Office for National Statistics

Statistical bulletin

# Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 23 June 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.

## Notice

### 23 June 2022

Flash estimates of aggregated value added tax (VAT) data are unavailable this week; we will reinstate these data in a future bulletin.

Please note that this week we have revised our methodology for interpolating data in Adzuna online jobs. This has resulted in slight revisions to data for 27 May 2022 and 3 June 2022. No other dates were affected.

# Table of contents

# 1 . Main points

- The total volume of online job adverts decreased by 5% on 17 June 2022 to 123% of their February 2020 pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) average level (Adzuna). Section 3.

- Of currently trading businesses, 20% reported that their turnover decreased in May 2022 compared with April 2022; in contrast, 14% reported that turnover had increased (initial results from Wave 59 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)). Section 3.

- Consumer behaviour indicators largely showed some increased activity this week, with visits to "retail and recreation" increasing by 6%, while the number of transactions increased at all Pret A Manger locations except London Airports; in comparison, UK credit and debit card purchases decreased by 2 percentage points, with decreases in all categories except "work related", which increased by 6 percentage points (Google Mobility, Pret A Manger, Bank of England CHAPS data). Section 4.

- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 64% in the week to 19 June 2022, the second highest weekly increase this year, increasing to 35% of the peak level seen on 10 March 2022 (National Grid). Section 5.

- Transport indicators showed a mixed picture this week, with total ship visits, and cargo and tanker ship visits increasing by 5% and 3%, respectively; meanwhile, daily UK flights and road traffic were both broadly unchanged from the previous week (exactEarth, EUROCONTROL, Department for Transport). Section 6.

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 break in the available shipping data (from 14 to 19 June 2021) is when the data collection system changed.

2. The break in the available shipping data (from 9 to 21 May 2022) have been removed due to technical issues.

# 3 . Business and workforce

The total volume of online job adverts decreased by 5% compared to the previous week to 123% of its February 2020 pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) average level, with decreases across all English regions and UK countries.

Company incorporations decreased by 16% when compared with the previous week, while voluntary dissolution applications fell by 7% across the same period. Compared with the equivalent week of 2019, incorporations and voluntary dissolution applications were 22% and 13% higher, respectively.

Potential redundancies were 57% of their pre-coronavirus level in the week to 12 June 2022.

## Online job adverts by category

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 1: The total volume of online job adverts decreased by 5% and was 123% of its February 2020 pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) average level on 17 June 2022**

**Volume of online job adverts by category, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 4 January 2019 to 17 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted**

**Notes:**

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

2. Users should note that week-on-week changes in online job advert volumes are outlined as percentages, rather than as percentage point changes. Percentage change figures quoted in the commentary will therefore not necessarily match the percentage point changes observed in the charts and [accompanying dataset](#).

**Download the data**

[.xlsx](#)

Of the 28 categories, 22 saw a decrease in the number of online job adverts on Friday 17 June 2022 when compared with the previous week. The largest decrease was in "IT, computing and software" (14%), followed by "wholesale and retail" (13%). The largest increases compared with the previous week were in "travel and tourism" and "transport, logistics and warehouse", both rising by 3%.

The category with the highest level of online job adverts when compared with its February 2020 pre-coronavirus pandemic average levels was "transport, logistics and warehouse" at 227%, followed by "domestic help" at 223%.

## Job adverts by region

**Figure 2: Online job adverts decreased in all English regions and UK countries from the previous week; the largest decrease occurred in London where they fell by 6%**

**Volume of online job adverts by UK countries and English regions, index: 100 = February 2020 average, 7 February 2020 to 17 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted**

**Download the data**

[.xlsx](#)

The largest decreases were seen in London, Northern Ireland and Scotland, falling by 6%, 5% and 5%, respectively. Despite the weekly decreases, all English regions and UK countries remain above their February 2020 average level.

# Business impact and insights

Initial results from Wave 59 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) cover the reference period 1 May to 31 May 2022, with a response rate of 22.1% (8,417 responses). The survey was live for the period 13 to 21 June 2022.

Table 1: A net 6% of trading businesses reported a decrease in turnover in May 2022, compared with April 2022, down from 10% reported between March and April 2022

Impact on turnover, businesses currently trading, weighted by count, UK, 1 May to 31 May 2022

|  | All Industries |
| --- | --- |
| **Turnover increased** | 14% |
| **Turnover stayed the same** | 56% |
| **Turnover decreased** | 20% |
| **Not sure** | 10% |

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

Notes

1. Initial weighted results, Wave 59 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

2. Table may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

Table 2: More than a third of UK businesses (35%) reported production, suppliers or both had been affected by energy prices in mid-June 2022, a slight increase from 33% in the second half of May 2022

Affected by energy prices, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 13 June to 21 June 2022

|  | All Industries |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes, production has been affected** | 6% |
| **Yes, suppliers have been affected** | 14% |
| **Yes, both production and suppliers have been affected** | 15% |
| **No, the business has not been affected** | 25% |
| **Not sure** | 17% |
| **Not applicable** | 23% |

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

Notes

1. Initial weighted results, Wave 59 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

2. Table may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

# 4 . Consumer behaviour

Google mobility data showed that visits to all category types increased in the week to 17 June 2022, with the largest being in "park visits" and "retail and recreation", which increased by 13% and 6%, respectively, coinciding with a period of warm weather across parts of the UK. "Park visits" and "grocery & pharmacy visits" were the only categories above their pre-coronavirus average, at 158% and 109%, respectively.

Transactions at Pret A Manger stores increased at almost all locations in the latest week, with the largest increase being in Manchester, which rose by 16 percentage points, and London suburban and London City locations, where they increased by 14 percentage points.

The UK credit and debit card purchases indicator decreased by 2 percentage points to 100% of its February 2020 average in the week to 16 June 2022. There were decreases in all spending categories with the exception of "work related", which increased by 6 percentage points. This category includes spending on road fuel.

UK seated diners increased by 20 percentage points in the week to 19 June 2022, following the 36 percentage point decrease in the previous week, to 127% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019.

## Transactions at Pret A Manger

Pret A Manger is a sandwich and coffee shop franchise chain, operating around 400 stores across the UK. Its transactional data are presented as an index and show total weekly till transactions at Pret A Manger shops as a proportion of the average weekly level in the first four weeks of 2020 (between Friday 3 January and Thursday 30 January 2020). Because of this comparison across the data time series, users should expect an element of seasonality in the data.

More information on the areas featured is available in our Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology. These data are also made available every Tuesday through the Bloomberg Pret Index.

**Figure 3: Transactions at all store locations increased in the week to 16 June 2022**

**Transactions in Pret A Manger stores, UK, week ending 4 March 2021 to 16 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted**

## Figure 3: Transactions at all store locations increased in the week to 16 June 2022

Transactions in Pret A Manger stores, UK, week ending 4 March 2021 to 16 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted
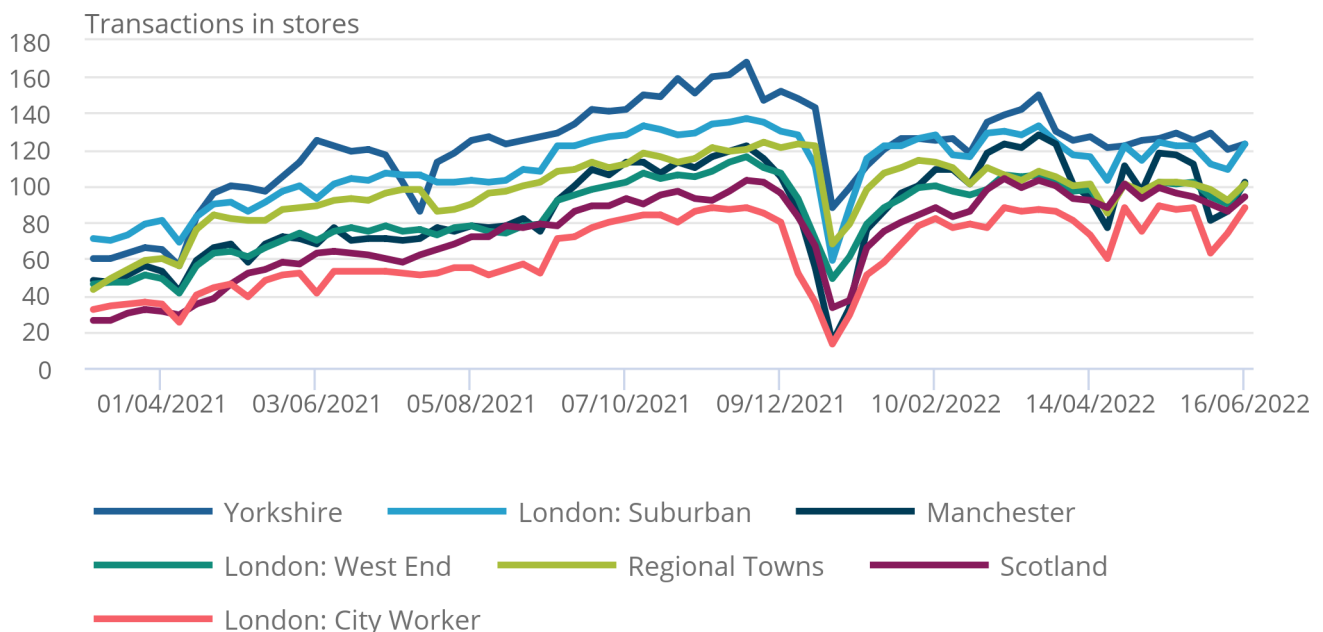


Source: Pret A Manger

Notes:

1. Dine-in services in England were suspended during the third national lockdown, which remained in place until Step 3 (17 May 2021) of England's roadmap out of lockdown.

2. Users should note not all store locations reopened as coronavirus restrictions were eased.

3. The index begins on 4 March 2021 as most stores were closed before this therefore the corresponding indices were mostly zero.

Manchester had the largest increase when compared with the previous week, rising by 16 percentage points to 102% of its January 2020 average level. Yorkshire and London suburban stores, which increased by 3 and 14 percentage points respectively, have the joint highest number of transactions compared with January 2020 averages, at 123%. Yorkshire had the lowest increase of any region.

**Figure 4: Transactions in London airport stores fell by 2 percentage points in the latest week, and are now at 131% of their January 2020 average level**

**Transactions in Pret A Manger stores, UK, week ending 4 March 2021 to 16 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted**

Figure 4: Transactions in London airport stores fell by 2 percentage points in the latest week, and are now at 131% of their January 2020 average level

Transactions in Pret A Manger stores, UK, week ending 4 March 2021 to 16 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted
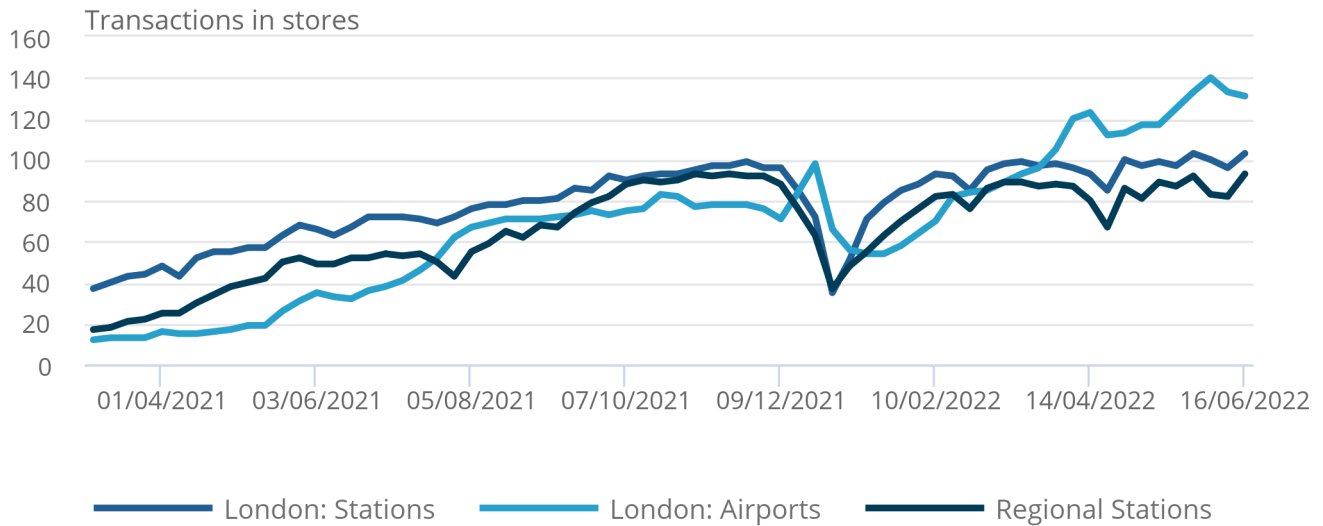


Source: Pret A Manger

# 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 accompanyingmethodology 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" (which includes spending on road fuel) 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 5: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases decreased by 2 percentage points in the week to 16 June 2022 to 100%, broadly equal to its February 2020 average**

**Index February 2020 = 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 16 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices**



Figure 5: The aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases decreased by 2 percentage points in the week to 16 June 2022 to 100%, broadly equal to its February 2020 average

Index February 2020 &#x3D; 100, a backward looking seven-day rolling average, 13 January 2020 to 16 June 2022, non-seasonally adjusted, nominal prices
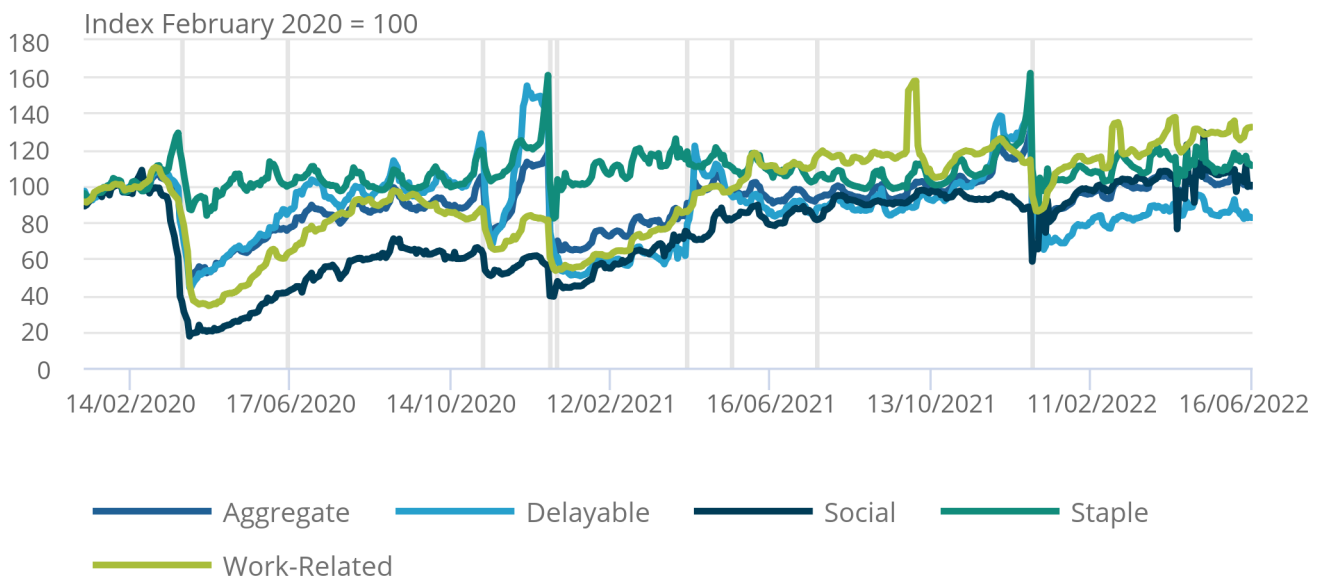
**Source: ONS and Bank of England calculations**

**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 5 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:

- "work-related" (which includes spending on road fuel) increased by 6 percentage points

- "staple" decreased by 4 percentage points

- "social" decreased by 3 percentage points

- "delayable" decreased by 1 percentage point

"Work-related" and "staple" spending were above their February 2020 average levels at 132% and 111%, respectively. "Social" spending was broadly equal to its February 2020 average level and "delayable" spending remained below the February 2020 average level at 82%.

# 5 . Housing and energy

## 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 increased by 64% in the week to 19 June 2022**

**System average price, pence per kilowatt hour, 1 January 2020 to 19 June 2022, UK, non-seasonally adjusted**



Figure 6: The preceding seven-day rolling average gas price increased by 64% in the week to 19 June 2022

System average price, pence per kilowatt hour, 1 January 2020 to 19 June 2022, UK, non-seasonally adjusted
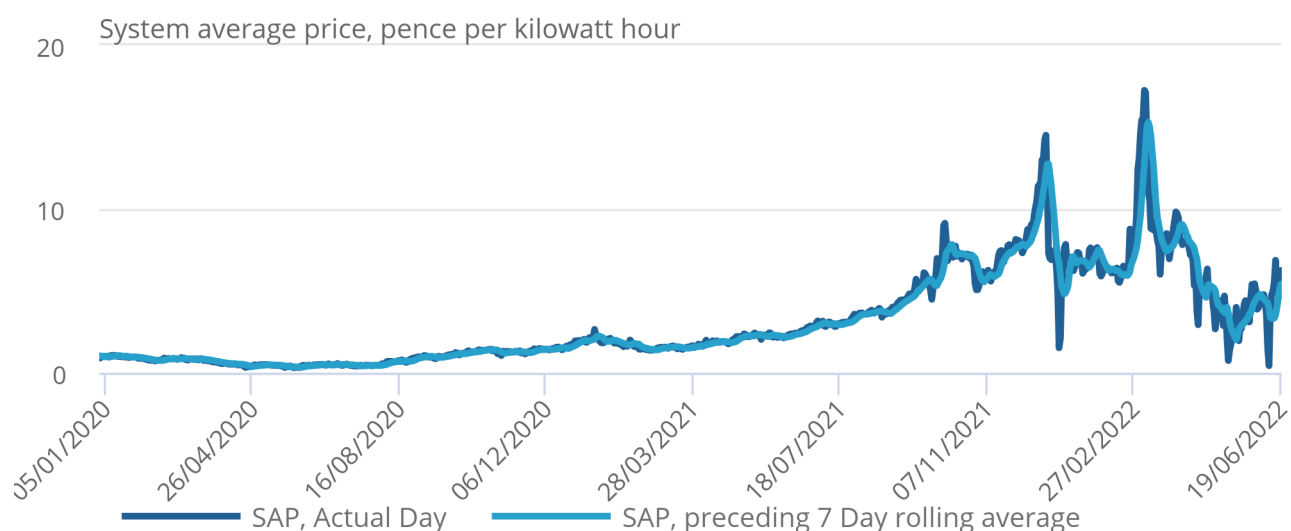
**Source: National Grid**

**Notes:**

1. The price trends observed above 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.

On 23 June 2022, the average SAP increased by 64% to 5.4 pence per kilowatt hour. This increase is the second highest weekly increase seen this year, with the highest increase occurring in the week to 6 March 2022 (66%). This increase follows a general decrease in the SAP of gas since its peak on 10 March 2022.

The full data time series of actual day SAP and the preceding seven-day average, including data from 2018 to the present, can be found in the [accompanying dataset](#).

# 6 . Transport

Transport indicators showed a mixed picture in the latest week. Total ship visits increased by 5%, and cargo and tanker visits increased by 3%, compared with the previous week.

Daily UK flight levels compared with the equivalent week of 2019 were at 86% in the week to 19 June 2022, unchanged from the previous week.

Road traffic on Monday 20 June 2022 was broadly unchanged from the previous week at 101% of the level seen on the Monday of the first week in February 2020.

# 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 7: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 86% of the equivalent week of 2019, at 5,681 in the week to 19 June 2022**

**Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 19 June 2022, UK**

## Figure 7: The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 86% of the equivalent week of 2019, at 5,681 in the week to 19 June 2022

Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average, 2 January 2019 to 19 June 2022, UK



Number of daily flights, non-seasonally adjusted, seven-day moving average
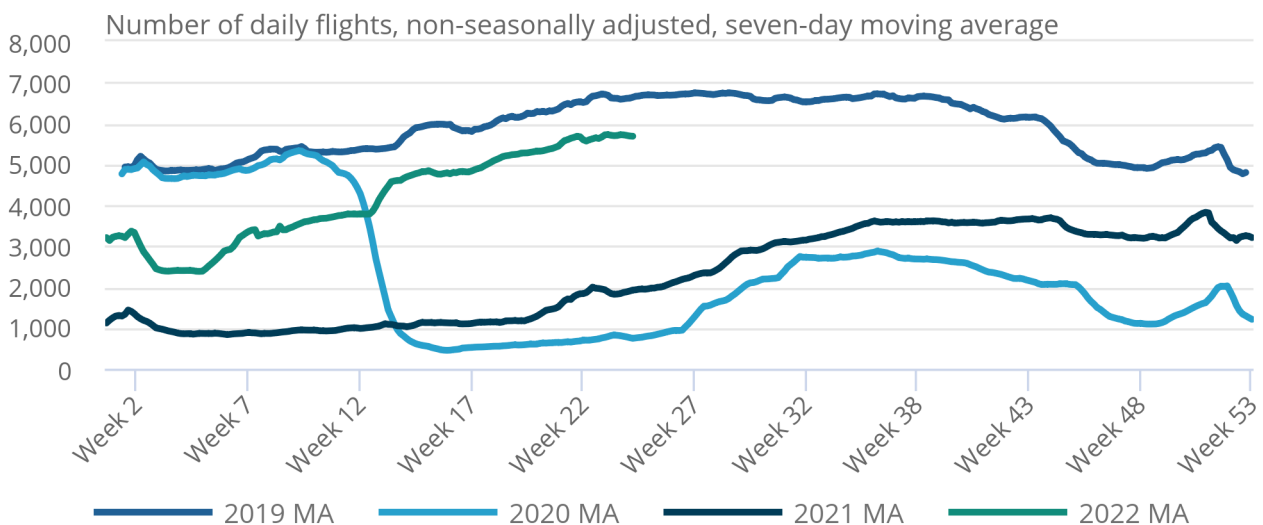
**Source: European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL)**

The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was unchanged from the previous week (5,681) and was at 86% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019. This is the seventh consecutive week where the number of flights compared with the equivalent week of 2019 was broadly unchanged, and matches the peak in this year, first reached in the week to 29 May 2022.

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

Advance potential redundancies Dataset | Released 23 June 2022 Weekly dataset showing the number of potential redundancies and employers proposing redundancies, submitted to Insolvency Service via HR1 forms.

Traffic camera activity Dataset | Released 23 June 2022 Experimental daily traffic camera counts data for busyness indices covering the UK.

System Average Price (SAP) of gas Dataset | Released 23 June 2022 Daily and rolling average System Average Price (SAP) of gas traded in the UK.

Weekly shipping indicators Dataset | Released 23 June 2022 Experimental weekly and daily ship visits dataset covering UK ports.

Online job advert estimates Dataset | Released 23 June 2022 Experimental job advert indices covering the UK job market.

UK spending on credit and debit cards Dataset | Released 23 June 2022 Experimental indicator for monitoring UK retail purchases derived from the Bank of England's CHAPS data.

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

A full overview of coronavirus restrictions for each of the four UK constituent countries can be found:

- [coronavirus in England](#)

- [coronavirus in Scotland](#)

- [coronavirus in Wales](#)

- [coronavirus in Northern Ireland](#)

These 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

[Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest data and analysis](#) Webpage | Updated as and when data become available Latest data on the coronavirus in the UK and its effect on the economy and society.

[Public Opinions and Social trends, Great Britain](#) Bulletin | Released 10 June 2022 Latest indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional](#) Bulletin | Released 21 June 2022 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](#) Bulletin | Released 17 June 2022 Initial data from the COVID-19 Infection Survey (delivered in partnership with IQVIA, the University of Oxford and Lighthouse laboratories).