

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 31 March 2022

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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Next release:
7 April 2022

Notice

31 March 2022

The next publication of retail footfall data, to be released 7 April 2022, will be the last for the foreseeable future. Related content in previous bulletins will remain available.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and hope to introduce a comparable indicator in the future.

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1 . Main points

- The labour market remains tight, with total online job adverts on 25 March 2022, at 135% of their February 2020 average level. [Section 3](#).
- Potential redundancies and the numbers of employers proposing redundancies fell by 7% and 3%, respectively in the latest week. [Section 3](#).
- In early March 2022, more than one-fifth of the UK workforce (21%) was estimated to be using a hybrid model of working, this is 6 percentage points higher than at the start of 2022.
- Both retail footfall and Pret A Manger transactions increased in the latest week; meanwhile, credit and debit card purchases and OpenTable seated diners remained at broadly similar levels to the previous week. [Section 4](#).
- Transport indicators displayed week-on-week growth coinciding with the continued good weather conditions across the UK; this included increases in all ship visits by 5% as well as daily UK flights by 2%, with road traffic broadly similar to the previous week.
- The system average price of gas decreased by 7% in the week to 27 March 2022, with the level now 50% below that of 10 March 2022 (which was when prices peaked in the rolling 7-day series); the system average price of gas is 392% higher compared with the same period last year.

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. OpenTable seated diners weekly comparisons were previously made with the seven-day period to each Monday. From today's release the weekly comparison period will change to the seven-day period to each Sunday.
3. Adzuna online job adverts in the latest period are being compared from 21 to 25 March 2022; caution is advised when comparing these data as this is not the Friday-to-Friday comparison period historically used.

3 . Business and workforce

Self-isolation rates in the workforce by sector and for working age population by country

Data from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey (CIS) were used to provide modelled estimates of the proportion of the workforce self-isolating because of coronavirus by work sector and the proportion of the working age population self-isolating because of coronavirus by country.

In the two weeks ending 19 March 2022, the percentage of people self-isolating because of coronavirus has significantly increased in all work sectors except for the "Food production, agriculture, farming" work sector.

Figure 1: The percentage of the working-age population self-isolating because of coronavirus increased in England and Wales in the two weeks ending 19 March 2022

Estimated percentage of the working-age population (aged 17 to 69 years) self-isolating because of coronavirus (COVID-19) from 30 January to 19 March 2022, UK countries

Notes:

1. All results are provisional and subject to revision.
2. These statistics refer to self-reported self-isolation occurring in working-age adults (aged 17 to 69 years), regardless of employment status, living in private households.
3. During the period shown, self-isolation requirements were frequently updated with different changes taking place at different times across the UK countries.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Figure 2: The sectors with the highest percentage of the workforce in self-isolation on 19 March 2022 were “arts, entertainment or recreation” and “social care”, at 3.8% and 3.6%, respectively

Estimated percentage of the workforce self-isolating because of coronavirus (COVID-19), by work sector, 23 January 2022 to 19 March 2022, UK

Notes:

1. All results are provisional and subject to revision.
2. These statistics refer to self-reported self-isolation in working adults (aged 16 years and over) living in private households.
3. In the “arts, entertainment or recreation” work sector, there is a 95% confidence interval from 2.8% to 5.3%.
4. In the “social care” work sector, there is a 95% confidence interval from 2.6% to 5.0%.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

More information on how these estimates were calculated is available in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Infection Survey estimates of the UK workforce in self-isolation by sector](#), published on 14 February 2022.

A breakdown of the CIS data is available in the [accompanying dataset](#).

Business impact and insights

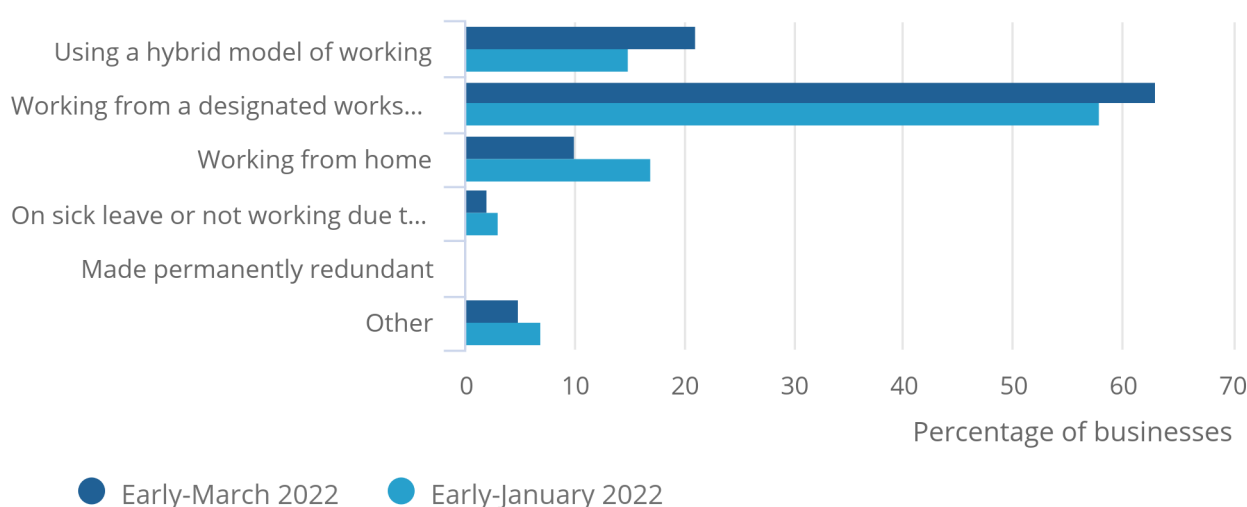
Initial results from Wave 53 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) cover the reference period 7 to 29 March 2022, with a response rate of 21.9% (8,363 responses). The survey was live for the period 21 to 29 March 2022.

Figure 3: In early March 2022, more than one-fifth of the UK workforce (21%) was estimated to be using a hybrid model of working, this is 6 percentage points higher than at the start of 2022

Working arrangements, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by employment, UK, 27 December 2021 to 20 March 2022

Figure 3: In early March 2022, more than one-fifth of the UK workforce (21%) was estimated to be using a hybrid model of working, this is 6 percentage points higher than at the start of 2022

Working arrangements, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by employment, UK, 27 December 2021 to 20 March 2022



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

Notes:

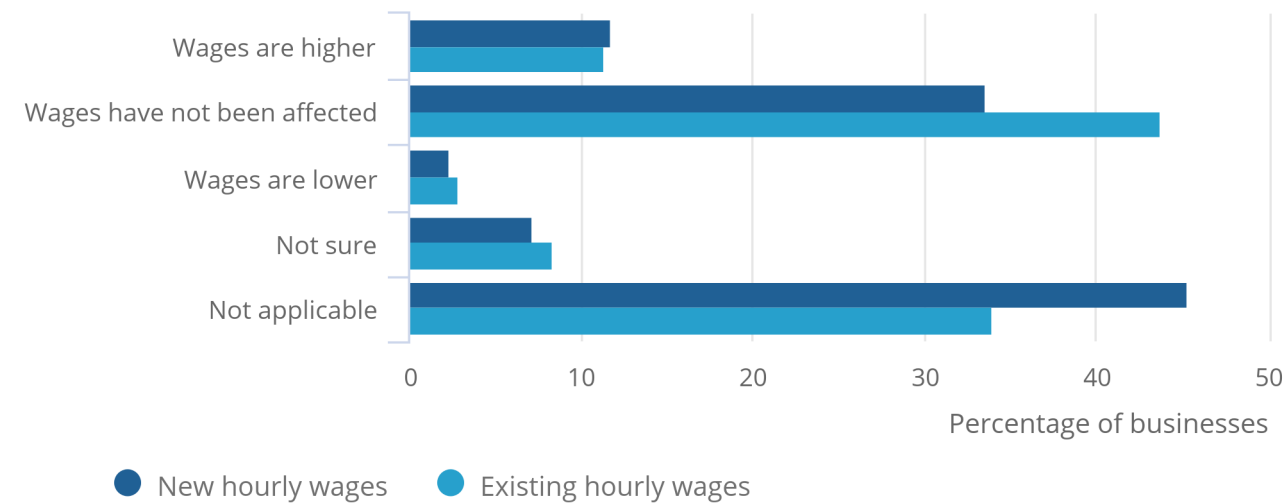
1. Final weighted results Wave 48 and initial weighted results Wave 53 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') BICS.
2. Bars may not sum to 100% because of rounding and percentages less than 1% being removed for disclosure purposes.
3. "Other" includes all other arrangements not defined in the question.
4. Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period, however, for questions regarding the last two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire.

Figure 4: 44% of businesses reported that hourly wages for existing employees were in line with normal expectations, while 11% reported wages to be higher

Hourly wages, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 7 to 29 March 2022

Figure 4: 44% of businesses reported that hourly wages for existing employees were in line with normal expectations, while 11% reported wages to be higher

Hourly wages, businesses not permanently stopped trading, weighted by count, UK, 7 to 29 March 2022



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

Notes:

1. Initial weighted results, Wave 53 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') BICS.
2. Bars 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, however, for questions regarding the last month, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire.

Table 1: In March 2022, 27% of UK businesses currently trading reported that turnover was lower than its “normal range” for the time of year, unchanged from early February 2022

Impact on turnover, businesses currently trading, weighted by count, UK, 7 to 29 March 2022

All Industries	
Turnover has increased by more than 50%	Less than 1%
Turnover has increased between 20% and 50%	2%
Turnover has increased by up to 20%	5%
Turnover has not been affected	54%
Turnover has decreased by up to 20%	13%
Turnover has decreased between 20% and 50%	9%
Turnover has decreased by more than 50%	5%
Not sure	12%

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

Notes

1. Initial weighted results from Wave 53 of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') 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, however, for questions regarding the last month, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire.

4 . Consumer behaviour

Social impact of coronavirus

This section includes selected results from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) covering the period 16 to 27 March 2022. The survey went out to 4,471 adults in Great Britain and had a response rate of 69% (3,100 responses). Further information to help understand the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain is available in [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#).

Cost of living

In the period 16 to 27 March 2022, 87% of adults reported their cost of living had increased over the last month. This was up 4 percentage points from 83% in the last period (3 to 13 March 2022). Among those who reported a cost of living increase, the most frequently reported reasons continued to be:

- rising food shop prices (88%)
- rising energy bills (83%)
- increases to the price of fuel (77%)

Travelling to work

In the period 16 to 27 March 2022, the proportion of working adults in Great Britain who in the past seven days:

- travelled to work (both exclusively and in combination with working from home) was broadly similar to the previous period (3 to 13 March 2022) at 71%
- worked exclusively from home remained broadly similar to the previous period at 12%
- neither travelled to work nor worked from home was broadly similar to the previous period at 17%

Shopping

Of the 94% of adults in Great Britain who reported leaving home in the past seven days (broadly unchanged from 95% in the previous period), the proportion that did so to go shopping was 85%.

Face coverings

Of the 94% 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 decreased by 6 percentage points from the previous period, to 68%. Further breakdowns, such as the situation when a face covering was worn (for example, while shopping), and by country, is available in [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#).

5 . Data

[Advance potential redundancies](#)

Dataset | Released 31 March 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 31 March 2022

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

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

Dataset | Released 31 March 2022

Daily and rolling average System Average Price (SAP) of gas traded in the UK.

[Weekly shipping indicators](#)

Dataset | Released 31 March 2022

Experimental weekly and daily ship visits dataset covering UK ports.

[Transactions at Pret A Manger](#)

Dataset | Released 31 March 2022

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

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

Dataset | Released 31 March 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](#).

6 . Glossary

Faster indicator

A faster indicator provides insight 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.

7 . 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](#).

8 . 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 restrictions

A full overview of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions for each of the four UK constituent countries can be found below.

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [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.

9 . 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.

[Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#)

Bulletin | Released 18 March 2022

Latest indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

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

Bulletin | Released 29 March 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 25 March 2022

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