Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 11 August 2022

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.

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Next release:
18 August 2022

Notice

11 August 2022

Vehicle flows around ports for May and June 2022 are included in the datasets accompanying this release. After this publication, we intend to pause the production of these data for the foreseeable future. If this causes any concerns, or if you have any questions regarding this, please contact us at realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk

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1 . Main points

- Consumer behaviour indicators showed mixed activity in the latest week with week-on-week increases in UK credit and debit card purchases (up by 4 percentage points) and "park" visits (up by 4%), while UK seated diners fell by 5 percentage points (Bank of England CHAPS data, Google Mobility, OpenTable). Section 3.

- The total volume of online job adverts on 5 August 2022 was broadly unchanged from the previous week but was 5% down on the level in the equivalent day of 2021; the largest weekly decrease was seen in the "legal" category, falling by 15%, while "wholesale and retail" online job adverts increased by 19% (Adzuna). Section 4.

- Approximately 5% of businesses with 250 or more employees offered a one-off cost of living payment to their employees in the last three months; this compares with 1% of businesses with fewer than 250 employees offering a payment (final results from Wave 62 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)).

- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas decreased by 6% in the week to 7 August 2022, falling to 61% of the peak level seen on 10 March 2022 (National Grid).

- Transport indicators this week were largely stable with overall road traffic and UK daily flights broadly unchanged from the previous week (Department for Transport, EUROCONTROL). Section 5.

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 representativity and relevance which may mean indicators change at short notice.

2 . Latest indicators at a glance

Notes:

1. Shipping data for 25 July to 7 August 2022 have been removed because of technical issues.

2. Revolut adjustments to user count are at an aggregate level and as such, age bands may not adjust evenly.

3. 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.

3 . Consumer behaviour

UK seated diners decreased by 5 percentage points in the week to 7 August 2022 and were 126% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019. Seated diner levels in London were broadly unchanged, at 96% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019.

Google Mobility data showed that in the week to 5 August 2022, "parks" and "transit station" visits increased by 4% and 2%, respectively. Visits to all other locations were broadly unchanged from the previous week. Our accompanying dataset is available.

Transactions at Pret A Manger stores were mixed in the week to 4 August 2022. There were increases in Scotland and Manchester of 4 percentage points and falls of 2 percentage points in Yorkshire and London Suburban stores. Our accompanying dataset is available.

Revolut debit card transaction data showed spending in all sectors rose in the week to 7 August 2022, apart from "retail" spending. "Retail" spending fell by 6 percentage points but remains 16 percentage points higher than at the same time last year. The largest weekly increase was in "food and drink" spending, which rose by 4 percentage points and was 24 percentage points above the level at the same time last year. Our accompanying dataset is available.

In the week to 4 August 2022, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 4 percentage points. This was driven by increases in all spending categories apart from "work-related", which was broadly unchanged. The largest weekly increase was in the "delayable" spending category, which rose by 6 percentage points. Our accompanying dataset is available.

4 . Business and workforce

The total volume of online job adverts on 5 August 2022 remained broadly similar compared with the previous week but was 5% lower than the level in the equivalent day of 2021. Results across categories and regions varied with the largest weekly decreases in the "legal" and "creative, design, arts and media" categories, falling 15% and 14%, respectively. Meanwhile, the largest weekly rises were in "wholesale and retail" (19%) and "catering and hospitality" (7%) online job adverts. At the regional level, online job adverts in London saw the largest week-on-week fall of all UK countries and regions, at 3%. Scotland had the largest weekly increase at 8%. Our accompanying dataset is available.

Company incorporations increased 13% from the previous week, in the week to 5 August 2022. Over the same period, voluntary dissolution applications fell by 9%. Our accompanying dataset is available.

Potential redundancies in the week to 31 July 2022 were 58% of their pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) level, while the number of employers proposing redundancies are now 77% of their pre-coronavirus levels. Our accompanying dataset is available.

5 . Transport

Daily UK flight levels remained stable in the week to 7 August 2022. They were at 84% of the equivalent week of 2019, broadly unchanged from the previous week. Our accompanying dataset is available.

Road traffic on Monday 8 August 2022 was broadly unchanged from the previous week at 99% of the level seen on the Monday of the first week in February 2020. All types of vehicle traffic were broadly unchanged when compared with the previous week.

In the week ending 7 August 2022, the seasonally adjusted average count of traffic camera activity for cars in London fell by 6% from the previous week and was 109% of the level recorded before the national lockdown in March 2020. Our accompanying dataset is available.

6 . Data

Advance potential redundancies
Dataset | Released 11 August 2022
Weekly dataset showing the number of potential redundancies and employers proposing redundancies, submitted to Insolvency Service via HR1 forms.

System Average Price (SAP) of gas
Dataset | Released 11 August 2022
Daily and rolling average System Average Price (SAP) of gas traded in the UK.

Transactions at Pret A Manger
Dataset | Released 11 August 2022
Weekly transactional data from approximately 400 Pret A Manger stores around the UK.

UK spending on credit and debit cards
Dataset | Released 11 August 2022
Experimental indicator for monitoring UK retail purchases derived from the Bank of England's CHAPS data.

Revolut debit card transactions
Dataset | Released 11 August 2022
Insight into the spending patterns of UK consumers from financial technology company Revolut.

Daily vehicle flows around ports
Dataset | Released 11 August 2022
Daily data showing vehicle flows around major ports in England. Contains average 15-minute sensor counts by size of vehicle, and average speeds.

Users should note that this section lists a selection of the data available with this publication. For the full list of available datasets please see our accompanying dataset page.

7 . 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.

8 . Measuring the data

Information on the methodology used to produce the indicators in this bulletin is available in the Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology.

9 . 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

A full overview of coronavirus restrictions for each of the four UK constituent countries can be found:

- coronavirus in England

- coronavirus in Scotland

- coronavirus in Wales

- coronavirus in Northern Ireland

These 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.

10 . Related links

Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest data and analysis
Webpage | Updated as and when data become available
Latest data on the coronavirus pandemic in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain
Bulletin | Released 5 August 2022
Social insights on daily life and events, including the cost of living, location of work, health and well-being from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional
Bulletin | Released 9 August 2022
Provisional counts of the number of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving coronavirus, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey, UK
Bulletin | Released 5 August 2022
Initial data from the COVID-19 Infection Survey (delivered in partnership with University of Oxford, the University of Manchester, UK Health Security Agency (UK HSA) and Wellcome Trust).