

WEEKLY REPORT



MMGY
Weekly Report for UK & Ireland
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TRADE UPDATE

UK Aviation Hits Record-High Passenger Numbers as Summer Travel Booms

The UK aviation sector has surged to record levels ahead of the summer peak, fully rebounding to pre-pandemic figures as passenger volumes soar. Between April and June 2025, UK airports welcomed a record 81 million passengers, pushing the total to 141 million passengers for the first half of the year, a new milestone for the industry. This robust growth signals a powerful recovery in travel demand, with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) predicting that the summer peak season (July - September) could break records again. Amid this high demand, the government is advancing expansion plans for major airports like Heathrow and Gatwick.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

UK Travel Industry Calls for School Holiday Reform Amid Climate Change

The UK Outbound Travel Group is urging reform of the school calendar as families increasingly opt for shoulder-season holidays to avoid extreme summer heat. Representing organisations such as the Advantage Travel Partnership, IntelTravel, and Aito, the group is calling on the Department for Education to collaborate with travel bodies, teachers, and parents to create transition plans. Proposals include extending the October half-term and shortening the summer break, especially as academies already have flexibility in setting term dates. Reform, campaigners argue, would ease travel pressures, improve affordability, and reflect changing climate realities.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Strong Public Backing for UK-EU Youth Mobility Deal, Says Travel Industry

New research by Abta and Seasonal Businesses in Travel (SBiT) reveals strong public support for a UK-EU youth mobility agreement, with 76% of Britons in favour of a deal allowing young people to work, live, and study in Europe for limited periods. Notably, 61% of Leave voters also support the proposal. Industry leaders argue such opportunities are vital, with nearly half of travel professionals having gained early career experience abroad. However, since Brexit, UK nationals in overseas tourism support roles have dropped by 69%, limiting pathways into the industry. The sector, contributing over £52 billion annually to the UK economy, warns that lack of mobility is holding back growth.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Gatwick Baggage Screeners Secure 7% Pay Rise, Call Off Strikes

Strikes planned by hold baggage screeners at Gatwick Airport have been cancelled after workers accepted an improved pay deal with ICTS. Staff will receive a 7% pay rise, backdated to April 2025, following a successful vote. Unite general secretary Sharon Graham hailed the outcome as a clear example of trade union action delivering tangible benefits for members. Alongside the wage increase, staff will now receive double pay for working on Good Friday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, also backdated. Parking subsidies have been raised from 25% to 40%, while death-in-service benefits have increased significantly: from £10,000 to £15,000 for staff with one to five years' service, and from £20,000 to £30,000 for those with over five years. Unite praised the solidarity of its members, noting that earlier planned strikes were also suspended this month. The deal prevents disruption over the busy travel period.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

ECONOMIC, POLITICAL & SOCIAL UPDATE

Children to be offered chickenpox vaccine on NHS

All young children in England, Wales and Northern Ireland will be offered a free chickenpox vaccine by the NHS from January next year. It is to be given in two doses at the ages of 12 and 18 months, and to be combined with the existing MMR vaccine - protecting against measles, mumps and rubella. For older children, a catch up campaign is being planned to ensure they don't miss out. The hope is that by offering the vaccine for free, youngsters will be protected from the rare, but severe complications that can arise from contracting the red itchy spots. The free vaccine should also save parents from taking time off work for their sick child.

According to the Department of Health and Social Care, chickenpox causes an estimated £24m in lost income and productivity every year in the UK. Health minister Stephen Kinnock said: "We're giving parents the power to protect their children... this vaccine puts children's health first and gives working families the support they deserve."

Source: [BBC](#)

Pre-budget lift for Rachel Reeves as UK business confidence rises

Despite anxieties surrounding the state of the economy, confidence among UK businesses has grown. This comes as a rare slice of positive news for the chancellor, Rachel Reeves, in the run-up to her autumn budget. Lloyds Bank conducted a poll in August of UK companies which showed that improved sentiment among manufacturers and retailers helped push overall optimism within the UK, with up to 54% of companies now feeling confident in the current environment. This marks an increase in overall business sentiment for the fourth consecutive month, as a growing number of businesses feel strong about their trading prospects.

Source: [The Guardian](#)

UK car sales to US rise following tariff deal

Sales of British-made cars to the US rose by 6.8% in July following the introduction of the UK-US tariff deal following three months in a row of falling sales, according to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). In April of this year, the US president hiked import taxes on UK cars to 27.5% from the previous 2.5%, sending shockwaves through the industry. It was however agreed in May that this would be lowered to 10% from the end of June. The tariff cut from 27.5% to 10% only applies to the first 100,000 cars sent across the Atlantic, which is roughly the number of cars the UK exported to the US last year.

Any additional car imports above that number will be taxed at 27.5%, according to the agreement. The SMTT said recent figures "illustrate the impact of this deal", though it added that UK car manufacturing was struggling in general. "The US remains the largest single national market for British-built cars, underscoring the importance of the UK-US trade deal," they said.

Source: [BBC](#)

AIRLINE UPDATE

Corendon Airlines: Corendon Airlines is set to expand its UK operations in summer 2026 by increasing flight frequencies from six airports. Antalya will see daily services from London Stansted, along with multiple weekly connections from Manchester, Gatwick, Birmingham, Glasgow, and Newcastle. Heraklion in Crete will also benefit from more regular flights as the airline raises capacity by 20% compared with this year, across the UK, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Poland.

According to UK country manager Matthew Carpenter, the strategy focuses on strengthening core routes and enhancing services to key leisure destinations in Greece and Turkey. Corendon currently serves 18 destinations across Turkey, Greece, Spain, the Canary Islands, Egypt, and Morocco, carrying around 10 million passengers annually. The planned capacity boost reflects the airline's growth ambitions and commitment to meeting rising demand for Mediterranean and North African holiday travel among UK and European holidaymakers.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Jet2: Jet2.com has introduced a new policy allowing children under the age of two to fly free of charge, strengthening its reputation as a family-friendly airline. The change, which took effect for all new bookings from last Friday, mirrors a similar move by its sister company, Jet2holidays. The UK's third-largest airline now claims to be the only carrier in the country offering free travel for infants on both package holidays and seat-only flights across Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Canary Islands.

Alongside the free travel policy, Jet2.com has expanded its baggage allowances for families. Passengers can check in up to two items of baby equipment per child such as prams, car seats, or travel cots without incurring extra charges. Additionally, infants are entitled to a 10kg baggage allowance. Chief executive Steve Heapy said the move aims to make travel more affordable and accessible for millions of families.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Ryanair: Ryanair is extending several summer routes from London Stansted into its winter 2025/26 schedule, while also intensifying its crackdown on oversized cabin bags. The airline will continue operating four weekly flights from Stansted to Murcia in Spain, twice-weekly services to Trapani in Italy, and three flights per week to Lübeck and Münster in Germany. Additionally, Ryanair confirmed the launch of a new London Luton to Wroclaw route.

Alongside these route expansions, the airline is raising the incentive for ground staff to identify passengers with bags exceeding the free cabin allowance. The reward will increase from €1.50 to €2.50 per oversized bag spotted, with the €80 monthly cap removed, effective from November. Chief Executive Michael O'Leary emphasised that while most passengers comply, stricter enforcement is necessary for the small minority who do not. Passengers with oversized bags face charges of £20 to £60 for placing luggage in the hold.

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

TOUR OPERATORS, TRAVEL AGENCIES & OTA UPDATE

G Adventures: G Adventures has posted a record year, with 20% growth in both global and UK sales from August 2024 to July 2025. UK sales in July alone rose 27%, while global sales jumped 40%. The small-group operator launched over 300 new trips, expanding its portfolio to more than 1,000. Managing director Brian Young credited travel agents as “crucial” to success. Popular destinations include Morocco, Vietnam, China, and Greece, with strong growth across Asia, South America, and the Middle East.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Grand Prix Grand Tours: Grand Prix Grand Tours, a London-based motorsport travel operator founded in 2016, has begun supplying Hays Travel as part of its strategy to grow through the trade. The company, which offers packages to every Formula One race except China, half of the MotoGP calendar, and soon the 24-hour Le Mans, launched a new B2B portal in July. This system gives agents access to trade pricing, flexibility in quotes, and price parity with direct bookings. With a 12-strong team of motorsport fans, director Jay Chauhan says the move positions the operator for growth and wider agency partnerships.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Hays Travel: Hays Travel has opened a new branch in Dunstable, just nine miles from Luton airport, following Jet2's launch of 17 routes from the airport earlier this year. The store, which began trading in July and officially opened on August 21, is managed by James Little, a graduate of Hays' 'New to Travel' scheme. Little praised the strong local response and customer interest in Jet2 holidays and wider travel options. The branch features seven desks and a double bureau. Chief operating officer Jonathon Woodall-Johnston said the location strengthens Hays' regional presence and supports customers with both holidays and travel money.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Just Go Holidays: Just Go Holidays has reported a 27% increase in festive bookings for 2025 compared to the same period last year, with demand remaining strong despite the UK's recent hot weather. Over the past four weeks, nearly half (45%) of bookings have been for November and December departures, showing that travellers are eager to plan winter getaways earlier than usual.

Trade sales manager Claire Dutton noted that many customers returned from summer holidays and immediately booked Christmas trips, with demand expected to continue through September and beyond. To support travel agents, the operator is rolling out themed marketing materials and more offers on its trade platforms.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

SOCIAL UPDATE

Testing of picture-in-picture (PiP) playback feature by Instagram

Instagram is now testing a picture-in-picture (PiP) feature for Reels, allowing users to watch videos outside of the platform. A new PiP toggle is also available in playback settings. This feature will allow users to multitask, viewing content whilst they are outside of the Instagram app.

Source: [Social Media Today](#)

MICE UPDATE

Reach 2.0 doubles down on diversity in events

The Reach Events Scholarship Initiative has launched "Reach 2.0," a restructured and legacy-driven model aimed at strengthening governance, enhancing delivery, and expanding its scholarships from three to five annually. Originally founded in 2022 to support Black, Asian, and underrepresented minority ethnic students pursuing events management degrees, the initiative offers £5,000 per year for three years to assist with living expenses. Funded by industry donations, Reach also connects students with real-world opportunities like internships and networking. The updated model includes an Advisory Board and dedicated working groups focused on areas such as social outreach, PR, coaching, alumni, events, and fundraising.

Source: [M&IT Magazine](#)

LIGHTER NOTE

Young brothers spend summer holidays caring for tiny red squirrels found alone on the forest floor.

See [here](#)