

WEEKLY REPORT

13 June 2025



ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL UPDATE

Air India tragic accident claims lives of most on board, with one sole survivor

An aviation disaster occurred in India's western city of Ahmedabad, on Thursday 12 June, where an Air India flight bound for London crashed shortly after take-off. The aircraft, a Boeing 787, went down in a residential area. Search and recovery operations remain underway. Investigators have recovered one of the aircraft's two black boxes, a key component in determining the cause of the crash.

Source: [BBC](#)

Reeves refuses to rule out tax rises after economy shrinks

Chancellor Rachel Reeves has refused to rule out future tax rises after the UK economy suffered its worst contraction for a year and a half in April. The economy unexpectedly shrank by 0.3% after taxes increased for businesses, household bills jumped and exports to the US plunged. Despite a more stable 0.7% growth over the three months to April, economists including the IFS and Resolution Foundation warned that weak growth and unfunded spending commitments could lead to tax increases in the Autumn Budget.

Source: [BBC](#)

Chancellor hands NHS £29bn extra per year and pledges to end asylum hotels

Chancellor Rachel Reeves has committed to increasing day-to-day NHS spending by £29bn per year, as part of her spending review aimed at addressing public dissatisfaction nearly a year after Labour's election win. Reeves also pledged to end the use of asylum hotels during this parliament, by reducing the asylum backlog and accelerating returns, which she said would save £1bn annually. Departmental budgets will grow by an average of 2.3% a year in real terms until 2028-29.

Source: [Sky News](#)

Thunderstorm warnings in place as drought declared for millions

The Met Office has issued yellow thunderstorm warnings across southern England, Wales, and southern Scotland amid forecasts of torrential downpours in the coming days. Simultaneously, the Environment Agency has declared a drought in Yorkshire following the driest spring in over a century, with rainfall less than 50% of the seasonal average. Temperatures are expected to peak on Friday, potentially matching the year's record of 29.3°C, recorded in Kew Gardens on 1 May.

Source: [The Guardian](#)

TRADE UPDATE

EU ministers agree to reduce compensation for flight delays

EU transport ministers have agreed revised rules on air passenger rights when flights are delayed or cancelled which will cut the compensation due for a delay and increase the length of delay before compensation applies. The ministers agreed a raft of changes to EU Regulation 261 on air passenger rights at a meeting on June 5, most crucially to increase the period of delay before passengers are entitled to compensation on flights under 3,500 km (short and medium haul) from three hours to four. They agreed to increase the period of delay before compensation rules apply on flights over 3,500 km from four hours to six or more.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Eurostar to launch two new London routes to Frankfurt and Geneva

Eurostar plans to launch two new routes linking London and central Europe amid growing demand for sustainable rail travel options. The operator on Tuesday (10 June) said it would seek to serve Frankfurt and Geneva from London starting in the early 2030s, taking advantage of Eurostar's aim to grow its fleet with up to 50 new trains. A third new route running between Amsterdam/Brussels to Geneva is also planned. Meanwhile, following the reinstatement in February of services from London to Rotterdam and Amsterdam after an eight-month pause, Eurostar will add two more frequencies on this route this year.

Source: [TTG Media](#)

Outbound travel to add £10bn to UK economy over next five years

Outbound travel can grow by 20% by 2030, add another £10 billion to the UK economy and ensure the future of regional airports, a new report from ABTA claims – providing the government throws its weight behind the sector. The report said the outbound industry could be worth £62 billion a year to the UK economy and bring an additional 146,000 direct and supply chain jobs in the next five years. Published on Wednesday (11 June) to coincide with the government's Spending Review and ABTA's Travel Matters conference in London, the report said: "As the government focuses on the delivery of growth, the role of outbound as a catalyst for other parts of tourism must be recognised."

Source: [TTG Media](#)

UK outbound leisure travel market is 'slowing but still growing'

The UK outbound travel market is slowing down but is still growing, Abta's Travel Matters conference has heard. Cumulative growth of 4% is expected in UK outbound leisure travel across all destinations for the 2024-2026 period, a growth of 2% a year, according to Tourism Economics managing director Dave Goodger. In volume terms, outbound travel remains "very much a short-haul view", he said. Europe, rather than the UK, could also be benefitting from a downturn in travel to the US.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

UK seeing strong growth in expedition cruising

Expedition cruising in the UK grew faster than other markets for 27% of Expedition Cruise Network (ECN) operator members during the first half of 2025. ECN data revealed that 46% of members saw the UK market grow at the same rate as other

countries. The survey of 28 operators also found that younger travellers are taking expedition cruises with 31% recording the strongest growth in the 45-55 age market. Solos, luxury travellers, and multi-generational family groups are also demographics experiencing growth, it found. Antarctica remains the top destination, followed by Svalbard, Greenland, Alaska and the Northwest Passage.

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

AIRLINE UPDATE

Etihad - Etihad Airways claims to be the fastest growing Middle East carrier by reporting an almost 20% rise in monthly carryings. The UAE carrier flew 1.7 million passengers in May to give a rolling annual total of almost 20 million. The 19% year-on-year growth in May came as Etihad expanded its fleet to 100 aircraft operating from its Abu Dhabi hub. The airline reported flying 8.4 million passengers in the first five months of the year, up 17% from the same period in 2024, with the airline maintaining an 87% average passenger load factor. The May load factor of 87% compared with 84% a year earlier, "reinforcing Etihad's ability to optimise capacity while maintaining high demand".

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Ryanair - Ryanair plans to fine passengers who have to be offloaded because of disruptive behaviour, £500, in what it calls a 'major misconduct clampdown'. The airline said its customers 'expect to travel in a comfortable and stress-free environment, free from unnecessary disruption caused by a tiny number of unruly passengers'. In a statement, Ryanair said: "While this is an industry-wide issue affecting all airlines, Ryanair is committed to tackling unruly passenger behaviour for the benefit of its passengers and crew, and will continue to pursue disruptive passengers for civil damages, but at a minimum, they will now be issued with a £500 fine."

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

Turkish Airlines - Turkish Airlines has increased its number of weekly flights from the UK and Ireland to Istanbul for the summer 2025 schedule. The flag carrier has added two flights from Heathrow, bringing the weekly total to 47, with two added from Gatwick to take the total to 28. The Manchester route will operate 28 flights a week, up from 25, offering four daily connections, while Birmingham will be served by an additional four weekly flights to take the total to 18. The number of flights from Dublin is increasing from 18 a week to 21, while the frequency from Edinburgh is rising from 10 to 14.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

TOUR OPERATORS, TRAVEL AGENCIES & OTA UPDATE

Affordable Luxury Travel - Affordable Luxury Travel has changed its name to Luxtripper, a brand that collapsed 20 months ago. In a statement posted on its website, Affordable Luxury said Luxtripper 'once set the standard for luxury escapes'. Affordable Luxury Travel bought the Luxtripper brand and assets from the

administrators in October 2023. Explaining why it had decided to adopt the Luxtripper name, the company said it was 'breathing new life into an award-winning name that once inspired thousands of luxury travellers'. There will be no changes for customers who have booked with Affordable Luxury Travel, the London-based company confirmed, adding that it was just 'changing the banner above the door'.

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

Fred Holidays - Fred. Holidays has introduced an out-of-date range package guarantee. It allows customers to secure package holidays beyond the standard airline booking window, typically limited to 11 months in advance. Around 60% of Fred Holidays' cruise and tour business is booked out of date range. Director of Tour Operations Tricia Birmingham said: "We've listened to our travel agent partners who are experiencing growing demand from customers planning bucket-list cruises and tours – some as far ahead as summer 2027. "Our out-of-date range package guarantee provides the competitive service, greater flexibility, price protection and peace of mind that our agent partners and customers have been demanding."

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

Swords Travel - Luxury agency Swords Travel is launching a new in-house tour operation to better serve clients and address gaps in the market where existing products "do not meet the high standards expected". Co-founders Mark and Stuart Swords said the launch of Signature by Swords marked a "significant milestone" for the business, "enabling it to deliver even greater flexibility, personalisation and value to clients and partners". However, the Wimbledon-based company stressed it remains firmly committed to its strong relationships with external tour operators and partners.

Source: [TTG Media](#)

Travel Counsellors - Travel Counsellors has launched a global incentive, TCTravelfest, designed to drive momentum during the summer lates trading period. More than 2,200 Travel Counsellors have been grouped into teams of up to 50, led by team captains. Participants will take part in weekly booking challenges throughout June, earn points based on key business metrics such as bookings, margin, customer care, and performance in the lates market and track their progress via a live leaderboard. The top prize for the winning team is a Caribbean cruise with Norwegian Cruise Line. Additional spot prizes and recognition opportunities will be offered throughout the programme to celebrate continued effort, collaboration, and results. Global Sales Director Jim Eastwood said: "TCTravelfest promises to be our biggest and most exciting global incentive yet."

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

SOCIAL UPDATE

Instagram launches teleprompter feature to Edits

Instagram has rolled out a new teleprompter feature within its video editing app, 'Edits'. This tool introduces a rolling text display, allowing users to upload a script and view it whilst recording. Instead of memorising scripts, users can now read their text directly on screen and will be able to adjust the text size and scrolling speed of the text.

Source: [Social Media Today](#)

Meta introduces AI 'Restyle' video tool

Meta has launched 'Restyle,' an AI-powered video editing tool for short form videos, now available within Instagram's 'Edits' app and Meta's AI app. This tool enables users to modify video elements such as visual style, location, and even outfits with 50 preset prompts.

Source: [Social Samosa](#)

MICE UPDATE**Associations unite to inspire students to join not-for-profit sector**

The International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and the European Society of Association Executives (ESAE) have signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), aimed at nurturing the next generation of professionals in the international association meetings sector. As part of the MoU, ICCA will expand its well-established ICCAUni programme, which connects universities and emerging talent with industry leaders. With support from ESAE, this outreach will be amplified to engage more academic institutions globally and facilitate meaningful mentorship and career-building opportunities for students.

Source: [\(AMI\) Association Meetings International](#)

LIGHTER NOTE

Meet Britain's newest dog breed! Mudi is officially granted recognition by The Kennel Club - making it the 225th breed in the UK.

Read more [here](#).