

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 9 September 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.

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1 . Main Points

- The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 3,589 in the week ending 5 September 2021, a 5% increase from the previous week and the highest average number of UK flights seen for almost 18 months. (EUROCONTROL). [Section 3](#).
- In the week to 2 September 2021, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 6 percentage points from the previous week, to 99% of its February 2020 average (Bank of England CHAPS data). [Section 4](#).
- The number of new Value Added Tax (VAT) reporters in August 2021 (21,000) was 18% higher than in August 2020 (17,730) but 2% lower than August 2019 (21,490) (HM Revenue and Customs VAT returns). [Section 5](#).
- In the week to 6 September 2021, the seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners fell by 28 percentage points from the previous week to 128% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019; however, the previous week included a bank holiday (OpenTable). [Section 6](#).
- On 3 September 2021, online job adverts in London increased by 9% from the previous week, the largest week-on-week increase in London since 5 March 2021; despite this, it remains the region with the lowest volume of online job adverts relative to its pre-pandemic level (Adzuna). [Section 7](#).
- In the week to 4 September 2021, overall retail footfall in the UK decreased slightly from the previous week and was at 84% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019 (Springboard). [Section 8](#).
- Of businesses not permanently stopped trading, 13% reported that vacancies were more difficult to fill in the last month compared with normal expectations for this time of year, in late August 2021; this is up from 9% in early August 2021 (Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), 23 August to 5 September 2021). [Section 9](#).
- 89% of adults who left their home reported wearing a face covering in the latest week; this was broadly similar to the previous survey (Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, 18 to 22 August 2021). [Section 10](#).
- There was an average of 290 daily ship visits in the week to 5 September 2021, a 2% decrease from the previous week; the average number of daily cargo ship visits saw a slight week-on-week increase of 1% (exactEarth). [Section 11](#).
- The volume of motor vehicle traffic on Monday 6 September 2021 was at 100% of its level in the first week of February 2020 (Department for Transport). [Section 12](#).
- In the week ending 5 September 2021, the seasonally adjusted average count of traffic camera activity for pedestrians and cyclists in London had increased by 5% from the previous week to 129% of its pre-pandemic level (Transport for London). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There were 12,385 company incorporations in the week to 3 September 2021, a decrease of 10% from the previous week and a similar level to the equivalent week of 2019 (12,714); the main reason for this lower volume is the four-day working week caused by the bank holiday. See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There were 4,880 voluntary dissolution applications in the week to 3 September 2021; a decrease of 16% from the previous week (see previous main point) but 6% higher than the equivalent week of 2019 (4,594) (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

Notes:

1. Users should note that the break in the available shipping data (from 14 to 19 June 2021) is when the data collection system changed. [See Section 11](#).

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.

The 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 Instrument 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.

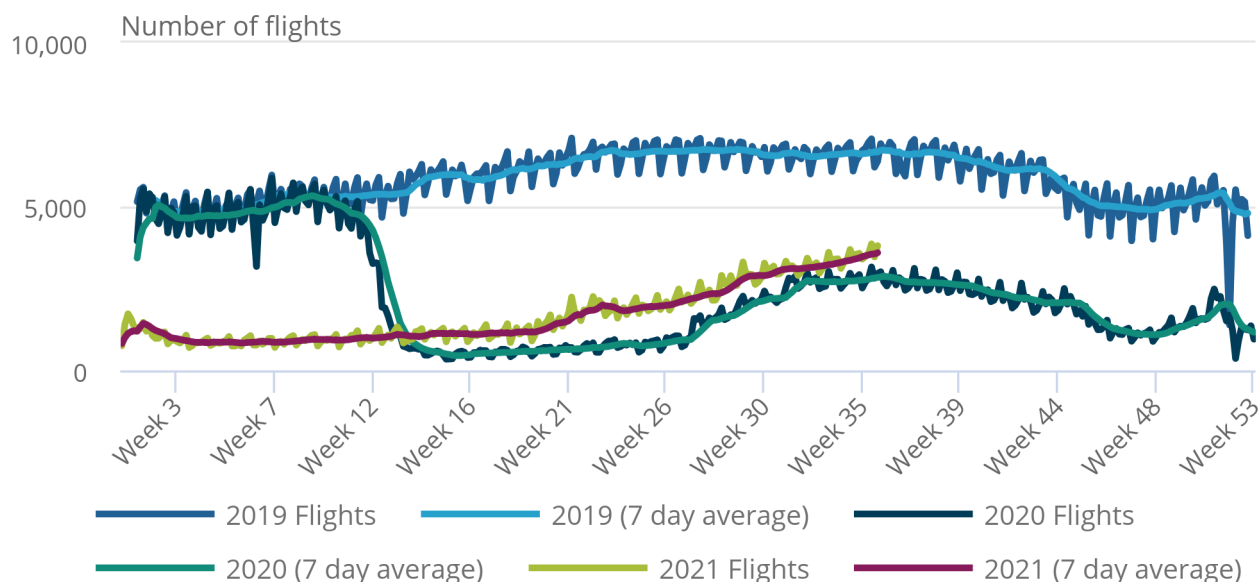
Data from EUROCONTROL do not include information on the volume of passengers or cargo carried on UK flights. Especially in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, flights might not be operating at full capacity and therefore trends in passengers and cargo will differ from trends in flights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

Figure 1: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 3,589 in the week ending 5 September 2021, a 5% increase from the previous week

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, and seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 5 September 2021, UK

Figure 1: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 3,589 in the week ending 5 September 2021, a 5% increase from the previous week

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, and seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 5 September 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 5 September 2021, the seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 3,589, a 5% increase from the previous week (3,405) and a 15% increase from 3,111 the previous month (week ending 8 August 2021). This is the highest weekly average number of UK flights seen for almost 18 months (since 19 March 2020).

The seven-day average number of UK daily flights has increased by 151% 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 54% and 127% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019 and 2020, respectively.

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 . UK spending on debit and credit cards

Daily CHAPS-based indicator

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 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:

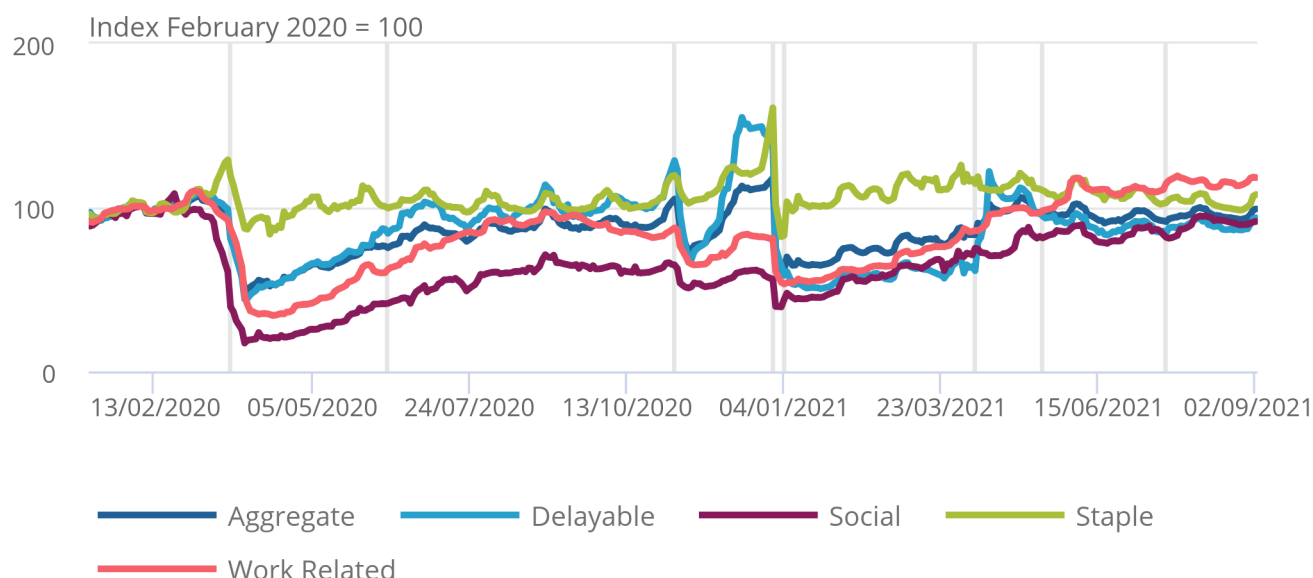
- "staples" refers to companies that sell essential goods that households need to purchase, such as food and utilities
- "work-related" refers to companies providing public transport or selling petrol
- "delayable" refers to companies selling goods whose purchase could be delayed, such as clothing or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

Figure 2: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 6 percentage points in the week to 2 September 2021 to 99% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 2 September 2021, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices

Figure 2: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 6 percentage points in the week to 2 September 2021 to 99% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 2 September 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 are the sum of card transactions processed up to the previous working day so there is a slight time lag when compared with real-life events on the chart.
2. The vertical lines indicate notable 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 coronavirus lifted in England.
3. Percentage point difference is derived from current week and previous week index before rounding.
4. Data for one sub-sector with 15% weight in the "social" spending category has been imputed for the period 12 August to 2 September 2021 because of data availability issues.

Figure 2 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 2 September 2021, the CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases in aggregate increased by 6 percentage points from the previous week to 99% of its February 2020 average level. All spending categories increased in this latest week:

- “staple” increased by 9 percentage points
- “delayable” increased by 7 percentage points
- “work-related” increased by 4 percentage points
- “social” increased by 2 percentage points

The week to 2 September overlapped with the August pay day and the Summer Bank Holiday. Users should note this when comparing aggregate spending and spending by category in the week to 2 September 2021 with the week to 26 August 2021.

In the latest week, “work-related” and “staple” spending were above their February 2020 average levels, at 118% and 108%, respectively. Conversely, “delayable” and “social” spending were at 94% and 92% of their February 2020 average levels, respectively.

Monthly CHAPS-based indicator

In August 2021, the monthly CHAPS-based indicator of aggregate credit and debit card spending was at 96% of its February 2020 average level, which is broadly unchanged from July 2021.

This is the fifth consecutive month that the monthly index has been greater than 90%, with September and December 2020 the only other times since March 2020 where this was the case.

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 (ONS), rather than being an additional series that is produced and validated by the Bank of England.

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 business creations.

Figure 3: There were 21,000 new VAT reporters in August 2021 – higher than August 2020 (17,730), but lower than August 2019 (21,490)

Number of new firm reporters, January 2015 to August 2021, seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted, UK

Figure 3: There were 21,000 new VAT reporters in August 2021 – higher than August 2020 (17,730), but lower than August 2019 (21,490)

Number of new firm reporters, January 2015 to August 2021, seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted, UK



Source: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

There were 21,000 new VAT reporters in the UK in August 2021, a decrease of 4% from 21,930 in July 2021. The number of new VAT reporters in August 2021 was 18% higher than in August 2020 (17,730) but 2% lower than August 2019 (21,490). This is also slightly higher than the 2015 to 2019 longer-term average (20,878).

The number of new reporters in the production industry rose by 13% from 970 in July 2021 to 1,100 in August 2021. In the services industry, there were 15,900 new VAT reporters in August 2021, a 7% decrease from the 17,140 reported in July 2021.

The figures explained in this section 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 4 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 4: A net 3% of firms reported a decreasing turnover in July 2021; this is the largest reported negative net difference since April 2020

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

Notes:

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

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The month-on-month, all-industry turnover estimate for July 2021 shows that in the past month, out of 38,550 firms, more firms have reported decreasing rather than increasing turnover (net negative 3%). This is the largest negative net difference since April 2020, although it is important to note that these data are unweighted and we do not have information on the size of the changes reported.

A net 6% of firms in the construction industry reported decreasing turnover in July 2021. This is the fifth consecutive month where more firms have reported decreasing turnover than increasing turnover in the construction industry. A net 4% and 2% of firms in the agriculture and production industries, respectively, reported decreasing turnover in July 2021. Meanwhile, in the services industry, an equal number of firms (net 0%) reported increasing turnover as those that reported decreasing turnover in the last month.

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

6 . OpenTable seated diners

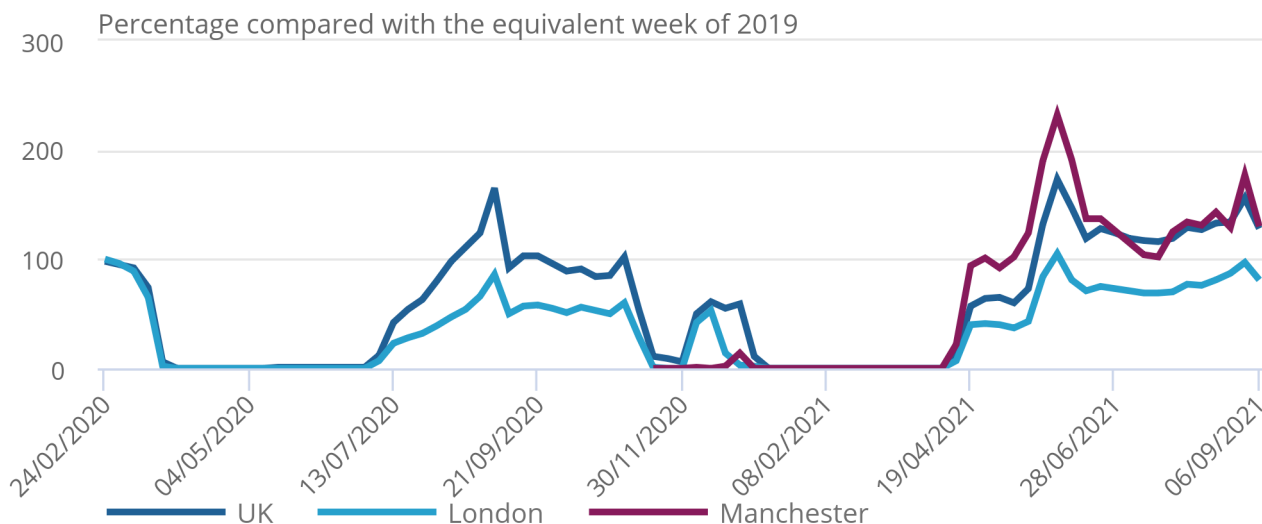
OpenTable is a provider of data for online restaurant reservations, with daily data for the UK, London and Manchester being publicly available in its [The state of the industry](#) dashboard. These data show the impact of recent events and restrictions on the hospitality industry using a sample of restaurants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

Figure 5: The seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners saw a 28 percentage point week-on-week fall to 6 September 2021, and was 128% 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 6 September 2021, UK, London and Manchester

Figure 5: The seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners saw a 28 percentage point week-on-week fall to 6 September 2021, and was 128% 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 6 September 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 35 2021 is compared with Week 35 2019.
2. Please note that data for Manchester are only available from week ending 16 November 2020.

According to OpenTable, in the week to 6 September 2021, the seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners decreased by 28% when compared with the previous week, and was 128% of its level in the equivalent week of 2019. However, this fall follows a week that included a bank holiday (30 August 2021) and is still notably higher than the comparable week in 2020, which was 92% of the equivalent week of 2019.

In the latest week, the seven-day average estimate of seated diners in Manchester fell by 47 percentage points to 130% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019. During the same period, the equivalent figure for London was 81%, a decrease of 16 percentage points from 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). In the period since this reopening to the latest week, the average estimate of UK seated diners was 132% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019.

7 . Online job adverts

Job adverts by categories

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 6: The total volume of online job adverts on 3 September increased by 2% from the previous week, to 128% of its February 2020 average level

Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 4 January 2019 to 3 September 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

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According to Adzuna, on 3 September 2021, the total volume of online job adverts in the UK increased by 2% from the previous week (27 August 2021).

Of the 28 categories, 15 saw a weekly increase in the number of online job adverts, 6 were unchanged, while the remaining 7 decreased when compared with the previous week. The largest weekly increase was in “legal”, which rose by 25%. This represents a recovery in the volume of online job adverts for “legal” after a significant dip throughout August 2021 and is now at similar levels to the end of July (30 July 2021). This seasonal pattern is consistent with previous years. The largest weekly fall was in “education”, which fell by 5%.

The total volume of online job adverts remained substantially above pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic volume, at 128% of its February 2020 average level. The “transport, logistics and warehouse” category remained that with the highest amount of job adverts relative to its February 2020 average pre-pandemic level, at 326%.

There are only six categories that are now below pre-pandemic levels. The lowest of these is “education”, which is at 83% of its February 2020 average level.

Job adverts by region

Figure 7: London remains the region with the lowest volume of online job adverts relative to its pre-pandemic level, despite a large week-on-week increase

Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 4 January 2019 to 3 September 2021, non-seasonally adjusted

Download the data

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On 3 September 2021, the volume of online job adverts remained unchanged in 6 of the 12 UK countries and English regions when compared with the previous week (27 August 2021). Only the East Midlands saw a decrease, falling slightly by 1% from the previous week. Meanwhile, online job adverts in London and Northern Ireland both rose by 9%. This is the largest week-on-week increase in online job adverts in London since 5 March 2021.

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 the North East, Northern Ireland and East Midlands, at 171%, 166% and 156% 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.

Despite the significant week-on-week increase, London remains the region with the lowest volume of online job adverts relative to its pre-pandemic level at 109% of its February 2020 average level.

8 . Retail footfall

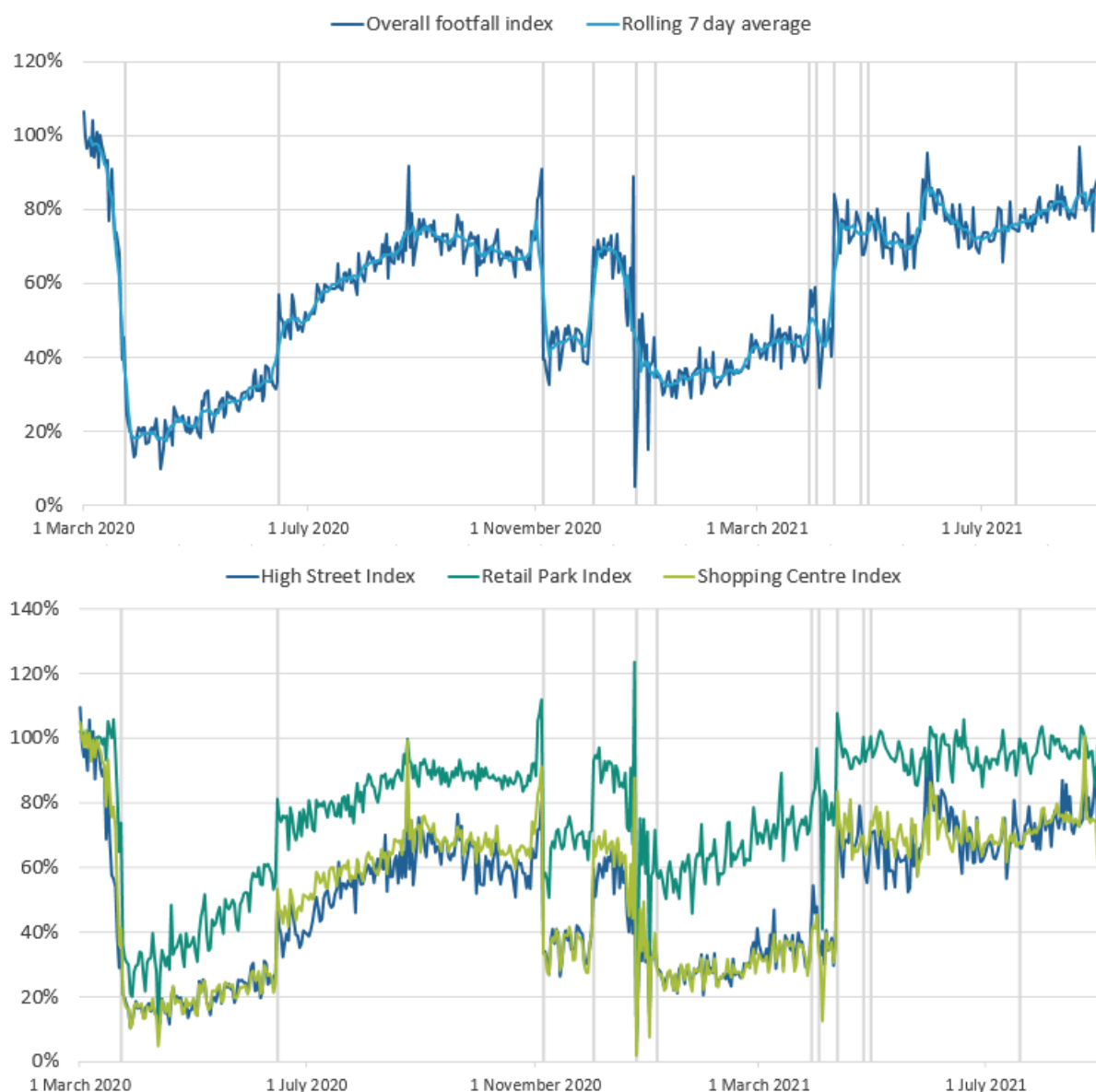
National footfall figures are supplied by [Springboard](#), a provider of data on customer activity. They measure the following for overall UK retail footfall, as well as by high street, retail park, and shopping centre categories:

- daily retail footfall as a percentage of its level on the same day of the equivalent week of 2019; for example, Saturday 4 September 2021 is compared with Saturday 31 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 35 of 2021 is compared with Week 34 of 2021
- Springboard's weekly data are defined over a seven-day period running from Sunday to Saturday; Week 35 of 2021 therefore refers to the period Sunday 29 August to Saturday 4 September 2021

Users should note that all quoted figures have been rounded to the nearest integer.

Figure 8: UK retail footfall levels in the week to 4 September were at 84% of the equivalent week in 2019, a slight decrease from the previous week

Volume of overall daily retail footfall, percentage compared with the equivalent day of the equivalent week of 2019, 1 March 2020 to 4 September 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.

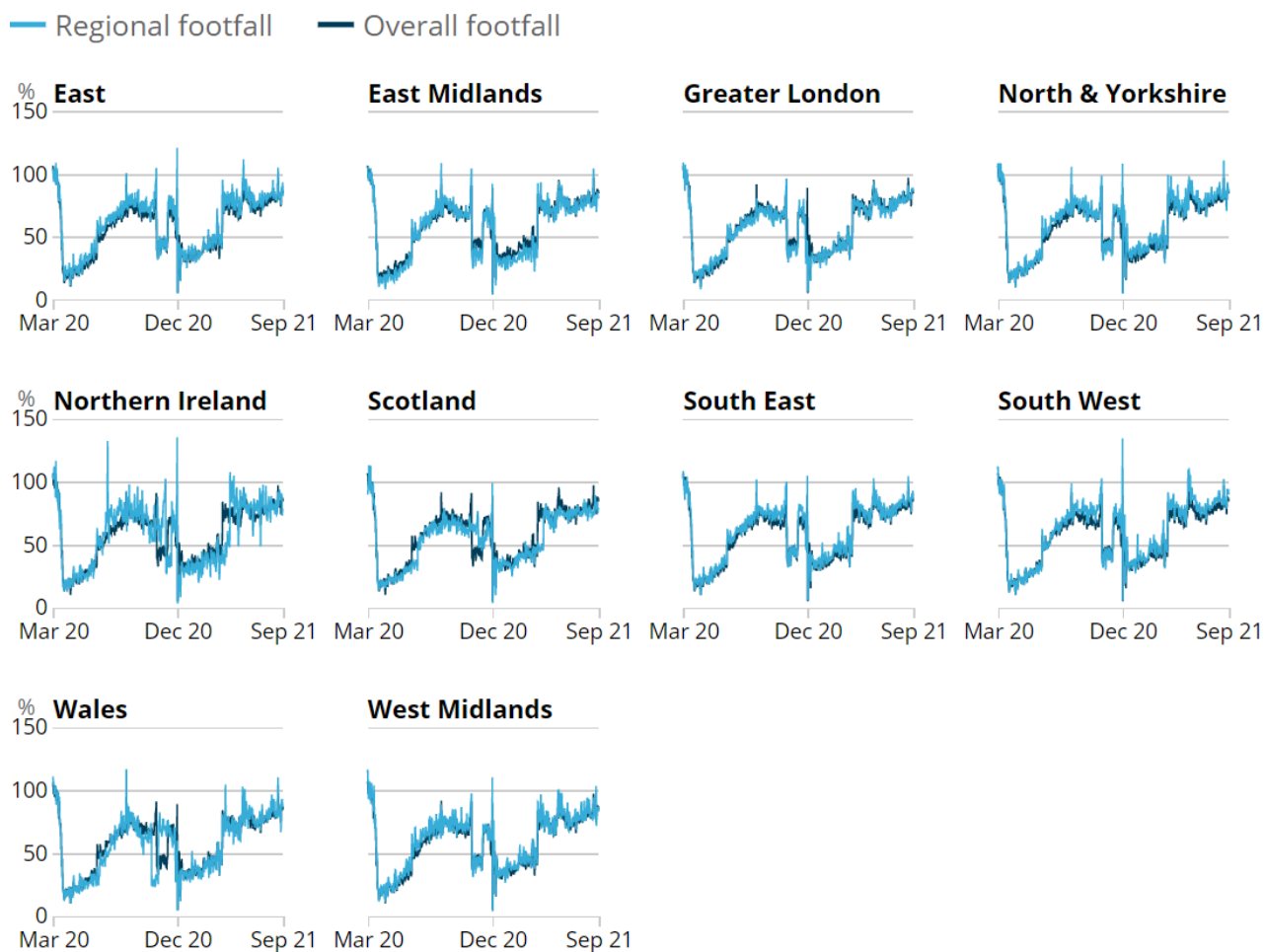
According to Springboard, in the week to 4 September 2021, the volume of overall retail footfall in the UK decreased slightly by 1% from the previous week (week to 28 August 2021). In the latest week, retail footfall in high streets decreased by 3%, in shopping centres it remained broadly unchanged from the previous week, and in retail parks it increased slightly by 1%.

In the latest week to 4 September 2021, overall retail footfall was at 84% 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 97% of its equivalent 2019 level. Meanwhile, the corresponding figures for high streets and shopping centres were 81% and 78%, 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 9: The South West region had the highest retail footfall relative to pre-pandemic levels in the week to 4 September 2021, at 90% 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 4 September 2021



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

According to Springboard, in the week to 4 September 2021, the volume of overall retail footfall in the UK decreased slightly by 1% from the previous week (week to 28 August 2021). In the latest week, retail footfall in high streets decreased by 3%, in shopping centres it remained broadly unchanged from the previous week, and in retail parks it increased slightly by 1%.

In the same week, relative to the levels seen in the equivalent week of 2019, retail footfall was strongest in the South West at 90%, followed by the South East and Wales, where footfall was at 87% and 86%, respectively. In contrast, retail footfall was weakest in Scotland and the East Midlands, both at 80% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019.

9 . Business impacts and insights

Final data for Wave 38 (reference period 9 August to 22 August 2021) of the Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) can be found in [Business insights and impacts on the UK economy: 9 September 2021](#).

In late August 2021, of businesses not permanently stopped trading, 13% reported that vacancies were more difficult to fill in the last month compared with normal expectations for this time of year. This is up from 9% in early August 2021. Businesses that reported difficulties filling vacancies in the last month compared with normal expectations were asked for the reasons for the difficulty. Approximately two in three (67%) of those businesses that are finding vacancies more difficult to fill than normal gave the reason of a lack of suitable applicants.

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

10 . Social impact of coronavirus

This section includes some provisional results from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) covering the period 25 August to 5 September 2021. The survey went out to 5,003 adults in Great Britain and had a response rate of 68% (3,387 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 updated on 10 September 2021.

The OPN has now moved to a fortnightly data collection. The same information as has been provided previously will be included within the fortnightly release.

Travelling to work

In the period 25 August to 5 September 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 survey to 57%
- worked exclusively from home remained unchanged from the previous wave at 21%
- neither travelled to work nor worked from home decreased by 3 percentage points from the previous survey to 21%

Shopping

Of the 96% of adults in Great Britain who reported leaving home in the past seven days, the proportion that did so to shop for food and medicine increased slightly by 2 percentage points from the previous survey to 84%.

The proportion of these adults who shopped for things other than food and medicine in the last seven days was broadly unchanged from the previous survey at 46%.

Face coverings

Of the 96% of adults in Great Britain who reported leaving home in the past seven days, the proportion that did so and reported wearing a face covering was broadly similar to the previous survey at 89%. 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](#) due to be published on 10 September 2021.

11 . Shipping

A changeover in the systems used to collect these data has introduced a level shift in the data time series from 14 June 2021 onwards, and users should not make comparisons between data before and after this date. The data produced prior to the change, for 1 April 2019 to 13 June 2021, can still be compared within that period.

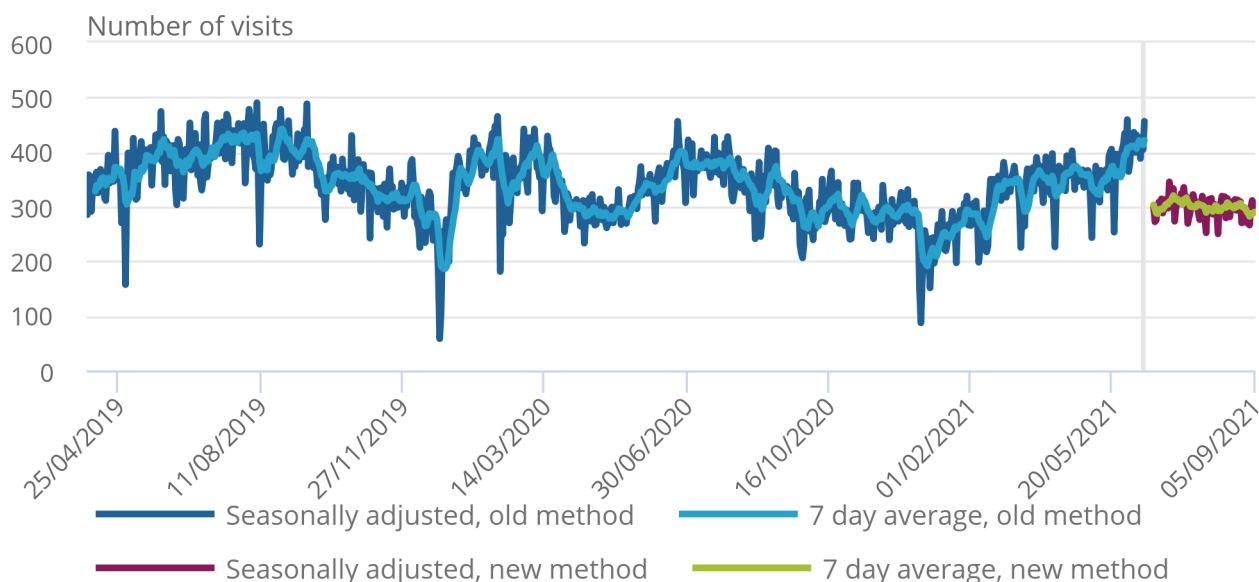
A full methodological review of our current method of data collection is underway and data may be subject to revision once this is complete. We will continue to update the [accompanying dataset](#) using the current method until the review is complete.

Figure 10: There was an average of 290 daily ship visits in the week to 5 September 2021, a 2% decrease from 296 in the previous week

Daily movements in shipping visits, UK, seasonally adjusted, 1 December 2019 to 5 September 2021

Figure 10: There was an average of 290 daily ship visits in the week to 5 September 2021, a 2% decrease from 296 in the previous week

Daily movements in shipping visits, UK, seasonally adjusted, 1 December 2019 to 5 September 2021



Source: exactEarth

Notes:

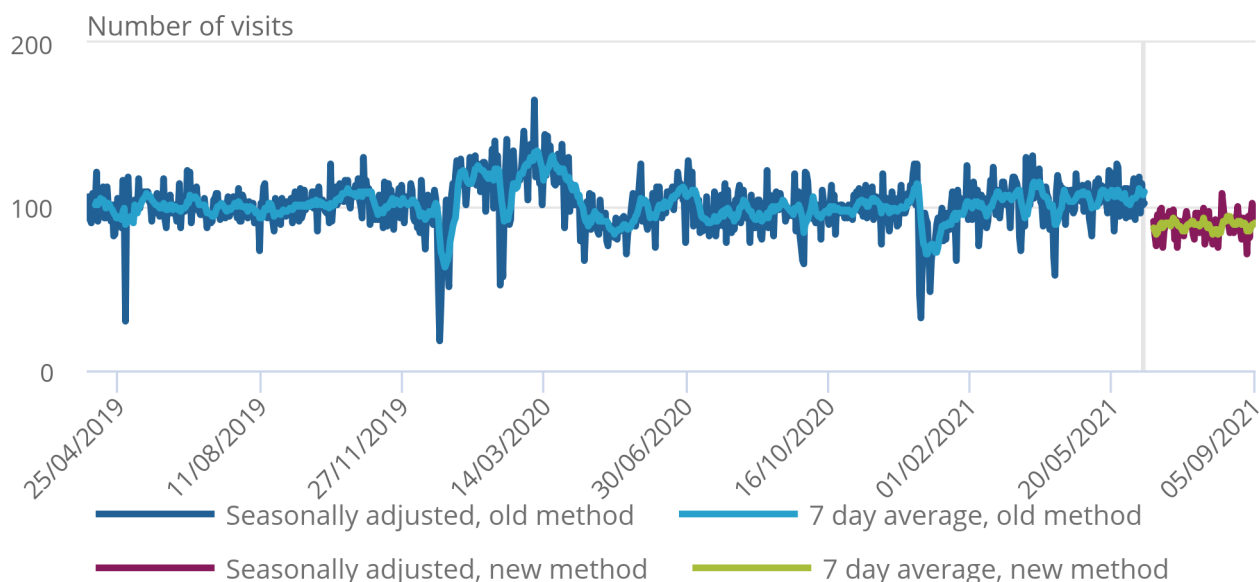
1. The vertical line indicates the date when the data collection system changed. Users should not compare data before and after this date.
2. See the [accompanying dataset](#) for notable dates and weather events.
3. In the coming weeks, we will continue to review the seasonally adjusted estimates of shipping indicators data following its reintroduction with the discontinuity.

Figure 11: The average number of daily cargo ships visits increased by 1% from 89 to 90 in the week to 5 September 2021

Daily movements in cargo shipping visits, UK, seasonally adjusted, 1 December 2019 to 5 September 2021

Figure 11: The average number of daily cargo ships visits increased by 1% from 89 to 90 in the week to 5 September 2021

Daily movements in cargo shipping visits, UK, seasonally adjusted, 1 December 2019 to 5 September 2021



Source: exactEarth

Notes:

1. The vertical line indicates the date when the data collection system changed. Users should not compare data before and after this date.
2. See the [accompanying dataset](#) for notable dates and weather events.
3. In the coming weeks, we will continue to review the seasonally adjusted estimates of shipping indicators data following the reintroduction of data.

12 . Road traffic in Great Britain

Week-on-two-week (23 August 2021) comparisons are made this week to avoid comparing against the lower level of motor vehicle traffic seen in the previous week because of the Summer Bank Holiday.

According to Department for Transport (DfT) non-seasonally adjusted road traffic data, the volume of all motor vehicle traffic on 6 September 2021 was at 100% of the level seen on the Monday of the first week in February 2020; this is broadly similar to two weeks ago.

Compared with 23 August 2021, traffic volume for cars was unchanged, at 96% of the level seen in the first week of February 2020. Heavy goods vehicles and light commercial vehicles increased slightly by 3 and 2 percentage points from two weeks ago to 109% and 110%, respectively.

Figure 12: The volume of motor vehicle traffic on Monday 6 September 2021 was at 100% 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 6 September 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).

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

13 . Data

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

Dataset | Released 9 September 2021

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

[Shipping indicators](#)

Dataset | Released 9 September 2021

Experimental weekly and daily ship visits dataset covering UK ports.

[Traffic camera activity](#)

Dataset | Released 9 September 2021

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

[Online job advert estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 9 September 2021

Experimental job advert indices covering the UK online job market.

[Company Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolutions](#)

Dataset | Released 9 September 2021

The number of weekly Companies House Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolution applications accepted.

[Daily UK flights](#)

Dataset | Released 9 September 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.

14 . 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; this 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.

15 . Measuring the data

UK coronavirus restrictions

A full overview of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions for each of the four UK constituent countries can be found [here](#):

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

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

16 . 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](#).

17 . 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: 27 August 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 27 August 2021

Latest indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional: 27 August 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 7 September 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: 3 September 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 3 September 2021

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