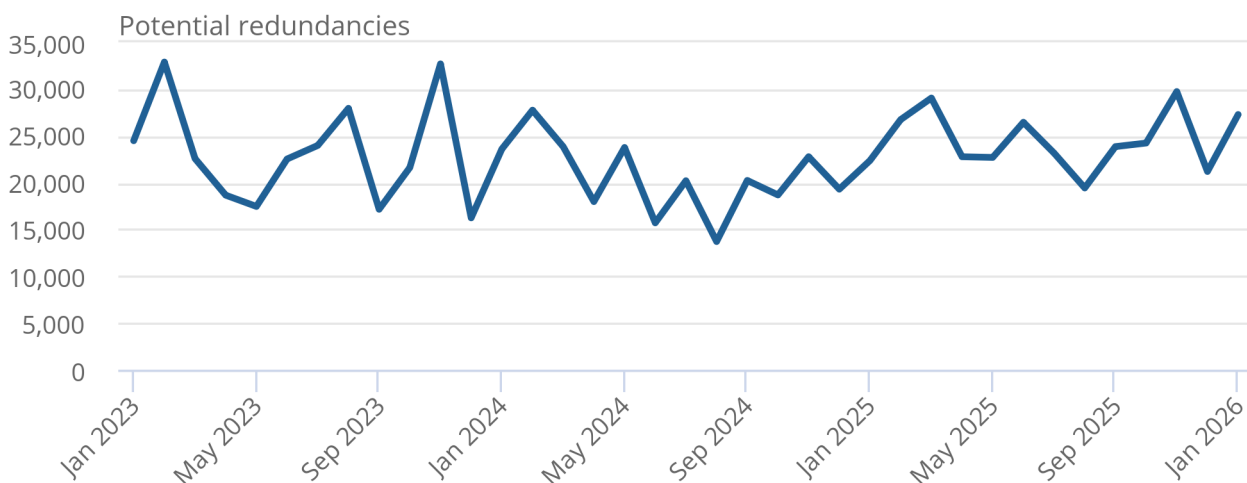
Year-on-year, the largest percentage increase in potential redundancies was recorded in the "Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants" industry (67%), followed by "Banking and Finance" (37%) and "Energy and Water" (30%). Three industries reported lower levels of potential redundancies in January 2026 compared with the same month a year earlier: "Transport and Communication" (down 17%), "Other Services" (down 14%), and "Manufacturing" (down 9%).

**Figure 6: The number of potential redundancies increased by 29% in January 2026 compared with December 2025, and increased by 22% when compared with January 2025**

Monthly potential redundancies, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 6: The number of potential redundancies increased by 29% in January 2026 compared with December 2025, and increased by 22% when compared with January 2025

Monthly potential redundancies, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Insolvency Service HR1 forms

For more information, our accompanying [Advanced notification of potential redundancies weekly dataset](#) is available. Industry and regional breakdowns by month are available in our [monthly potential redundancies dataset](#)

## 5 . Energy

Wholesale gas and electricity prices increased in January 2026 compared with December 2025, coinciding with higher demand during a colder-than-average start to the year, and supply constraints.

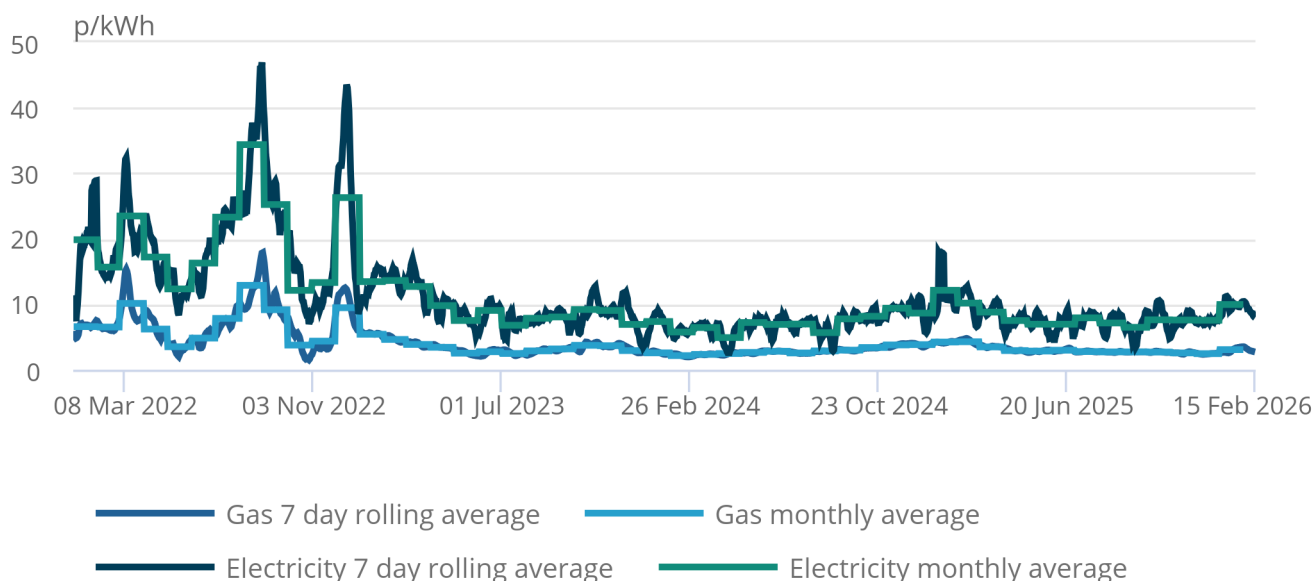
## System Average Price of gas and System Price of electricity

**Figure 7: The System Average Price of gas increased by 25% in January 2026, while the System Price of electricity increased by 32%, compared with December 2025**

System Average Price (SAP) of gas and System Price of electricity, monthly average and seven-day rolling average, UK, 1 January 2022 to 15 February 2026, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 7: The System Average Price of gas increased by 25% in January 2026, while the System Price of electricity increased by 32%, compared with December 2025

System Average Price (SAP) of gas and System Price of electricity, monthly average and seven-day rolling average, UK, 1 January 2022 to 15 February 2026, non-seasonally adjusted



**Source: Elxon, National Gas Transmission**

The System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 25% in January 2026, compared with December 2025, from 2.449 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) to 3.064p/kWh but decreased by 27% when compared with January 2025, which had a monthly SAP of 4.222p/kWh.

The System Price of electricity increased by 32% in January 2026, compared with December 2025, from an average price of 7.548p/kWh to 9.952p/kWh. The price decreased by 18% when compared with January 2025, which had a monthly price of 12.127p/kWh.

The increase in wholesale gas and electricity prices in January 2026 coincided with high demand for gas to heat homes in low temperatures at the start of the year, and supply pressures. More information is available in [Weather and Climate summaries - Met Office](#).

Changes in the System Average Price (SAP) of gas and the System Price of electricity are considered by the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) when setting the energy price caps for the next three months. Large changes in these prices can indicate that the future price cap set by Ofgem will change.

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

## 6 . Transport

## New vehicle registrations

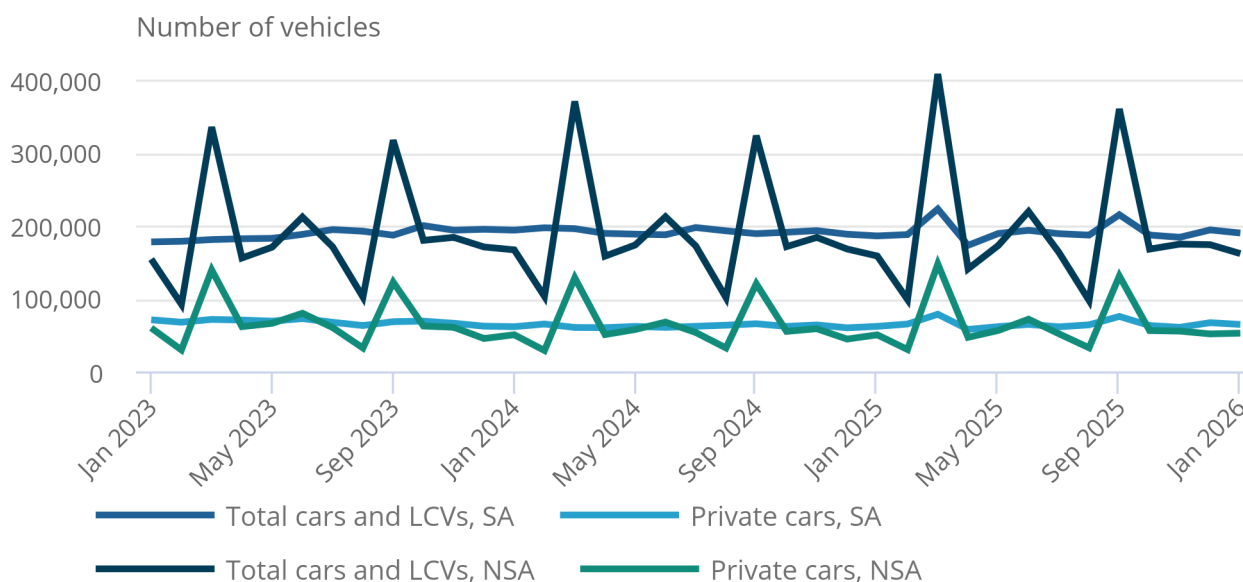
The seasonally adjusted number of new vehicle registrations decreased by 2% in January 2026 compared with December 2025. The largest decrease in new registrations over this period was in light commercial vehicles (LCVs), which fell by 13%, followed by private cars (4%). Registrations of business cars, in contrast, increased by 10%.

**Figure 8: The seasonally adjusted number of new vehicle registrations decreased by 2% in January 2026 compared with December 2025**

Number of new car and Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) registrations, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 8: The seasonally adjusted number of new vehicle registrations decreased by 2% in January 2026 compared with December 2025

Number of new car and Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) registrations, UK, January 2023 to January 2026, seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted



Source: The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), seasonally adjusted by the Office for National Statistics

The seasonally adjusted number of new registrations for battery electric cars saw the largest decrease in January 2026, falling by 4% from December 2025, followed by hybrid electric cars, which decreased by 2% over the same period. New registrations of plug-in hybrid electric cars, in contrast, increased by 5%.

The seasonally adjusted proportion of new car registrations that were electric (Battery Electric, conventional Hybrid, Plug in Hybrid) remained broadly unchanged at 49% in January 2026 compared with December 2025, but increased by 3 percentage points compared with January 2025.

Our accompanying [SMMT vehicle production and registrations dataset](#) is available.

## UK flights

The seasonally adjusted number of UK flights decreased by 2% in January 2026 compared with December 2025 and was 1% lower than January 2025.

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

## 7 . Housing

### Energy Performance Building Certificates

The seasonally adjusted number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) lodged in England and Wales for new dwellings decreased by 4% in January 2026, compared with the previous month. When compared with January 2025, they increased by 4%.

The seasonally adjusted number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) lodged in England and Wales for existing dwellings increased by 2% in January 2026, compared with the previous month, but decreased by 2% when compared with January 2025.

Our accompanying [Energy Performance Building Certificates \(EPC\) dataset](#) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's [WeeklyEPCs for domestic properties dataset](#) are available.

## 8 . Data

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

Dataset | Released 19 February 2026

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 19 February 2026

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 19 February 2026

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. 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](mailto: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](mailto:realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk).

## Weekly data release

- [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.
- [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.
- [UK retail footfall dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.
- [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#); updated 12 February 2026.
- [System Average Price of gas dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.
- [System Price of electricity dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.
- [Energy Performance Building Certificates \(EPC\) dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.
- [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#); updated 4 December 2025.
- [Daily UK flights dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.

## Monthly data release

- [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#); updated 12 February 2026.
- [Textkernel new online job adverts dataset](#); updated 18 December 2025.
- [Value Added Tax \(VAT\) flash estimates dataset](#); updated 15 January 2025.
- [Renter affordability for new tenancies dataset](#); updated 15 January 2025.
- [SMMT vehicle registration and production dataset](#); updated 19 February 2026.

## 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. We use 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 revised 6 November 2025

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

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

Article | Released 25 June 2025

Methodology for the seasonal adjustment of real-time indicators.

### [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.

### [Labour demand volumes by Standard Occupation Classification \(SOC 2020\), UK](#)

Dataset | Released quarterly

These tables contain the number of online job adverts, split by local authority and occupation (SOC 2020).

## 12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 19 February 2026, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 19 February 2026](#).