

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 31 May 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.

Contact:
Real Time Indicators team
realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk

Release date:
31 May 2024

Next release:
6 June 2024

Notice

31 May 2024

This release has a headline-only format and is accompanied by updated datasets. We will continue to publish the weekly bulletin as usual from 6 June 2024.

Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Latest indicators at a glance](#)
3. [Data](#)
4. [Glossary](#)
5. [Measuring the data](#)
6. [Strengths and limitations](#)
7. [Related links](#)
8. [Cite this statistical bulletin](#)

1 . Main points

- In the latest week, overall retail footfall decreased by 1% when compared with the previous week, while the annual growth rate in average fuel prices rose by 1 percentage point (MRI OnLocation, Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero).
- The seasonally adjusted total Direct Debit failure rate fell by 1% in April 2024 when compared with the previous month, but was 7% higher when compared with April 2023; meanwhile, the monthly average electricity and gas Direct Debit transaction amount fell by 1% when compared with March 2024, which was 13% below April 2023, coinciding with the fall in the energy price cap on 1 April 2024 (Vocalink and Pay. UK).
- The total number of online job adverts on 24 May 2024 increased by 3% from the level in the previous week but was 18% lower than the equivalent week of 2023 (Adzuna).
- In the week to 26 May 2024, the System Price of electricity increased by 4% compared with the previous week and was 36% above the equivalent week of 2023; meanwhile, the System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 13% compared with the previous week and is now 28% higher than the equivalent week of 2023 (Elexon, National Gas Transmission).
- In the week to 28 May 2024, the daily average number of UK flights increased by 4% compared with the previous week and was 5% higher than the equivalent week of 2023 (EUROCONTROL).

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: Measuring the data section](#).

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 . Data

[Online job advert estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 31 May 2024

Weekly snapshot of online job advert indices covering the UK job market. These are official statistics in development. Source: Adzuna

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

Dataset | Released 16 May 2024

Daily, weekly and monthly data showing seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted UK spending using debit and credit cards. These are official statistics in development. Source: CHAPS, Bank of England

This section lists a selection of the 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.

5 . Measuring the data

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. Read 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 whether the statistics are of sufficient quality and value to be published as official statistics, or whether 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. Contact us at 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 the following list. Please note that there may be some change to the intended release frequency because of 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

- The [UK spending on credit and debit cards dataset](#) was last updated on 16 May 2024.
- The [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset](#) was last updated on 1 February 2024.
- The [Automotive Fuel spending dataset](#) was last updated on 31 May 2024.
- The [Online job advert estimates dataset](#) was last updated on 31 May 2024.
- The [Company incorporations, voluntary dissolutions and compulsory dissolutions dataset](#) was last updated on 31 May 2024.
- The [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#) was last updated on 16 May 2024.
- The [System Average price of gas dataset](#) was last updated on 31 May 2024.
- The [System Price of electricity dataset](#) was last updated on 31 May 2024.
- The [Traffic camera activity dataset](#) was last updated on 16 May 2024.
- The [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#) was last updated on 5 April 2024.
- The [Daily UK flights dataset](#) was last updated on 31 May 2024.

Fortnightly data release

- The [Transactions at Pret A Manger dataset](#) was last updated on 2 May 2024.

Monthly data release

- The [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#) was last updated on 31 May 2024.
- The [Value Added Tax, flash estimates dataset](#) was last updated on 18 April 2024.
- The [Renter affordability for new tenancies dataset](#) was last updated on 10 May 2024.
- The [Sales and jobs in small businesses dataset](#) was last updated on 2 May 2024.

6 . 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.

UK coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions

Coronavirus 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.

7 . Related links

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

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

Social insights on daily life and events from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) relating to the biggest issues facing society today.

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

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses. Based on responses from the voluntary fortnightly business survey (BICS) to deliver real-time information to help assess issues affecting UK businesses and economy, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience. These are official statistics in development.

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 31 May 2024, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 31 May 2024](#)