

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 13 October 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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Notice

13 October 2022

The estimated automotive fuel demand per transaction indicator is not included this week and until the end of the month because of data supply constraints.

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1 . Main points

- Consumer behaviour indicators showed mixed changes in activity in the latest week, with growth in UK credit and debit card purchases but falls in UK seated diners and transactions in most Pret A Manger locations; meanwhile, overall retail footfall in the UK was 89% of the equivalent week of 2019 (Bank of England CHAPS data, OpenTable, Pret A Manger, Springboard). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The business and workforce metrics mostly increased in the latest period, with online job adverts up in all 12 of the UK countries and English regions; total online job adverts increased by 5% in the latest week, which is the largest rise since the beginning of July 2022 but remains 18% below the most recent peak in mid-February 2022 (Adzuna). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- Of businesses not permanently stopped trading, nearly half (47%) reported that prices of goods or services bought in September 2022 had increased when compared with the previous month (initial results from Wave 67 of the [Business Insights and Conditions Survey \(BICS\)](#)). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas fell by 19% in the week to 9 October 2022; it was 26% down on the previous year and 65% lower than its peak level recorded on 28 August 2022 (National Grid). [Section 5: Energy and housing](#).
- Both UK road traffic and the average number of UK flights were broadly unchanged from the previous week, with the latter having been broadly consistent at around 85% of the equivalent week of 2019 since the end of April 2022 (Department for Transport, EUROCONTROL). [Section 6: Transport](#).

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. The breaks in the shipping series are caused by 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

Pret A Manger transactions decreased at most locations in the week to 6 October 2022. The largest decrease in regional locations was a 3-percentage-point fall in transactions at London city worker stores. All transport stores saw week-on-week decreases, with transactions at regional stations and London stations falling by 22 and 18 percentage points, respectively. Users should note these falls coincided with widespread rail strikes across the UK.

The only locations to see increased transactions in the latest week were London suburban and London West End stores, with both increasing by 1 percentage point. However, transactions at London suburban stores have generally trended downwards since 24 March 2022. Our [accompanying dataset: Transactions at Pret A Manger](#) is available.

In the week to 9 October 2022, the number of UK seated diners decreased by 3 percentage points and was 3 percentage points down on the previous year. However, seated diner numbers were 15 percentage points higher than the equivalent week of 2019. Seated diners in London were broadly unchanged in the latest week but were 5 percentage points higher than the previous year. They were 14 percentage points lower than the equivalent week of 2019.

National retail footfall

National retail footfall figures are supplied by Springboard, a provider of data on customer activity. The breakdowns in this indicator are as follows:

- overall footfall, which is the sum of the average footfall in each destination type weighted by their respective footfall volumes
- shopping centre, which is a space that does not form part of the public highway, and is owned and managed by a single landlord
- high street, which is the central part of the main business and commercial area of a town
- retail parks and shopping parks, which comprise retail warehouse units, wholly owned and managed by a single landlord

Springboard's weekly data are defined over a seven-day period running from Monday to Sunday. Week 40 of 2022 therefore refers to the period Monday 3 October to Sunday 9 October 2022. Users should note that all quoted figures have been rounded to the nearest integer.

Figure 1: In the week to 9 October 2022, overall weekly retail footfall was 89% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

Volume of daily retail footfall, percentage compared with the equivalent week of 2019, 1 January 2020 to 9 October 2022, UK

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

According to Springboard, in the UK in the week to 9 October 2022, the volume of overall weekly retail footfall for:

- the overall springboard index was 99% of the previous week, and 89% of the equivalent week of 2019
- high streets was unchanged from the previous week, and 89% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019
- retail parks was 98% of the previous week, and 96% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019
- shopping centres was 97% of the previous week, and 83% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019

In the week to 9 October 2022, there were decreases in retail footfall in nine English regions and UK countries. The largest week-on-week fall in retail footfall was in Scotland, which was at 95% of the level in the previous week.

Revolut debit card transactions: daily card spending by sector

Revolut is a financial technology company with over five million users within the UK financial payment ecosystem. Revolut data are presented on a per-account basis to account for Revolut's high user-growth over time, so that comparisons can be made on a like-for-like basis over a longer data time series. Revolut customers tend to be younger and more metropolitan than the average UK consumer, so spending may not be representative of the overall UK macroeconomic picture.

"Betting" expenditure can be erratic and is omitted from the data as its inclusion would lead to volatility in the spending category "entertainment" that affects user interpretation.

More information on Revolut data is provided in the accompanying [methodology article: Using Revolut cardholder data to derive real-time indicators of consumer spending QMI](#).

Sectoral card spending shows consumer value spending over time across spending categories, which may provide insights into consumer behaviour in response to changing current events, preferences, governmental policy and other factors. These series are comprised of aggregated and mutually exclusive Merchant Category Codes, which are business attributes that classify businesses dependent upon their primary business category:

- "retail spending" includes clothing, department, mixed retail, services and household stores
- "food and drink" includes supermarkets, convenience stores and other food providers
- "entertainment" includes membership clubs, cinemas, ticketed events, sports, galleries and tourist attractions
- "pubs, restaurants, and fast food" includes pubs, nightclubs, restaurants and fast food
- "travel" includes airlines, hotels and motoring
- "automotive fuel" includes service stations and automated fuel dispensers

Figure 2: Debit card spending on “automotive fuel” decreased by 6 percentage points in the latest week and was 29 percentage points lower than peak spending levels in the week to 14 August 2022

Total spend by sectoral group, seven-day average, week ending 1 January 2020 to 9 October 2022, UK, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices

Notes:

1. Percentage point differences are derived before rounding.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Revolut debit card transaction data showed that spending fell in all sectors in the week to 9 October 2022. The largest week-on-week decrease was in "retail" spending, which fell by 15 percentage points, though users should note that this fall is in line with expected monthly patterns. Most sectors have been broadly trending upwards since the beginning of 2022.

In the latest week, debit card spending fell in all age categories. The largest decrease was for those aged 18 to 34 years, with an 11-percentage-point fall in the latest week. Debit card spending for those aged 35 to 54 years, as well as those aged 55 years and over, decreased by 5 percentage points in the same period.

Online spending saw a week-on-week decrease of 19 percentage points, while in-store spending decreased by 3 percentage points.

UK spending on debit and credit cards

Daily CHAPS-based indicator

These data series are experimental real-time 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:

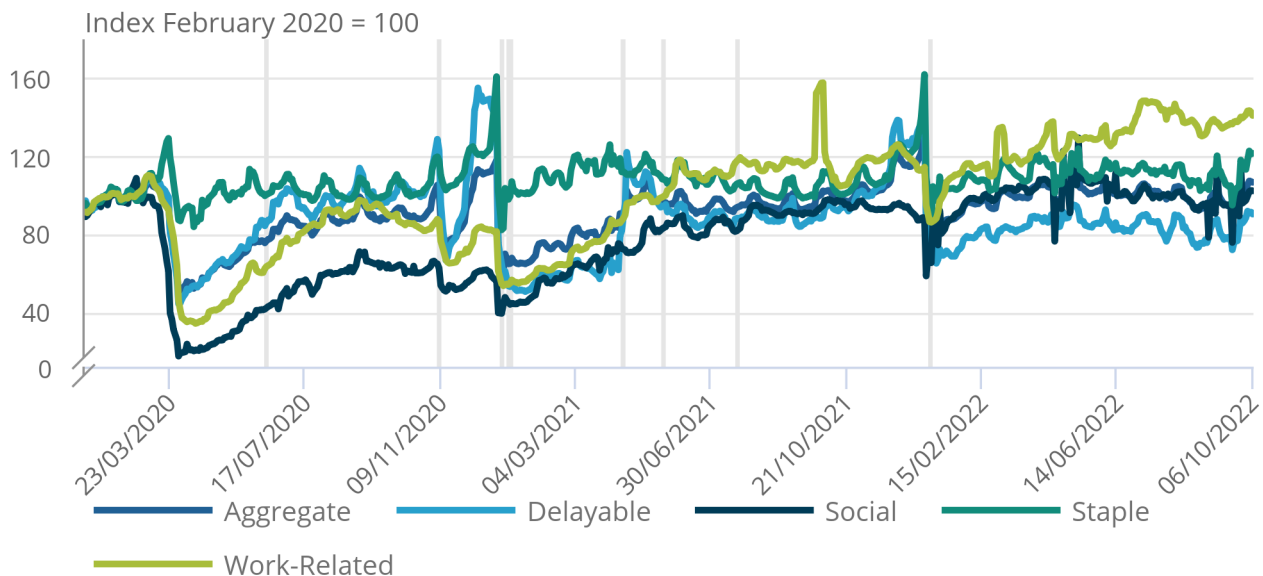
- "staples" refers to companies that sell essential goods that households need to purchase, such as food and utilities
- "work-related" refers to companies providing public transport or selling petrol
- "delayable" refers to companies selling goods whose purchase could be delayed, such as clothing or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

Figure 3: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 5 percentage points in the week to 6 October 2022 to 107% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 6 October 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices, UK

Figure 3: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 5 percentage points in the week to 6 October 2022 to 107% of its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 6 October 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices, UK



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 a slight time lag when compared with real-life events on the chart.
2. The vertical lines indicate notable events and coronavirus (COVID-19) restriction changes.
3. Percentage point difference is derived from current week and previous week index before rounding.

Figure 3 shows changes in the value of CHAPS payments received by large UK corporates from their credit and debit card processors, "merchant acquirers".

The spending categories recorded the following changes in the latest week:

- "staple" increased by 8 percentage points
- "social" increased by 6 percentage points
- "delayable" increased by 3 percentage points
- "work-related" (which includes spending on road fuel) remained broadly unchanged

"Work-related", "staple" and "social" spending were above their February 2020 average levels at 141%, 121%, and 102%, respectively. "Delayable" spending remained below its February 2020 average level at 90%.

UK spending on debit and credit cards: monthly CHAPS-based indicator

The monthly data time series is available in the [accompanying dataset: UK spending on credit and debit cards](#) 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.

The monthly CHAPS-based indicator of aggregate credit and debit card spending in September 2022 was at 98% of its February 2020 average level. This was broadly unchanged from August 2022 (97%) but was 2 percentage points higher than in September 2021 (96%).

All spending categories in the monthly CHAPS-based indicator from August to September 2022 were broadly unchanged. "Work-related" and "staple" spending for September 2022 were above their February 2020 average levels, at 138% and 109%, respectively. Over the same period, "social" and "delayable" spending remained below their February 2020 average levels, at 96% and 81%, respectively.

All spending categories had increased when compared with the equivalent period last year, apart from "delayable", which decreased by 7 percentage points. The largest increase was a 14-percentage-point rise in "work-related" spending.

4 . Business and workforce

Company incorporations in the week to 7 October 2022 were 19% above the level in the equivalent week of 2021 and 22% higher than 2019. In comparison, voluntary dissolution applications were 12% above the level in the equivalent week of 2021 and 7% higher than 2019. Our [accompanying dataset: Company incorporations, voluntary dissolutions and compulsory dissolutions](#) is available.

Potential redundancies in the week to 2 October 2022 were 68% of their pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) level and 124% of the level in the equivalent week of 2021. The number of employers proposing redundancies was 86% of pre-coronavirus level and 141% of the level in the equivalent week of 2021. Our [accompanying dataset: Advanced notification of potential redundancies](#) is available.

Online job adverts

These figures are experimental estimates of online job adverts provided by Adzuna, an online job search engine, by category and 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 4: The total number of online job adverts rose by 5% in the latest week but was 13% down on the equivalent week of 2021

Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 4 January 2019 to 7 October 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, UK

Notes:

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

There were increased numbers of job adverts in 22 of the 28 online job advert categories, while three decreased and three remained unchanged. The largest increase was in the "transport, logistics and warehouse" category, which rose by 15% in the latest week, in line with seasonal trends. The "transport, logistics and warehouse" category was only 71% of the level seen a year ago, but this is the highest it has been this year.

There were also notable week-on-week increases in the "customer service and support" (10%), "scientific and QA" (9%), "accounting and finance" (9%) and "healthcare and social care" (9%) categories. The number of adverts in "healthcare and social care" had been trending downwards since peaking in mid-December 2021. The category with the largest weekly fall was the "charity and voluntary" category, which decreased by 6%.

Figure 5: All 12 of the UK countries and English regions saw increases in number of online job adverts in the latest week

Volume of online job adverts by UK countries and English regions, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 7 February 2020 to 7 October 2022, non-seasonally adjusted

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

In the latest week, all 12 of the UK countries and English regions saw increases in the number of online job adverts. Despite week-on-week increases, Scotland was the only location that recorded a higher number of online job adverts compared with the level seen a year ago; this figure was 11% higher than one year before.

Meanwhile, the largest fall in online job adverts when compared with the equivalent day of 2021 was in the North East, which was down 27%. However, this region remained at 138% of its pre-coronavirus February 2020 level.

Business impact and insights

Initial results from Wave 67 of the [Business Insights and Conditions Survey](#) (BICS) were collected from 3 to 11 October 2022, with a response rate of 21.8% (8,262 responses).

Table 1: Nearly half (47%) of not permanently stopped trading UK businesses reported that prices of goods or services bought had increased in September 2022 when compared with the previous month
Prices of goods or services bought/sold, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 1 to 30 September 2022

	Prices increased	Prices stayed the same	Prices decreased	Not sure	Not applicable
Prices bought	47.0%	30.5%	Less than 1%	6.0%	16.0%
Prices sold	20.8%	56.2%	2.0%	4.4%	16.6%

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)

Notes

1. Initial weighted results Wave 67 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).
2. Table may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.

Table 2: Nearly half (46%) of not permanently stopped trading UK businesses expect prices of goods or services sold to remain the same for November 2022, compared with 28% that think they will increase
Price expectations of goods or services sold, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 1 to 30 November 2022

	Prices will increase	Prices will stay the same	Prices will decrease	Not sure	Not applicable
All industries	28.0%	46.4%	1.5%	10.1%	14.1%

Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)

Notes

1. Initial weighted results Wave 67 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).
2. Table may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.

5 . Energy and housing

System Average Price (SAP) of gas

This is the average price of all gas traded through the balancing market. Market participants post bids or offers for volumes of gas a day-ahead and within-day trades. The SAP aggregates the trades conducted on the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM). This is the market that the National Grid use in their role as residual balancer. Other markets exist for wholesale gas trading in Great Britain.

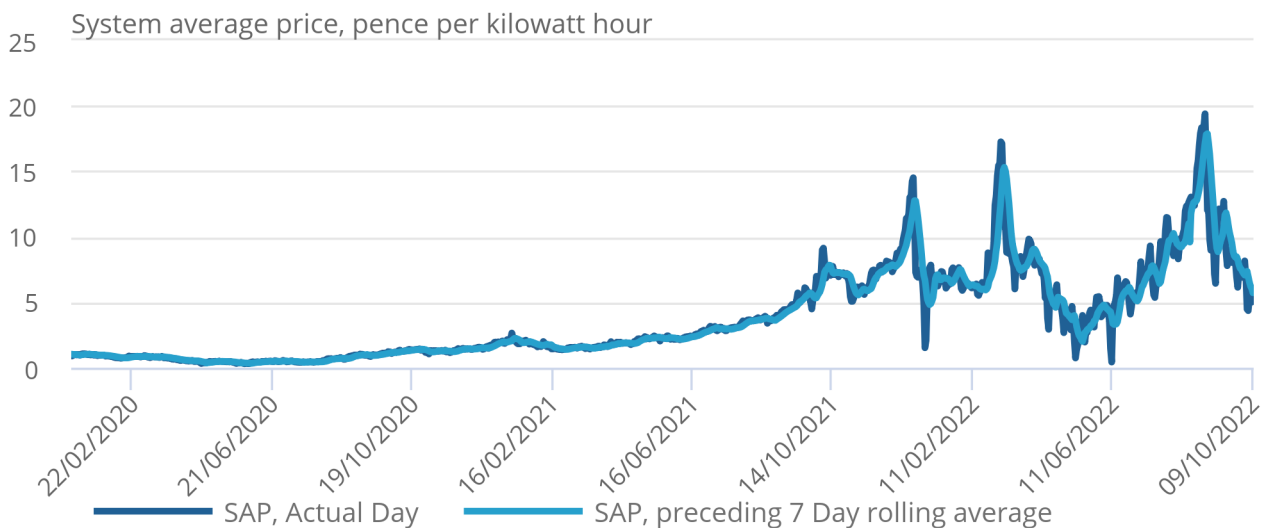
These data can be used to understand the general trend of gas prices within the UK. However, the data should be treated with caution as these can be subject to extreme within-day trading prices and may skew actual traded prices. It must also be noted that while these prices reflect spot prices on the day, traders can opt for futures contracts where the buyer and the seller agree the market-determined price for gas for a future date. The daily SAP is used to determine the futures price and is therefore a useful indicator of supply constraints and demand pressures.

Figure 6: The preceding seven-day rolling average gas price decreased by 19% in the week to 9 October 2022 and is now 65% lower than the peak level recorded on the 28 August 2022

System average price, pence per kilowatt hour, 1 January 2020 to 9 October 2022, GB, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 6: The preceding seven-day rolling average gas price decreased by 19% in the week to 9 October 2022 and is now 65% lower than the peak level recorded on the 28 August 2022

System average price, pence per kilowatt hour, 1 January 2020 to 9 October 2022, GB, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: National Grid

Notes:

1. The price trends observed will differ from that of the monthly Producer Price Inflation (PPI) series published by the ONS because of the differences in data sources and methods.

6 . Transport

In the week to 9 October 2022, total ship visits, and cargo and tanker visits, increased by 2% and 4%, respectively, compared with the previous week. Our [accompanying dataset: Weekly shipping indicators](#) is available.

Data for traffic camera activity in the latest week are available in our [accompanying dataset: Traffic camera activity](#).

Road traffic levels were broadly unchanged in the week to 10 October 2022. Road traffic levels of heavy goods vehicles on Monday 10 October 2022 were 5 percentage points below the equivalent day last year (Monday 11 October 2021), and light commercial vehicle traffic was 3 percentage points higher; car traffic levels were similar to last year. These statistics are published by the [Department for Transport](#).

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.

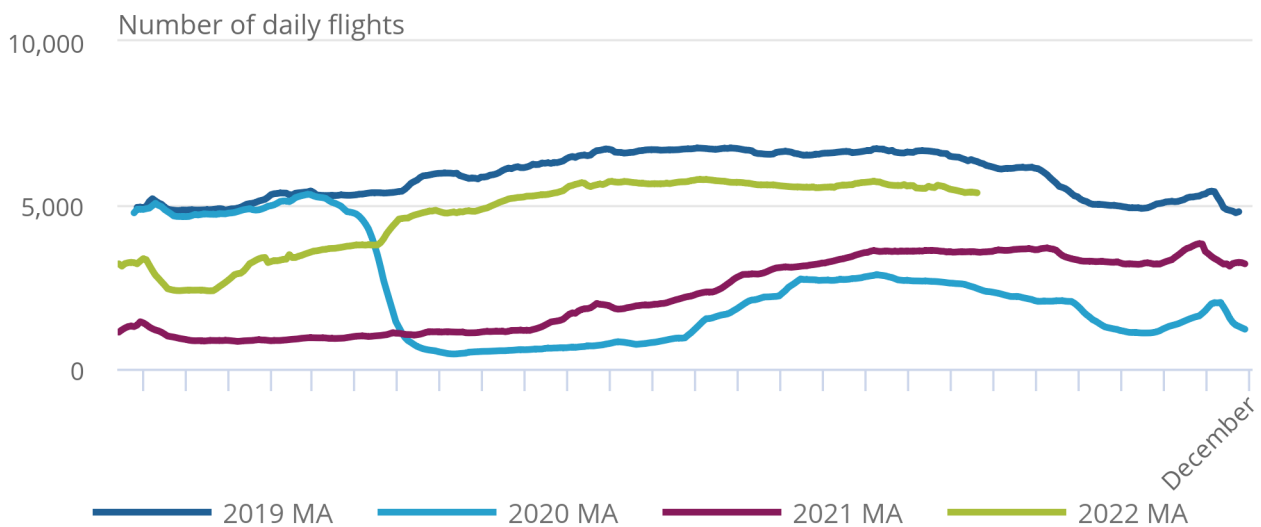
Data from EUROCONTROL do not include information on the number of passengers or volume of cargo carried on UK flights. For various reasons, flights may not be operating at full capacity, and therefore trends in passengers and cargo may differ from trends in flights presented here.

Figure 7: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights has been broadly consistent at around 85% of the equivalent week of 2019 since the end of April 2022

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 9 October 2022, UK

Figure 7: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights has been broadly consistent at around 85% of the equivalent week of 2019 since the end of April 2022

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 9 October 2022, UK



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

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

7 . Data

[Advanced notification of potential redundancies](#)

Dataset | Released 13 October 2022

Number of potential redundancies from Insolvency Service HR1 forms and number of employers proposing redundancies, Great Britain.

[Revolut spending on debit cards](#)

Dataset | Released 13 October 2022

Experimental indices of Revolut debit card transaction data, UK. Includes sectoral, age and online versus in-store breakdowns. Daily seven-day averages updated weekly plus monthly averages.

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

Dataset | Released 13 October 2022

Daily and rolling average System Average Price (SAP) of gas traded in Great Britain over the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM).

[Traffic camera activity](#)

Dataset | Released 13 October 2022

Busyness indices using traffic camera data to monitor flows of cars, pedestrians, cyclists, buses and commercial vehicles for selected cities and regions of the UK. Experimental Statistics.

[Transactions at Pret A Manger](#)

Dataset | Released 13 October 2022

Weekly transactional data from approximately 400 Pret A Manger stores around the UK.

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

Dataset | Released 13 October 2022

These data series are experimental real-time indicators for monitoring UK spending using debit and credit cards. They track the daily CHAPS payments made by credit and debit card payment processors to around 100 major UK retail corporates, based on data supplied by the Bank of England.

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 the [accompanying dataset page](#).

8 . 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.

9 . 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](#).

10 . 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

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.

11 . Related links

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

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

Social insights on daily life and events, including the cost of living, working arrangements and well-being from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

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

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses. 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.

12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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