

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 20 March 2025

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

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1 . Main points

- The seasonally adjusted “Total” Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% in February 2025, compared with January 2025; this is partly caused by increases in Direct Debit failures for “Loans” (4%) and “Mortgages” (2%) (Pay.UK, Vocalink). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- Total Revolut debit card spending decreased by 6% in February 2025, compared with the previous month, but increased by 2% when compared with February 2024 (Revolut). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- Total retail footfall decreased by 4% in the week to 16 March 2025, compared with the previous week, but increased by 2% when compared with the equivalent week of 2024 (MRI OnLocation). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The number of new online job adverts increased by 10% in February 2025, compared with February 2024 (Textkernel). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- More than a quarter (26%) of trading businesses reported that their turnover had decreased in February 2025, compared with the previous calendar month; this is down 2 percentage points from January, but in line with historical movements seen at this time of year ([final results from wave 128 of our Business Insights and Conditions Survey](#)).
- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 1% to 4.265 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) in February 2025, compared with the previous month; the System price of electricity decreased by 16% to 10.173p/kWh over the same period (Elexon, National Gas Transmission). [Section 5: Energy](#).
- The total number of ship visits to major UK ports increased by 2% in February 2025, compared with the previous month, but decreased by 7% when compared with February 2024 ship visits (exactEarth). [Section 6: Transport](#).

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 10: Data sources and quality.

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 . Consumer behaviour

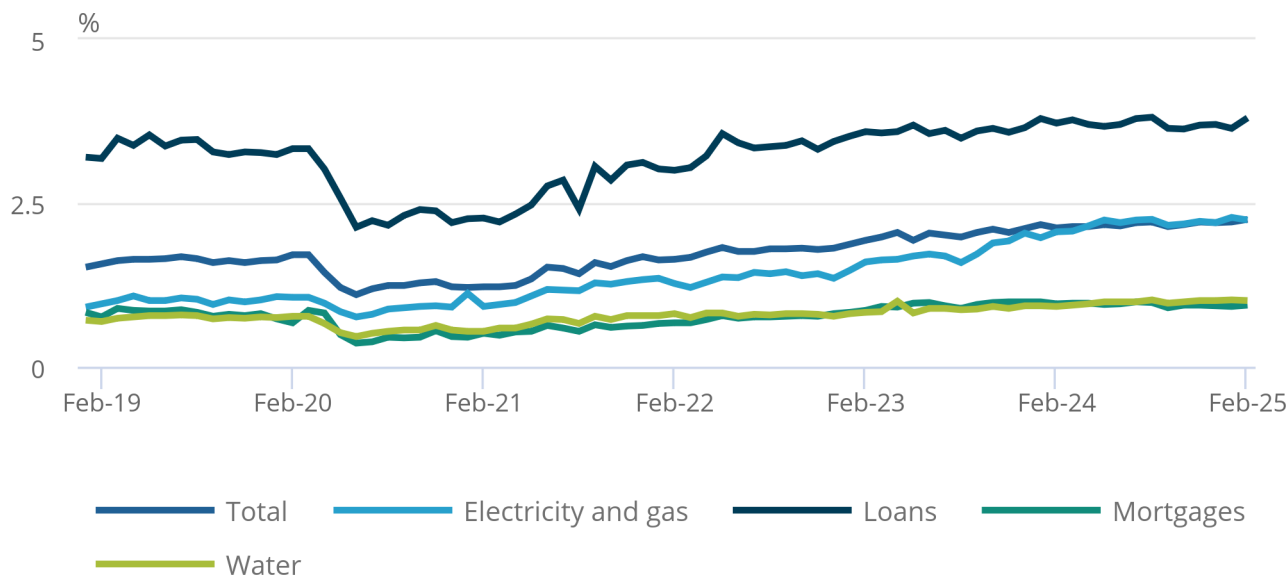
Monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount and failure rate

Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate for February 2025 increased by 2%, compared with the previous month, and increased by 6%, compared with February 2024

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to February 2025, seasonally adjusted

Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate for February 2025 increased by 2%, compared with the previous month, and increased by 6%, compared with February 2024

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to February 2025, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit failure, comprising data beyond the five categories published in our [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#).
3. The underlying failure rates are low, so month-to-month volatility is expected within this series.

In February 2025, the seasonally adjusted “Total” Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2%, compared with the previous month. This increase was partly caused by a 4% rise in failure rates for “Loans” and a 2% rise in “Mortgages”. “Electricity and Gas” and “Water” decreased by 2% and 1%, respectively, over the same period.

The seasonally adjusted “Total” Direct Debit failure rate increased by 6% in February 2025, compared with February 2024. This was partly caused by increases in failure rates of 11% for “Electricity and Gas” and 10% for “Water”. This was slightly offset by a decrease in failure rates of 2% for “Mortgages”.

The seasonally adjusted “Total” Direct debit average transaction amount increased by 1% in February 2025, compared with the previous month. Over this period, Direct Debit average transaction amounts rose by 1% for “Water”, but fell by 1% for “Electricity and Gas”. The average transaction amount remained broadly unchanged for both “Loans” and “Mortgages”.

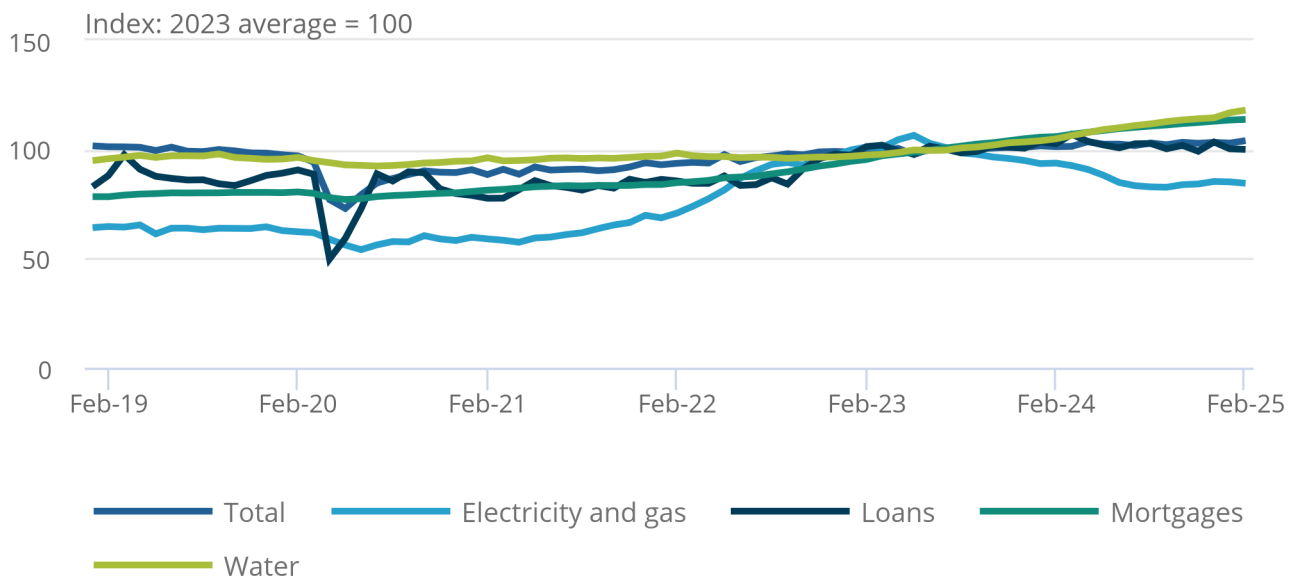
The seasonally adjusted “Total” Direct Debit average transaction amount increased by 3%, compared with February 2024. This was partly caused by increases in average transaction amounts of 13% for “Water” and 7% for “Mortgages”, and a 10% decrease in average transaction amount for “Electricity and Gas”.

Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount in February 2025 increased by 1%, compared with January 2025, and increased by 3%, compared with February 2024

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2019 to February 2025, seasonally adjusted

Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount in February 2025 increased by 1%, compared with January 2025, and increased by 3%, compared with February 2024

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2019 to February 2025, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit transactions, comprising data beyond the five categories published in our [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#).
3. Data are not adjusted for inflation.

The monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount are anonymised and aggregated datasets made available to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) by Pay.UK and Vocalink. The data are unadjusted for inflation and reflect economic activity in nominal terms.

For further details on what is covered within this indicator, see our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#).

Our accompanying [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#) is available.

Revolut spending on debit cards

Total Revolut debit card spending decreased by 4% in the week to 16 March 2025, compared with the previous week. The largest decreases were seen in the “Services” sector (11%) and “Entertainment” sector (6%).

Total Revolut debit card spending decreased by 6% in February 2025, compared with the previous month. The largest decreases were in the “Services” sector, which fell by 22%, and the “Shopping” sector, which fell by 7%.

Total Revolut debit card spending increased by 2% when compared with February 2024. The largest increases were in the “Entertainment” sector (10%) and the “Health” sector (7%).

Our accompanying [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset is available](#).

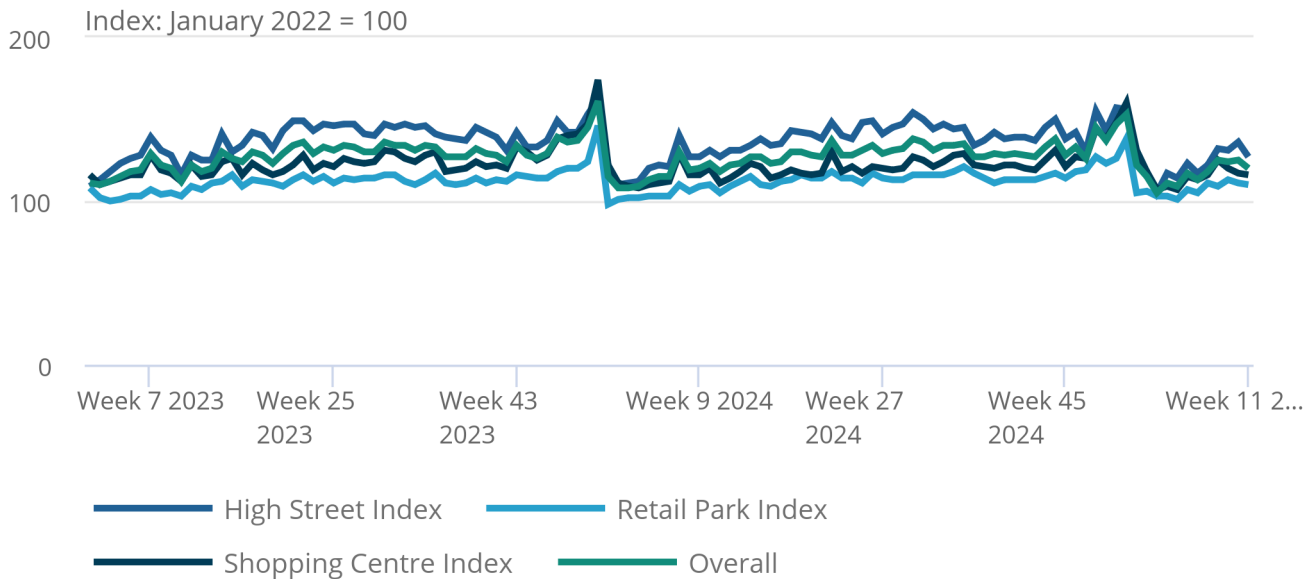
National retail footfall

Figure 3: Overall retail footfall in the week to 16 March 2025 decreased by 4% from the previous week, but was 2% higher than the same week of 2024

Index of daily retail footfall volumes, UK, 1 January 2023 to 16 March 2025, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 3: Overall retail footfall in the week to 16 March 2025 decreased by 4% from the previous week, but was 2% higher than the same week of 2024

Index of daily retail footfall volumes, UK, 1 January 2023 to 16 March 2025, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: MRI OnLocation

Notes:

1. Peaks in footfall correspond to bank holidays and school holidays and for the previous 12 months are as follows: Week 7, 2024 February school half term; Week 15, 2024 Easter bank holidays and school holidays; Week 21, 2024 late May bank holiday and school half term; Weeks 30 to 35, 2024 school holidays; Week 43, 2024 October half-term; Week 51, 2024 Christmas bank holidays and school holidays.

Retail footfall decreased across all three location categories in the week to 16 March 2025. High streets saw a 6% decrease, and retail parks and shopping centres both fell by 1%. Overall footfall increased by 2% when compared with the equivalent week of 2024. Retail park and shopping centre footfall both increased by 4% and high street footfall increased by 1%.

Overall retail footfall decreased in 7 of the 12 UK regions when compared with the previous week. The largest decrease was in East England, which fell by 8%. North West England, Northern Ireland, and Wales all increased by 5%. There were increases in 7 of the 12 regions, compared with the equivalent week of 2024. The largest increases were in Scotland, which increased by 8%, and North East England, which increased 6%.

Automotive fuel spending

In February 2025, the annual growth rate for the average price of automotive fuel increased by 1 percentage point, compared with the previous month. It increased by 5 percentage points, compared with the equivalent month of 2024.

The annual growth rate for average automotive fuel demand per transaction increased by 1 percentage point, compared with the previous month, and remained broadly unchanged when compared with the equivalent month of 2024.

Our accompanying [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#) is available.

4 . Business and workforce

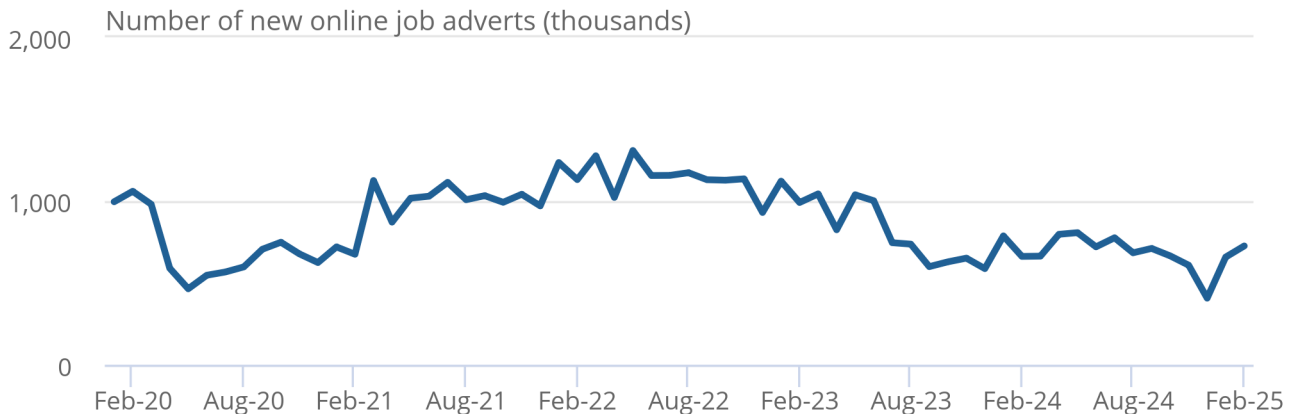
Textkernel new online job adverts

Figure 4: There were approximately 725,000 new adverts in February 2025, which was 10% higher than in February 2024

Volume of new adverts, UK, January 2020 to February 2025, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 4: There were approximately 725,000 new adverts in February 2025, which was 10% higher than in February 2024

Volume of new adverts, UK, January 2020 to February 2025, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Textkernel

Notes:

1. New adverts are the total number of adverts that have gone online in the month. This is calculated by counting the number of adverts that appear for the first time across the calendar month.
2. Counts are rounded to the nearest 5.

The number of new adverts increased by 10% when compared with February 2024. They increased from approximately 662,000 adverts to just over 725,000 adverts in February 2025. The number of new adverts in February 2025 also increased by 10% when compared with the previous month.

Figure 5: The number of new adverts increased in all UK countries and English regions in February 2025 when compared with February 2024

Volume of new adverts, UK countries and English regions, January 2020 to February 2025, non-seasonally adjusted

Notes:

1. New adverts represent the total number of adverts that have gone online in the month, calculated by counting the number of adverts that appear for the first time across the calendar month.
2. Counts are rounded to the nearest 5.
3. For information on how adverts were assigned to geographical locations, see [measuring labour demand volumes across the UK using Textkernel data user guide](#).

All UK countries and English regions had an increase in the number of new adverts in February 2025, compared with the previous year. The largest percentage increase was in Northern Ireland (39%) and the smallest was in London (1%).

The number of new adverts increased in 22 of the 26 occupation groups in February 2025, compared with February 2024. The occupation group that saw the largest percentage increase in the volume of new adverts over this period was "Transport and mobile machine drivers and operatives", which increased by 61%. This was followed by "Community and civil enforcement occupations" and "Elementary trades and related occupations", which both increased by 46%.

The occupation group with the largest percentage decrease in the volume of new adverts over the same period was "Health professionals", which fell by 8%.

Details on the methods used to compile these estimates are available in our [Measuring labour demand volumes across the UK using Textkernel data user guide](#). For further detailed tables using similar methodology and sources, see our [Labour demand by Standard Occupation Classification datasets](#).

5 . Energy

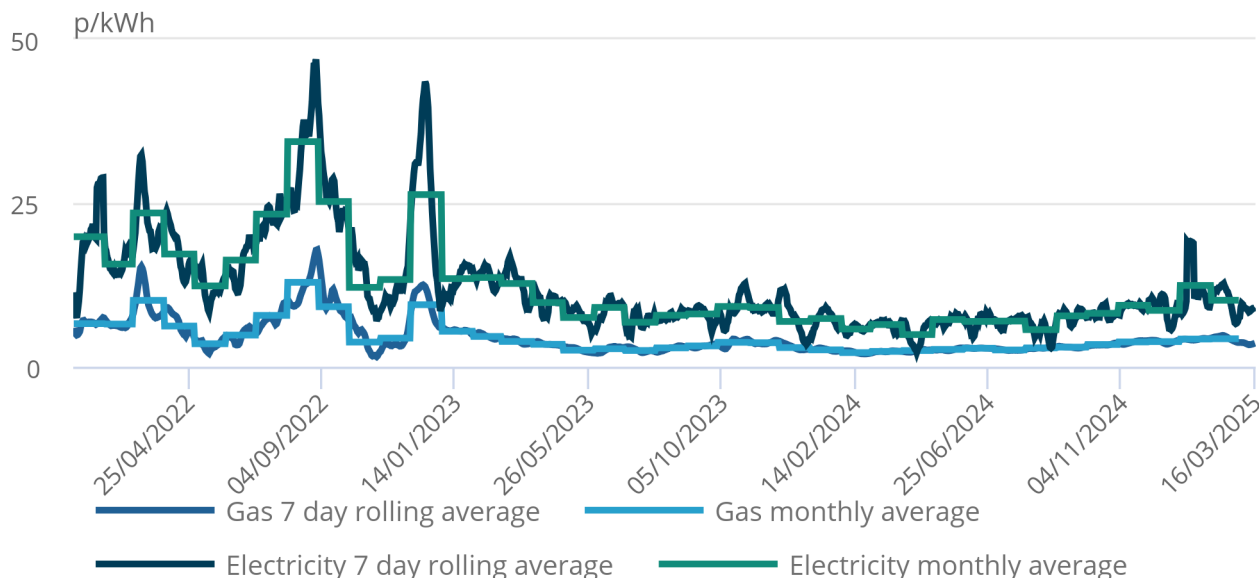
System Average Price of gas and System Price of electricity

Figure 6: The System Average Price of gas increased by 1% in February 2025, compared with the previous month, while the System Price of electricity decreased by 16%

System Average Price (SAP) of gas and System Price of electricity, monthly average and seven-day rolling average, UK, 1 January 2022 to 16 March 2025, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 6: The System Average Price of gas increased by 1% in February 2025, compared with the previous month, while the System Price of electricity decreased by 16%

System Average Price (SAP) of gas and System Price of electricity, monthly average and seven-day rolling average, UK, 1 January 2022 to 16 March 2025, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Elexon, National Gas Transmission

The System Average Price of gas increased by 1% in February 2025, compared with the previous month. It increased from a monthly average price of 4.222 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) to 4.265p/kWh. This was 98% higher than February 2024, which had a monthly average price of 2.149p/kWh.

The System price of electricity decreased by 16% in February 2025, compared with the previous month. It decreased from a monthly average price of 12.116p/kWh to 10.173p/kWh. This was 77% higher than in February 2024, which had a monthly average price of 5.754p/kWh.

Our accompanying [System Average Price of gas dataset](#) and [System Price of electricity dataset](#) are available.

6 . Transport

Daily UK flights

The seasonally adjusted total number of flights in February 2025 remained broadly unchanged, compared with January 2025 and February 2024.

Our accompanying [Daily UK flights dataset](#) is available.

Weekly shipping indicators

The monthly count of total ships visiting selected UK ports increased by 2% in February 2025, compared with the previous month. The monthly count of cargo ship and tanker visits decreased by 3% over the same period.

Both the total number of ship visits and the monthly count of cargo ship and tanker visits decreased by 7%, compared with the equivalent month of 2024.

Our accompanying [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#) is available.

7 . Housing

Energy Performance Building Certificates

The total number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) for new dwellings across England and Wales increased by 25% in the month to February 2025, compared with the previous month. For existing dwellings, it increased by 27% over the same period.

The total number of EPCs for new dwellings decreased by 25% and the number of EPCs for existing dwellings increased by 1%, compared with the equivalent month of 2024.

These estimates are all in line with seasonal expectations.

Our accompanying [Energy Performance Building Certificates \(EPC\) dataset](#) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's weekly [EPCs for domestic properties dataset](#) are available.

8 . Data

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

Dataset | Released 20 March 2025

Daily data showing System Average Price (SAP) of gas, and rolling seven-day average, traded in Great Britain over the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM). These are official statistics in development. Source: National Gas Transmission.

[System Price of electricity](#)

Dataset | Released 20 March 2025

Daily data showing the System Price of electricity, and rolling seven-day average, in Great Britain. These are official statistics in development. Source: Elexon

[Daily UK flights](#)

Dataset | Released 20 March 2025

Daily data showing UK flight numbers and rolling seven-day average, including flights to, from, and within the UK. These are official statistics in development. Source: EUROCONTROL.

This section lists a selection of data available in this publication. Please note that because of our data sharing agreement with MRI onLocation, we are unable to provide a dataset for our footfall metric. For the full list of available datasets, please see our [accompanying dataset page](#).

9 . 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.

Seasonal adjustment

Seasonal adjustment is the identification and removal of consistent and systematic variation in time series associated with the time of year. For more information on seasonal variation, and how we implement seasonal adjustment, see Section 2 of our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology article](#).

10 . Data sources and quality

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. Find out 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 if the statistics are of sufficient quality and value to be published as official statistics, or if 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. If you would like to get in touch, please email 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 this section. Please note that there may be some change to the intended release frequency for 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

- [UK credit and debit card payments](#); updated 5 December 2024.
- [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.
- [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.
- [Company incorporations, voluntary dissolutions and compulsory dissolutions dataset](#); updated 30 January 2024.
- [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#); updated 13 March 2025.
- [System Average price of gas dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.
- [System Price of electricity dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.
- [Energy Performance Building Certificates \(EPC\) dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.
- [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.
- [Daily UK flights dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.

Monthly data release

- [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#); updated 13 March 2025.
- [Textkernel new online job adverts dataset](#); updated 20 March 2025.
- [Value Added Tax \(VAT\) flash estimates dataset](#); updated 17 October 2024.
- [Renter affordability for new tenancies dataset](#); updated 13 March 2025.

Quarterly data release

- [Sales and jobs in small businesses dataset](#); updated 7 November 2024

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. We use 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.

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

[Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#)

Methodology | Last updated 2 April 2024

Methodology for the data collection, aggregation, analysis and presentation for the real-time indicators bulletin.

[GDP monthly estimate, UK](#)

Bulletin | Released monthly

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK. It estimates the size of and growth in the economy.

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

Bulletin | Released monthly

Social insights on daily life and events, including important issues, cost of living, and artificial intelligence 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, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience.

12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 20 March 2025, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 20 March 2025](#)