

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 30 September 2021

Early data and analysis for UK economy and society. Includes activity and change in business, spending, travel and jobs using rapid-response surveys, novel data sources and experimental methods.

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1 . Main points

- The volume of motor vehicle traffic on Monday 27 September 2021 decreased by 6 percentage points from the previous week to 95% of the level seen on the Monday of the first week in February 2020; this was the lowest volume of traffic on a non-Bank Holiday Monday since Monday 12 July 2021 ([Department for Transport](#)).
- The 6-percentage point week-on-week decrease in the volume of motor vehicle traffic was partially driven by a 6-percentage point fall in car and light commercial vehicle traffic, to 91% and 106% of the level seen on the Monday of the first week in February 2020, respectively; meanwhile heavy goods vehicle traffic fell by 3 percentage points to 107% ([Department for Transport](#)).
- On 24 September 2021, the total volume of online job adverts grew by 2% from the previous week to 135% of its February 2020 average level; the "transport, logistics and warehouse" category continued to see the highest volume of online job adverts relative to its February 2020 average level at 367% in the latest week (Adzuna). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- In the week to 23 September 2021, the aggregate CHAPS-based indicator of credit and debit card purchases increased by 2 percentage points from the previous week to 95% of its February 2020 average; this was driven by all spending categories increasing in the latest week (Bank of England CHAPS data). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- In the week to 25 September 2021, overall retail footfall in the UK increased by 3% from the previous week and was at 85% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019 (Springboard).
- The seven-day average number of UK daily flights was 3,608 in the week ending 26 September 2021; this was 54% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019 (EUROCONTROL). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- For the reference period 6 to 19 September 2021, a net 20% of currently trading UK businesses reported a decrease in turnover, compared with normal expectations for this time of year; this figure has gradually decreased from a high of 51% for the reference period 1 to 14 June 2020 (initial results from Wave 40 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS)). [Section 3](#).
- In the week to 27 September 2021, the seven-day average estimate of UK seated diners was broadly unchanged from the previous week at 123% of the level in the equivalent week of 2019 (OpenTable).
- There were 10,218 compulsory dissolution first gazettes (a notice issued by Companies House indicating their intention to remove a company from the register) in the week to 21 September 2021 (Companies House). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There were 5,842 voluntary dissolution applications (an application from a company to dissolve) in the week to 24 September 2021, an increase of 12% from the previous week and broadly similar to the equivalent week of 2019 (5,885) (Companies House). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There were 13,978 company incorporations in the week to 24 September 2021, a decrease of 5% from the previous week and broadly similar to the equivalent week of 2019 (14,151) (Companies House). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- In the week ending 26 September 2021, the seasonally adjusted average count of traffic camera activity for pedestrians and cyclists in London had increased by 8% from the previous week to 127% of the average level seen in the week before the first UK-wide lockdown (week ending 22 March 2020) (Transport for London). See the [accompanying dataset](#).
- There was an average of 286 daily ship visits in the week to 26 September 2021, a 2% increase from 280 in the previous week; the average number of daily cargo and tanker ship visits increased by 1% (exactEarth). 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.
2. Data for one CHAPS sub-sector with 15% weight in the “social” spending category has been imputed for the period of 12 August to 23 September 2021 because of data availability issues.

3 . Business impacts and insights

Table 1: In Wave 40, a net 20% of businesses reported a decrease in turnover, compared with normal expectations for this time of year, broadly unchanged from the previous wave
Impact on turnover, businesses currently trading, weighted by count, UK, 6 to 19 September 2021

All Industries	
Turnover has increased by more than 50%	Less than 1%
Turnover has increased between 20% and 50%	1%
Turnover has increased by up to 20%	5%
Turnover has not been affected	52%
Turnover has decreased by up to 20%	12%
Turnover has decreased between 20% and 50%	8%
Turnover has decreased by more than 50%	6%
Not sure	15%

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

Notes:

1. Initial weighted results, Wave 40 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.
3. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 6 September to 19 September 2021. However, for questions regarding the last two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (20 September to 28 September 2021).
4. Net turnover balances are the percentage of businesses reporting a decrease in turnover minus the percentage reporting an increase.

4 . Data

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

Dataset | Released 30 September 2021

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

[Shipping indicators](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2021

Experimental weekly and daily ship visits dataset covering UK ports.

[Traffic camera activity](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2021

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

[Online job advert estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2021

Experimental job advert indices covering the UK online job market.

[Company Incorporations, Voluntary Dissolutions and Compulsory Dissolutions](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2021

The number of weekly Companies House incorporations, compulsory dissolutions and voluntary dissolution applications accepted.

[Daily UK flights](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2021

Experimental daily UK flight numbers and rolling seven-day average, including flights to, from, and within the UK.

5 . 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 choose 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.

Compulsory dissolutions

When a company fails to file the required financial accounts and/or confirmation statements, if no contact is received by Companies House following a series of letters to the company and its officers, a first gazette notice is published in the Gazette, a notice of the Registrar's intention to dissolve the company.

6 . 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.

7 . 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](#).

8 . 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](#)

Bulletin | Released 24 September 2021

Latest indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

[Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales, provisional](#)

Bulletin | Released 28 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](#)

Bulletin | Released 24 September 2021

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