

Statistical bulletin

# Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 12 March 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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19 March 2026

## Notice

### 12 March 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. If you would like any further information, or to contribute feedback on our dashboard, please contact [realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk](mailto:realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk).

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# 1 . Main points

- Consumer behaviour slowed in the week to 8 March 2026, with UK retail footfall decreasing by 1% and Total Revolut debit card spending falling by 2%; UK retail footfall fell by 5% when compared with the equivalent week of 2025, while debit card spending increased by 13% over the same period (BT Active Intelligence, Revolut).
- The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit failure rate increased by 1% in February 2026 to 2.44%, compared with January 2026 (2.41%), and increased by 9% when compared with February 2025 (2.25%); similarly, average transaction amounts increased by 1% and 3%, respectively, over the same period, to a total average amount of £323.11 (Vocalink).
- Around a quarter (25%) of trading businesses reported that their turnover had decreased in February 2026, compared with the previous month, down 6 percentage points compared with January 2026; 50% reported that their turnover had stayed the same, 16% said it had increased, and 9% were unsure (initial results from Wave 152 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey).
- More than half of adults (56%) reported that their cost of living had increased compared with one month ago; 93% reported that the price of their food shop had increased and 69% reported that their gas or electricity bills had increased (initial findings for February 2026 from our Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, publishing on 20 March 2026).
- Wholesale energy prices have increased in response to recent events in the Middle East, with the System Average Price (SAP) of gas increasing by 68% from 2.669 p/kWh to 4.477 p/kWh in the week to 8 March 2026, compared with the previous week; the System Price of electricity increased by 74% from 6.430 p/kWh to 11.170 p/kWh over the same period (National Gas Transmission, Elexon).
- The seasonally adjusted number of UK flights increased by 5% in the week to 8 March 2026, compared with the previous week, but was broadly unchanged when compared with the equivalent week of 2025 (EUROCONTROL).
- The number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) lodged for new dwellings in England and Wales increased by 7% in the week to 8 March 2026, compared with the previous week, but was broadly unchanged when compared with the equivalent week of 2025 (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government).

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 5: 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. Existing EPC data can show sudden spikes when housing associations lodge multiple expired EPCs at once.

## 3 . Data

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

Dataset | Released 12 March 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 12 March 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 12 March 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](#).

## 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 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](#).

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

### Monthly data release

- [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#); updated 12 March 2026.
- [Textkernel new online job adverts dataset](#); updated 18 December 2025.
- [Value Added Tax \(VAT\) flash estimates dataset](#); updated 26 February 2026.
- [Renter affordability for new tenancies dataset](#); updated 12 March 2026.
- [SMMT vehicle registration and production dataset](#); updated 12 March 2026.

Please note, that Textkernel new online job advert dataset has been temporarily paused. This is because of data availability and additional quality assurance processes.

### 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.

## 6 . 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).

## 7 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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