

Statistical bulletin

# Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 12 August 2021

Early experimental data and analysis on economic activity and social change in the UK. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources, and experimental methods.

Contact:  
David Matthewson  
[faster.indicators@ons.gov.uk](mailto:faster.indicators@ons.gov.uk)  
+44 (0)1633 455612

Release date:  
12 August 2021

Next release:  
19 August 2021

## Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Latest indicators at a glance](#)
3. [UK flight data](#)
4. [Online job adverts](#)
5. [Value Added Tax returns](#)
6. [UK spending on debit and credit cards](#)
7. [Retail footfall](#)
8. [OpenTable seated diners](#)
9. [Business impacts and insights](#)
10. [Social impact of coronavirus](#)
11. [Road traffic in Great Britain](#)
12. [Data](#)
13. [Glossary](#)
14. [Measuring the data](#)
15. [Strengths and limitations](#)
16. [Related links](#)

# 1 . Main points

- In the week ending 8 August 2021, the seven-day average number of UK daily flights increased by 6% from the previous week to 3,111; this was the first time that the seven-day average surpassed 3,000 daily flights since the week ending 22 March 2020 (EUROCONTROL). [Section 3.](#)
- On 6 August 2021, the total volume of online job adverts fell by 5% from the previous week to 129% of its February 2020 average level; the volume of online job adverts across all UK countries and English regions decreased when compared with the previous week (Adzuna). [Section 4.](#)
- In June 2021, an equal number of firms reported increasing turnover as those reporting decreasing turnover in the last month; this was driven by marginal increases in turnover in services and production but decreasing turnover in construction (HM Revenue and Customs Value Added Tax returns). [Section 5.](#)
- In the week to 5 August 2021, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 4 percentage points from the previous week, to 99% of its February 2020 average (Bank of England CHAPS data). [Section 6.](#)
- In the week to 7 August 2021, overall retail footfall in the UK had increased slightly by 1% and was at 80% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019 (Springboard). [Section 7.](#)
- In the week to 9 August 2021, the seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners decreased slightly by 2 percentage points from the previous week to 127% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019 (OpenTable). [Section 8.](#)
- The percentage of businesses currently trading was 89% in early August 2021; this figure has remained stable since late June 2021, following a steady increase from 71% in January 2021 (Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), 26 July to 8 August 2021). [Section 9.](#)
- 90% of adults who left their home wore a face covering in the latest week, a slight decrease compared with the previous week (92%) (Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, 4 to 8 August 2021). [Section 10.](#)
- The volume of all motor vehicle traffic on Monday 9 August 2021 was at 98% of the level seen in the first week of February 2020; this is unchanged for the third consecutive week (Department for Transport). [Section 11.](#)
- In the week ending 8 August 2021, the seasonally adjusted average count of traffic camera activity for “pedestrians and cyclists” in the North East and Greater Manchester increased by 5% and 3%, respectively, from the previous week, while in London this category decreased by 3% over the same period (North East Traffic Cameras, Transport for Greater Manchester and Transport for London). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There were 13,152 company incorporations in the week to 6 August 2021; this was broadly unchanged for the second consecutive week, but was 3% higher than the equivalent week of 2019 (12,828) (Companies House). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There were 5,480 voluntary dissolution applications in the week to 6 August 2021; this is a 4% decrease from the previous week (5,735) and 9% lower than the equivalent week of 2019 (6,042) (Companies House). See the [accompanying dataset](#).

Results presented in this bulletin are experimental and may be subject to revision.

## 2 . Latest indicators at a glance

### 3 . UK flight data

These data are daily flight figures from the [European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation](#) (EUROCONTROL). Daily flight numbers for the UK alongside other countries are available in EUROCONTROL's dashboard. EUROCONTROL is a pan-European, civil-military organisation dedicated to supporting European aviation. Its Aviation Intelligence and Performance Review Unit provides independent collection and validation of air navigation services performance-related data and intelligence gathering.

These flights data include international arrivals and departures to and from the UK (including Crown Dependencies) and domestic UK flights, but exclude overflights (flights that pass over UK territory). They capture all flight movements that operate under Instrumental Flight Rules (IFR), where the pilot uses instruments in the flight deck to control, guide and adjust the plane. This includes commercial flights carrying passengers and cargo as well as non-commercial flights such as private and military flights.

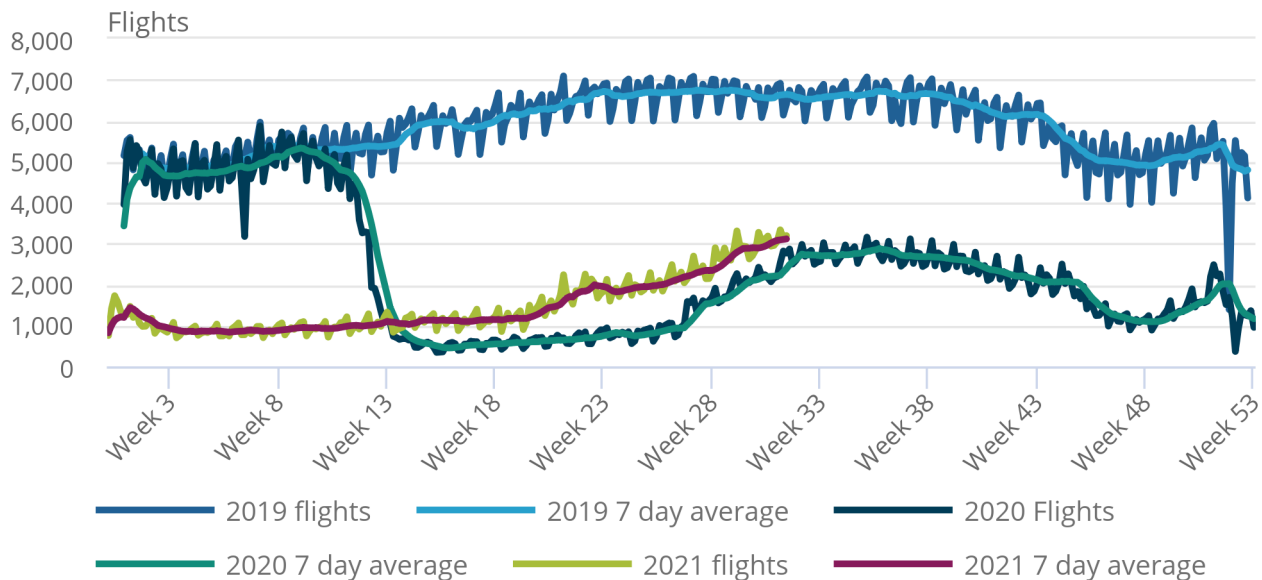
Data from EUROCONTROL do not include information on the volume of passengers or cargo carried on UK flights. Especially in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, flights might not be operating at full capacity and therefore trends in passengers and cargo will differ from trends in flights presented here.

**Figure 1: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights increased by 6% from the previous week; the first time this surpassed 3,000 daily flights since 22 March 2020**

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, and seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 8 August 2021, UK

Figure 1: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights increased by 6% from the previous week; the first time this surpassed 3,000 daily flights since 22 March 2020

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, and seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 8 August 2021, UK



Source: European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL)

Notes:

1. The fall in February 2020 coincides with Storm Ciara.
2. The falls in December and January coincide with Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

In the week ending 8 August 2021, the seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 3,111, having increased by 6% from the previous week. It is also the highest weekly average number of UK flights seen since the week ending 22 March 2020 (the day before the first national lockdown was implemented in the UK).

The seven-day average number of UK daily flights has now increased by 118% from the week ending 23 May 2021, the week that international travel was allowed to restart and the UK government implemented the travel traffic light system (17 May 2021).

The average number of UK daily flights in the latest week was at 47% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019; this is up slightly by 2 percentage points from the previous week when the level was 45%. In the latest week, compared with the equivalent week of 2020 (when UK travel corridors were still in place), the seven-day average number of daily flights was at 130% of its 2020 level.

The full data time series available for UK flights can be found in the [accompanying dataset](#), which contains daily flight numbers and the rolling seven-day averages.

## 4 . Online job adverts

### Job adverts by category

These figures are experimental estimates of online job adverts provided by Adzuna, an online job search engine, by category, by UK country and English region. 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 the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Vacancy Survey.

#### **Figure 2: The total volume of online job adverts fell by 5% in the week to 6 August 2021, to 129% of its February 2020 average level**

Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 4 January 2019 to 6 August 2021, non-seasonally adjusted

#### **Notes:**

1. Further category breakdowns are included in the [online job advert estimates dataset](#) and more details on the methodology can be found in [Using Adzuna data to derive an indicator of weekly vacancies](#).
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 charts and accompanying dataset.

#### **Download the data**

[.xlsx](#)

According to Adzuna, on 6 August 2021, the total volume of online job adverts in the UK saw a 5% decrease when compared with the previous week (30 July 2021). This is the largest week-on-week fall since a 7% decrease for the week ending 28 May 2021.

Of the 28 categories, 25 saw a weekly decrease in the number of online job adverts, while the remaining three were unchanged. The largest weekly decreases were in “legal”, “management/exec/consulting” and “scientific /QA”, which fell by 20%, 11% and 10%, respectively. Seasonality is likely to be a factor for these categories as recruitment activity for some employers often eases over the summer holidays, with similar falls having been seen in the summer of 2019.

Despite these notable week-on-week decreases, the total volume of online job adverts remained substantially above pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic levels, at 129% of its February 2020 average level. The “transport /logistics/warehouse” category remains the category with the highest level of job adverts relative to its pre-pandemic level, at 332% of its February 2020 average level.

Of the 28 categories, for the fifth consecutive week, the only three that remained below their February 2020 average levels were “graduate”, “energy/oil and gas” and “legal”, at 97%, 86% and 72%, respectively.

### Job adverts by region

### **Figure 3: The volume of online job adverts across all UK countries and English regions decreased in the week to 6 August 2021, but remained higher than their February 2020 average levels**

Volume of online job adverts by UK countries and English regions, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 7 February 2020 to 6 August 2021, non-seasonally adjusted

**Download the data**

[.xlsx](#)

On 6 August 2021, the volume of online job adverts had decreased across all UK countries and English regions when compared with the previous week (30 July 2021). The largest weekly decrease in the number of online job adverts was in Northern Ireland, falling by 11%. This followed a notable 13% week-on-week increase in the previous week (30 July 2021). London and Scotland also saw noteworthy week-on-week decreases of 9% and 5%, respectively.

In the latest week, volumes of online job adverts remained above their February 2020 average levels in all UK countries and English regions. The highest of these were in North East England, East Midlands and Northern Ireland, at 176%, 161% and 154% of their February 2020 average levels, respectively. The North East has been the region with the highest number of online job adverts relative to its pre-pandemic levels since 9 April 2021.

Meanwhile, relative to February 2020 average levels, the volume of online job adverts on 6 August 2021 remained lowest in London, where the corresponding figure was 104%. This is the lowest volume of online job adverts for London since the week ending 11 June 2021 when they were also 104% of their February 2020 average level.

## **5 . Value Added Tax returns**

### **New reporters**

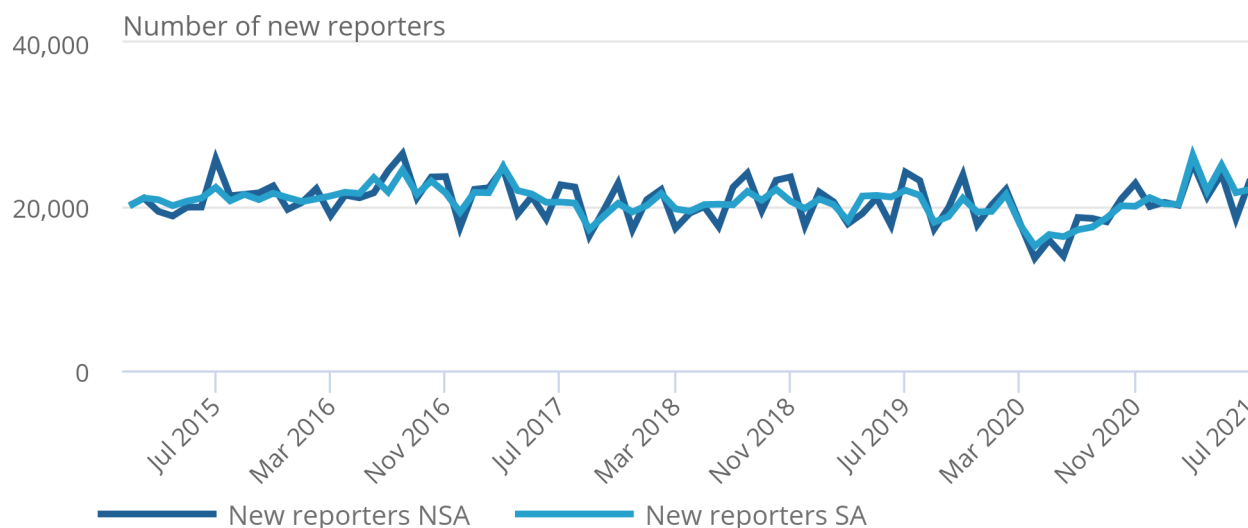
The new reporters index measures the number of UK firms sending Value Added Tax (VAT) returns to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for the first time, which is related to the number of firm creations.

**Figure 4: There were 22,090 new VAT reporters in July 2021, this is above July 2020 levels (16,980), and broadly unchanged from July 2019 (21,880)**

The number of new firm reporters, January 2015 to July 2021, seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted, UK

**Figure 4: There were 22,090 new VAT reporters in July 2021, this is above July 2020 levels (16,980), and broadly unchanged from July 2019 (21,880)**

The number of new firm reporters, January 2015 to July 2021, seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted, UK



Source: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

There were 22,090 new VAT reporters in the UK in July 2021, an increase of 2% from the 21,690 in June 2021. The number of new VAT reporters in July 2021 was 30% higher than in July 2020 (16,980) and broadly unchanged from July 2019 (21,880). This is also higher than the 2015 to 2019 longer-term average (20,878).

The number of new reporters in construction rose by 8% from 2,870 in June 2021 to 3,090 in July 2021. Conversely, in production there were 970 new VAT reporters in July 2021, a 19% decrease from the 1,200 reported in June 2021.

The figures explained in this section now refer to seasonally adjusted data. Non-seasonally adjusted data are available in the [accompanying dataset](#).

## Business turnover estimates

Turnover diffusion indices are an aggregate measure used to track whether most firms are reporting an increase or decrease in turnover in their VAT returns. They are calculated as the percentage of firms with increasing turnover minus the percentage with decreasing turnover.

The heatmap in Figure 5 is a visual way of showing the VAT diffusion indices based on the standard deviation from their historical 2008 to 2019 average. Larger deviations are more darkly coloured, with red representing a negative change, while teal represents a positive change when compared with the previous period.

## Figure 5: In June 2021, an equal number of firms reported increasing turnover as those reporting decreasing turnover in the last month.

Heatmap of business turnover estimates, UK, diffusion index standard deviation from the mean, up to June 2021.  
New reporters, UK, up to July 2021

### Notes:

1. Agri - Agriculture, forestry and fishing, All - All industries, SA - Seasonally adjusted.
2. More information is available in the [methodology article](#).

### Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

The month-on-month, all-industry turnover estimate for June 2021 shows that, out of 39,430 firms, an equal number of firms (net 0%) reported increasing turnover as those that reported decreasing turnover in the last month. This is the second consecutive month that an equal number of firms have reported increasing turnover as have reported decreasing turnover; this follows a three-month period of where more firms reported increasing turnover than decreasing turnover.

A net 3% and 2% of firms in production and services, respectively, reported increasing turnover compared with May 2021. Whereas a net 3% of firms in construction reported decreasing turnover over the same period. This is the fourth consecutive month where more firms have reported decreasing turnover than increasing turnover in the construction industry.

The figures explained in this section refer to seasonally adjusted data.

## 6 . UK spending on debit and credit cards

These data series are experimental faster indicators for estimating UK spending on credit and debit cards. They track the daily CHAPS payments made by credit and debit card payment processors to around 100 major UK retail corporates. These payments are the proceeds of recent credit and debit card transactions made by customers at their stores, both via physical and via online platforms. More information on the indicator is provided in the accompanying [methodology article](#).

Companies are allocated to one of four categories based on their primary business:

- “staples” refers to companies that sell essential goods that households need to purchase, such as food and utilities
- “work-related” refers to companies providing public transport or selling petrol
- “delayable” refers to companies selling goods whose purchase could be delayed, such as clothing or furnishings
- “social” refers to spending on travel and eating out

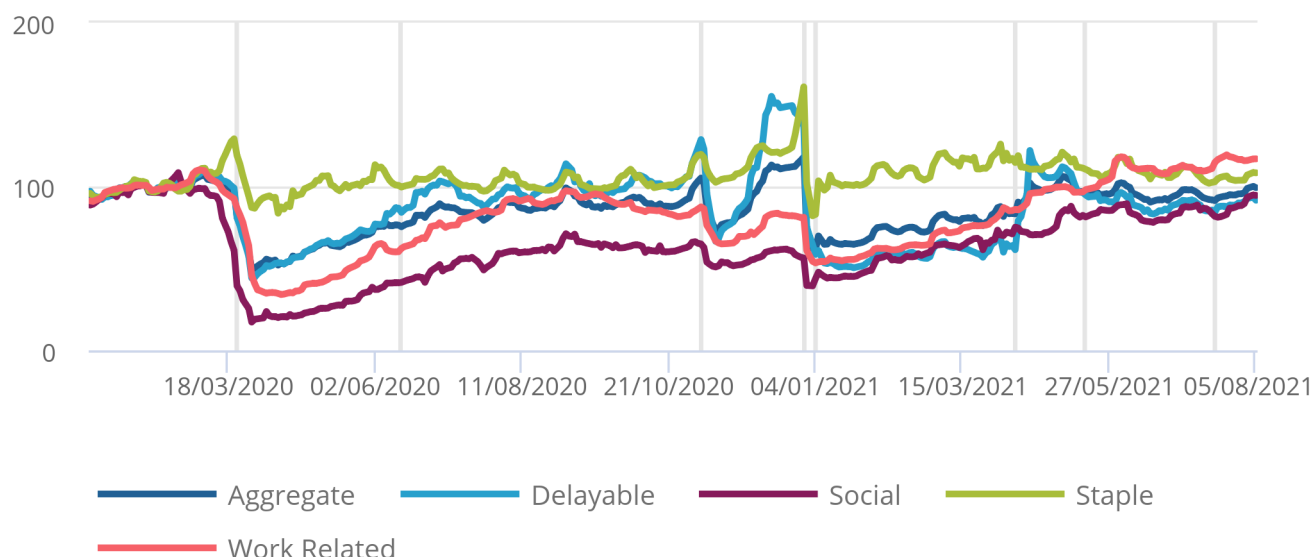


**Figure 6: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 4 percentage points in the week to 5 August 2021, to 99% of its February 2020 average**

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 5 August 2021, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices

Figure 6: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 4 percentage points in the week to 5 August 2021, to 99% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 5 August 2021, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices



Source: Office for National Statistics and Bank of England calculations

#### Notes:

1. Users should note the daily payment data is the sum of card transactions processed up to the previous working day, so there is slight time lag when compared with real-life events on the chart.
2. The vertical lines indicate key events. In order, the events are: first national lockdown begins; some non-essential shops allowed to reopen; regional restrictions begin in England; Christmas period; lockdowns announced in England and Scotland; reopening of non-essential shops, and outdoor pubs and restaurants in England; further easing of lockdown restrictions, including re-opening of indoor pubs and restaurants in England; most legal restrictions to control COVID-19 lifted in England.
3. Percentage point difference is derived from current week and previous week index before rounding.

Figure 6 shows changes in the value of CHAPS payments received by large UK corporates from their credit and debit card processors, “merchant acquirers”.

In the week to 5 August 2021, the CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases in aggregate increased by 4 percentage points from the previous week to 99% of its February 2020 average level. “Social”, “staple” and “delayable” spending categories increased from the previous week by 6, 5 and 2 percentage points, respectively. “Work-related” spending was broadly unchanged.

In the latest week, “work-related” and “staple” spending remained above their February 2020 average levels, at 117% and 108%, respectively. Conversely, “social” and “delayable” spending were at 95% and 92% of their February 2020 average levels, respectively. However, “social” spending has now risen to its highest level since early March 2020.

## Monthly CHAPS-based indicator

In July 2021, the monthly CHAPS-based indicator of aggregate credit and debit card spending was at 95% of its February 2020 average level, this is broadly unchanged from June 2021.

This is the fourth consecutive month that the monthly index has been greater than 90% and only the sixth month since March 2020. The monthly index was higher than 90% during September and December 2020. On both occasions aggregate spending was being driven mainly by the “delayable” and “staple” categories. However, the more recent higher levels of spending have been because of high levels of “staple” spending.

The monthly data time series is available in the [accompanying dataset](#) and includes methodological notes that users should bear in mind. The monthly CHAPS index is calculated by the Office for National Statistics, rather than being an additional series that is produced and validated by the Bank of England.

## 7 . Retail footfall

### National retail footfall

National footfall figures are supplied by [Springboard](#), a provider of data on customer activity. They measure the following for overall UK retail footfall, as well as by high street, retail park, and shopping centre categories:

- daily retail footfall as a percentage of its level on the same day of the equivalent week of 2019; for example, Saturday 7 August 2021 is compared with Saturday 3 August 2019
- total weekly retail footfall as a percentage of its level in the equivalent week of 2019
- the percentage change in weekly footfall compared with the previous week; for example, Week 31 of 2021 is compared with Week 30 of 2021
- Springboard's weekly data are defined over a seven-day period running from Sunday to Saturday; Week 31 of 2021 therefore refers to the period Sunday 1 August 2021 to Saturday 7 August 2021

**Figure 7: UK retail footfall levels were at 80% of the equivalent week of 2019 in the week to 7 August 2021; the highest comparable level since the week to 12 June 2021**

Volume of overall daily retail footfall, percentage compared with the equivalent day of the equivalent week of 2019, 1 March 2020 to 7 August 2021



Source: Springboard and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

**Notes:**

1. The vertical lines indicate notable events. In order, the events are: first national lockdowns begin; restrictions begin to ease across the UK; circuit-breaker lockdown in England; circuit breaker replaced with regional restrictions; Christmas; lockdown begins in England; "stay at home" rule ends in England; Easter; reopening of non-essential retail in England and Wales; reopening of non-essential retail in Scotland; reopening of non-essential retail in Northern Ireland; most legal restrictions to control COVID-19 lifted in England.
2. Users should note that week-on-week changes in retail footfall 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.

According to Springboard, in the week to 7 August 2021, the volume of overall retail footfall in the UK increased slightly by 1% from the previous week (week to 31 July 2021). This continues the gradual upward trend since the lifting of most legal restrictions in England on 19 July 2021 and is the fifth consecutive weekly rise in overall retail.

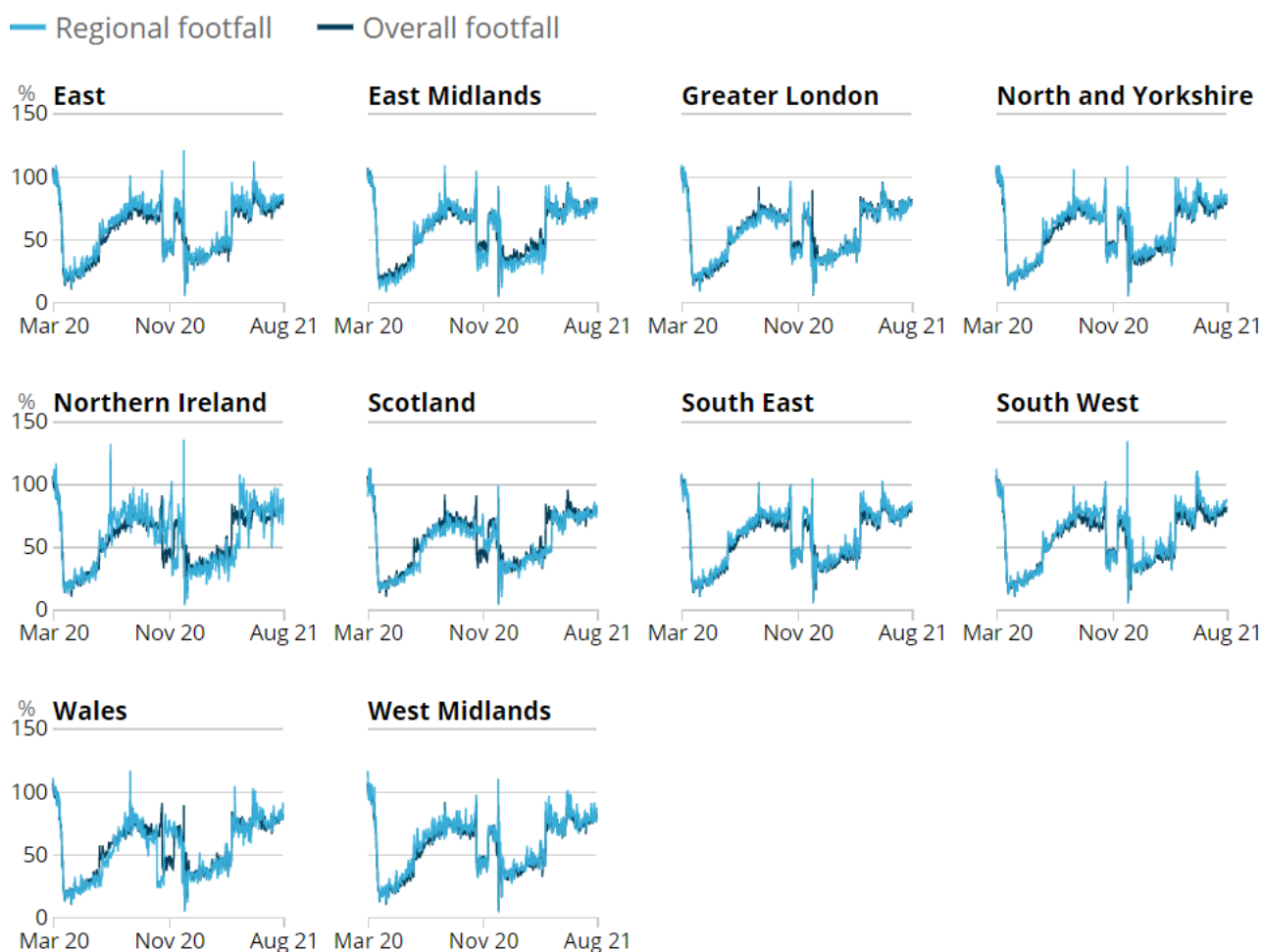
The latest week's increase was in-part driven by a week-on-week rise of 3% in footfall on high streets. Over the same week, footfall at shopping centres increased by 1% while retail park footfall remained broadly unchanged.

In the latest week to 7 August 2021, overall retail footfall was at 80% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019. Comparing retail locations, footfall at retail parks remained the strongest relative to pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic levels, at 98% of its equivalent 2019 level. Meanwhile, the corresponding figures for shopping centres and high streets were 75% and 74%, respectively. Throughout most of the pandemic, footfall at retail parks has consistently been strongest when compared with other retail locations, relative to their 2019 levels.

## Regional retail footfall

**Figure 8: The South West was the region with the highest retail footfall relative to pre-pandemic levels in the week to 7 August 2021, 85% of the level in the same week of 2019**

Volume of daily retail footfall, percentage of the level recorded on the same day of the equivalent week of 2019, UK countries and English regions, 1 March 2020 to 7 August 2021



Source: Springboard and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

According to Springboard, in the week to 7 August 2021, retail footfall saw week-on-week percentage increases in 6 of the 10 UK countries and English regions, the largest of which were in the West Midlands and Northern Ireland, which both saw 2% rises over the week. The remaining 4 of the 10 countries and English regions remained broadly unchanged from the previous week.

In the same week, relative to the levels seen in the equivalent week of 2019, retail footfall was strongest in the South West of England, the East of England and Wales at 85%, 84% and 84%, respectively. In contrast, retail footfall was weakest in the East Midlands, Greater London and Scotland at 78%, 79% and 79% of the levels seen in the equivalent week of 2019, respectively.

## **8 . OpenTable seated diners**

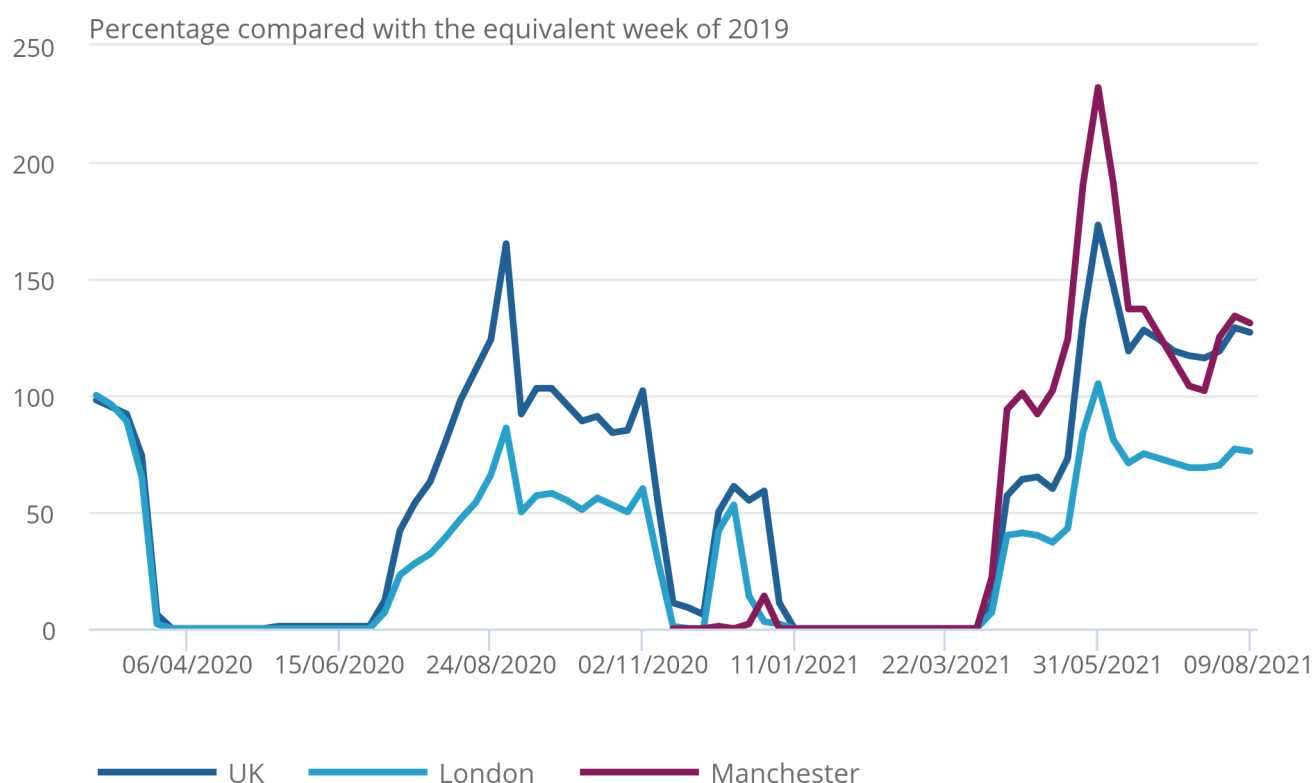
OpenTable is a provider of data for online restaurant reservations, with daily data for the UK, London and Manchester being publicly available in its [The state of the industry dashboard](#). These data show the impact of recent events and restrictions on the hospitality industry using a sample of restaurants on the OpenTable network across all channels, that is, online reservations, phone reservations and walk-ins.

**Figure 9: The seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners decreased by 2 percentage points in the week to 9 August 2021, to 127% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019**

Seated diners, seven-day average, percentage compared with the equivalent week of 2019, week ending 24 February 2020 to week ending 9 August 2021, UK, London and Manchester

Figure 9: The seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners decreased by 2 percentage points in the week to 9 August 2021, to 127% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

Seated diners, seven-day average, percentage compared with the equivalent week of 2019, week ending 24 February 2020 to week ending 9 August 2021, UK, London and Manchester



Source: OpenTable

**Notes:**

1. Data show the percentage of seated diners when compared with the same week in 2019. For example, Week 31 2021 is compared with Week 31 2019 .
2. Please note that data for Manchester are only available from week ending 16 November 2020.

According to OpenTable, in the week to 9 August 2021, the seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners decreased by 2 percentage points, when compared with the previous week, to 127% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019. This slight week-on-week decline follows a 10 percentage point increase in the week ending 2 August 2021. This is the first deviation away from the upward trend in recent weeks following the lifting of most legal restrictions in England on 19 July 2021.

In the latest week, the seven-day average estimate of seated diners in Manchester decreased slightly by 2 percentage points from the previous week to 131% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019. During the same period, the equivalent figure for London was 76%, broadly similar to the previous week.

The UK seven-day average estimate of seated diners has remained above the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019 since the week ending 17 May 2021 (following the reopening of indoor hospitality in England on 17 May 2021). Since the week ending 26 April 2021 to the latest week, seated diner estimates in Manchester have consistently remained above the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019. Over the same period in London, however, this has only occurred on one occasion, which was during the week to 31 May 2021, a week that included the second May bank holiday.

## 9 . Business impacts and insights

In the last two weeks, currently trading businesses reported that 11% of their workforce have moved from furlough or fully homeworking to a hybrid model of working.

Final data for Wave 36 (reference period 12 July to 25 July 2021) of the Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) can be found in [Business insights and impacts on the UK economy: 12 August 2021](#).

Further information can also be found in the [Business insights and impact on the UK economy dataset](#).

Please note, as part of our regular and ongoing quality assessment of our methods, we will be introducing improved methods to weighting of smaller businesses within the BICS sample where we use employment and turnover to do so. We plan to introduce these new methods in the publication of 26 August 2021. This may lead to some revisions in estimates for certain variables.

## 10 . Social impact of coronavirus

This section includes some provisional results from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) covering the period 4 to 8 August 2021. The survey went out to 4,996 adults in Great Britain and had a response rate of 61% (3,063 responses). Further information to help understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain will be available in [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#), due to be published on 13 August 2021.

### Travelling to work

In the period 4 to 8 August 2021, the proportion of working adults in Great Britain who in the past seven days:

- travelled to work (either exclusively or in combination with working from home) increased slightly by 2 percentage points from the previous week to 59%
- worked exclusively from home decreased slightly by 4 percentage points from the previous week to 19%
- neither travelled to work nor worked from home increased slightly 2 percentage points from the previous week to 22%

## Shopping

Of the 95% of adults who reported leaving home in the past seven days, the proportion that did so to shop for food and medicine decreased slightly by 3 percentage points from the previous week to 82%.

The proportion of these adults who shopped for things other than food and medicine in the last seven days remained broadly similar to the previous week at 44%.

## Face coverings

Of the 95% of adults who reported leaving home in the past seven days, the proportion that did so and wore a face covering fell slightly by 2 percentage points from the previous week to 90%. Further breakdowns such as the situation when a face covering was worn (for example, while shopping) and by country, will be available in [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#) to be published on 13 August 2021.

## 11 . Road traffic in Great Britain

According to Department for Transport (DfT) non-seasonally adjusted road traffic data, the volume of all motor vehicle traffic on Monday 9 August 2021 was at 98% of the level seen on the Monday of the first week in February 2020 and was unchanged for the third consecutive week.

Compared with the previous week (Monday 2 August 2021), traffic volume was broadly unchanged for light commercial vehicle, heavy goods vehicle and car vehicle traffic, at 108%, 104% and 94% of the level seen in the first week of February 2020, respectively.

### **Figure 10: The volume of motor vehicle traffic on Monday 9 August 2021 was at 98% of its level in the first week of February 2020**

Daily road traffic index: 100 = same traffic as the equivalent day of the week in the first week of February 2020, 1 March 2020 to 9 August 2021, non-seasonally adjusted

#### **Notes:**

1. The blue shaded areas refer to periods when restrictions across the UK were in effect. In order, these were: first national lockdown in the UK (23 March 2020) to easing of restrictions with non-essential shops reopening in England (15 June 2020); second lockdown in England (5 November 2020) to lockdown being replaced with three-tier system in England (2 December 2020); third lockdown announced in Scotland and England (4 January 2021) to "stay at home" restrictions ending in England (29 March 2021).

The daily DfT estimates are indexed to the first week of February 2020 and the comparison is with the same day of the week. The data provided are useful as an indication of traffic change rather than actual traffic volumes. More information on the methods, quality and economic analysis for these indicators can be found in the [DfT methodology article](#).

#### **Download the data**

[.xlsx](#)



## 12 . Data

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

Dataset | Released 12 August 2021

Experimental indicator for monitoring UK retail purchases derived from the Bank of England's CHAPS data.

### [Shipping indicators](#)

Dataset | Released 17 June 2021

Experimental weekly and daily ship visits dataset covering UK ports.

### [Traffic camera activity](#)

Dataset | Released 12 August 2021

Experimental daily traffic camera counts data for busyness indices covering the UK.

### [Online job advert estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 12 August 2021

Experimental job advert indices covering the UK online job market.

### [Company incorporations and voluntary dissolutions](#)

Dataset | Released 12 August 2021

The number of weekly Companies House incorporations and voluntary dissolution applications accepted.

### [Daily UK flights](#)

Dataset | Released 12 August 2021

Experimental daily UK flight numbers and rolling seven-day average, including flights to, from, and within the UK.

### [Online weekly price changes](#)

Dataset | Released 1 July 2021

Experimental estimates of online price changes for a selection of food and drink products from several large UK retailers.

### [Value Added Tax](#)

Dataset | Released 12 August 2021

Value Added Tax (VAT) turnover and expenditure diffusion indexes and new VAT reporters using data from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) VAT returns.

### [Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#)

Dataset | Released 12 August 2021

Responses from the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

## 13 . Glossary

### Faster indicator

A faster 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.

### Company incorporations

Incorporations are when a company is added to the Companies House register of limited companies. This can also include where an existing business applies to become a limited company, where it was not one before.

## Voluntary dissolution applications

A voluntary dissolution application is when a company applies to begin dissolution proceedings. As such, they effectively chose to be removed from the Companies House register. For a company to be eligible to voluntarily dissolve, it should not have completed any trading activity for a period of three months.

## New reporter

A new reporter is defined as a firm with a Value Added Tax (VAT) reference (that is, firm identification number), which has not previously reported its VAT returns. New reporters are published within one month of the end of the reporting period. The new reporting behaviour measure is classified by the month the data were received by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), known as the receipt date, which is not necessarily the same as the reference period (the period for which the VAT return is made).

## Diffusion index

The diffusion index tracks the growth in turnover and expenditure of firms. It is constructed to lie between negative 1 and 1. For example, if 65% of firms have increasing turnover, 30% have decreasing turnover and 5% turnover remains unchanged, then the diffusion index is 0.35.

# 14 . Measuring the data

## UK coronavirus restrictions

A full overview of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions for each of the four UK constituent countries:

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)

These restrictions should be considered when interpreting the data featured throughout this bulletin.

# 15 . Strengths and limitations

Information on the strengths and limitations of the indicators in this bulletin is available in the [Coronavirus and the latest indicators of the UK economy and society methodology](#).

## 16 . Related links

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest data and analysis](#)

Webpage | Updated as and when data become available

Latest data on the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

### [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 13 August 2021](#)

Bulletin | 13 August 2021

Latest indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

### [Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: week ending 30 July 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 10 August 2021

Provisional counts of deaths registered in England and Wales, including deaths involving COVID-19, in the latest weeks for which data are available.

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey, UK: 13 August 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 13 August 2021

Initial data from the COVID-19 Infection Survey (delivered in partnership with IQVIA, Oxford University and UK Biocentre).