

WEEKLY REPORT



MMGY
Weekly Report for UK & Ireland
19 September 2025

ECONOMIC, POLITICAL & SOCIAL UPDATE

U.S. President and UK Prime Minister sign bilateral U.K.-U.S. Tech Prosperity Deal

At the close of his state visit to the U.K., President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Keir Starmer signed what Starmer called a "groundbreaking" £250 billion (\$340 billion) U.K.-U.S. Tech Prosperity Deal. The agreement has a strong emphasis on AI with major investments pledged by companies such as Microsoft, Google and Nvidia. The deal is expected to create up to 15,000 jobs and establish American firms as a foundation for the UK's AI industry.

Source: [Time Magazine](#)

U.K. interest rates to be held at 4%

The Bank of England has decided to hold UK interest rates at 4%, signaling that the country isn't yet in the clear regarding inflation. Despite five previous rate cuts since August of last year, inflation has been rising again since April, largely due to increasing food costs. While the Bank expects inflation to eventually fall back to its 2% target, Governor Andrew Bailey warned that any future cuts would be "gradually and carefully" implemented, as two of the nine members on the Monetary Policy Committee had actually voted for a cut.

Source: [BBC](#)

UK households deposit a record £103 billion into Individual Savings Accounts

In the 2023-24 tax year, UK households deposited a record £103 billion into Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs), with a significant portion—£69.5 billion—going into cash ISAs. This marked a 67% increase from the previous year, driven by high interest rates set by the Bank of England and fears of a possible tax-free allowance reduction. Stocks and Shares ISAs also saw an 11% increase in inflows to £31 billion. The number of Lifetime ISA (LISA) accounts paid into saw a 28% increase. The number of Junior ISA accounts has also increased, especially the stocks and product which for the first time has seen investment surpass £1bn.

Source: [Financial Times](#)

TRADE UPDATE

Research Reveals Generation Gap in Holiday Booking Habits

Research by easyJet Holidays shows there's a "generation gap" in how far ahead people book their holidays. Gen Z tends to lock in trips less than 12 weeks before departure, while Gen X prefers booking about five months ahead. Millennials sit somewhere in between. Package holidays are rising in popularity across all age groups, and Gen Z in particular point to cost savings, simplicity, and peace of mind as major draws. More people overall are taking frequent trips, many now travel three or more times a year, often to recharge mentally or spend time with loved ones.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Travel Firms Highlight the Value of Purpose-Driven Tourism

Operators accredited under ATAS are increasingly emphasising 'purpose over profit,' highlighting that giving back to communities, protecting the environment, and acting ethically are now central to their business models. Several firms noted that obtaining B Corp certification helps them prove their claims of sustainability and responsibility aren't just for show. For example, trail-operators are using local-benefit measures such as "ripple scores", planting trees, and supporting social enterprises. One executive said such purpose-driven credentials can even influence customer choices when comparing otherwise similar tours.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Heathrow Breaks Record with Eight Million Passengers in August

In August 2025, Heathrow Airport achieved a historic milestone by handling over eight million passengers in a single month, marking the first time any European hub has reached this figure. The airport's busiest day was August 1, with more than 270,000 passengers. Despite the surge in traffic, service levels remained high, with 98% of baggage traveling as expected and 96% of passengers waiting less than five minutes at security. Heathrow also recorded its most punctual August ever.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

AIRLINE UPDATE

Aer Lingus - The Irish national airline is launching its most extensive transatlantic schedule yet for Summer 2026, and introducing a new direct route from Dublin to Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, set to launch in April. The airline will also increase frequency on existing popular routes: third daily flights from Dublin to New York JFK and Boston, more flights to Nashville and Indianapolis, and daily Dublin-Orlando service in peak season. The new route to Raleigh-Durham will be operated up to five times weekly on their Airbus A321 XLR aircraft.

Source: [ITTN](#)

Norse Atlantic Airways - The airline reported a 9% year-on-year increase in passenger numbers for August 2025, carrying 208,153 passengers across its network and charter operations. The airline achieved a load factor of 95%, up from 87% in August 2024. However, on-time performance declined, with only 64% of flights departing within 15 minutes of their scheduled time, compared to 79% the previous year. The airline attributed this decline to air traffic control delays and airport congestion. CEO Bjørn Tore Larsen highlighted the airline's consistent strong growth and world-leading load factor above 90% for the tenth consecutive month, driven by a data-driven market strategy and modern aircraft. Since its inception three years ago, Norse Atlantic has flown over four million passengers.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

British Airways CityFlyer - The British Airways (BA) carrier is launching year-round flights from London City Airport to Madrid, starting December 1, 2025. The service will operate 11 times a week, catering to the growing demand for leisure travel. Additionally, BA is resuming a partial winter service to Innsbruck from December 13, 2025 to March 28, 2026. Andrew Hodges, Chief Commercial Officer at London City Airport, noted that the introduction of the Madrid route and the return of popular ski destinations reflect the increasing demand for leisure travel from the airport.

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

TOUR OPERATORS, TRAVEL AGENCIES & OTA UPDATE

Attraction World & Top Villas - Luxury villa-provider Top Villas is deepening its partnership with Attraction World. The two already collaborate extensively in the US, especially in Orlando, combining villa stays with tickets to major theme parks like Disney and Universal. Now. Their joint offering is expanding to include Nashville and additional destinations in Europe. The move is intended to give UK travel agents a seamless way to offer outstanding villa accommodation alongside premium experiences.

Source: [Travel Gossip](#)

Great Little Escapes LLP - The group based in Sandhurst, Berkshire, ceased trading as an ATOL holder on June 13, 2025. The operator, which used multiple brands including Your Holidays and Tunisia First, also ran websites such as themaldives.co.uk and greatlittleescapes.co.uk. Customers with ATOL-protected bookings can make claims for refunds or compensation depending on how they paid. Travel agents holding consumer monies are instructed not to issue refunds until they receive guidance from the Air Travel Trust.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

Travel Counsellors - The company has reported a record £65 million in cruise bookings so far in 2025, a 17% increase year-on-year. Growth has been especially strong in premium and luxury sailings, up 66% and 88% respectively. In August alone, cruise sales reached £8.2 million, up 49% from the same month last year, and cruises now make up 17% of its UK leisure business (up from 12% in 2024). Consumer interest is rising too: 21% of people surveyed now favour cruises, up from 14% in 2023. The 25-34 age group is showing particularly strong gains.

Source: [Travel Weekly](#)

TUI Group - Tui and Oman's OMRAN Group have signed a strategic alliance to boost Oman's tourism sector. Central to the partnership is the development of a cluster of five new hotels in the Dhofar Governorate, set to open by winter 2028 under TUI's brands. The agreement also includes Oman acquiring a 1.4% stake in TUI Group. This collaboration aims to position Oman as a premier sun-and-beach destination, aligning with the country's Vision 2040 objectives. The project is expected to create significant employment opportunities and attract global visitors through integrated offerings of hotels, experiences, and cruises.

Source: [ITTN](#)

MEDIA & SOCIAL UPDATE

CapCut expands features with LinkedIn integration

TikTok's video editing app CapCut has rolled out a set of new tools, including a direct LinkedIn sharing option. Users can now post videos straight from CapCut to LinkedIn in just two taps, streamlining the process of repurposing content across platforms. Videos shared this way will include a "Made with CapCut" tag but won't be affected in LinkedIn's ranking algorithm. Alongside this, CapCut has launched new generative AI tools – from text-to-video and AI avatars to multilingual translations – designed to make video creation and editing faster and more versatile

Source: [Social Media Today](#)

Key Media Movers & Shakers

Harriet Elton, Condé Nast Traveller UK: Previously a freelance stylist, Harriet has been appointed Acting Senior Fashion and Lifestyle Editor at Condé Nast Traveller UK, where she will be covering Charlotte Davey's maternity leave.

Suzannah Ramsdale, The London Standard: Suzannah has returned from maternity leave to resume her role as Lifestyle Director at weekly newspaper The London Standard. She oversees all fashion, beauty, travel and wellness content.

Molly Codyre, Threadneedle Media: Molly has left her role as Deputy Editor at Foodism and Escapism Magazine.

Jennifer Morris, TTG (Travel Trade Gazette): Previously a Content Writer at the publication, Jennifer has been promoted to Contributing Editor of TTG.

Sources: [Diary Directory](#), [Roxhill Media](#)

MICE UPDATE

Belfast conferences set to deliver £90m economic boost under new ICC plan

National and international conferences, and conventions, in Belfast are projected to generate more than £90 million in economic impact over the next five years. The company behind ICC Belfast, Waterfront Hall and Ulster Hall, owned by Belfast City Council, has launched a new five-year business plan aimed at doubling the number of large-scale business events hosted in the city by 2030, while also expanding its live entertainment offer. The new plan sets out a go-to-market strategy developed with Belfast City Council and the Board, designed to deliver £90.5 million in economic impact from conference and convention business by 2030. The plan also places emphasis on live entertainment, with a goal of growing the economic impact of shows and performances at Waterfront Hall and Ulster Hall to £90m over five years.

Source: [CMW \(Conference and Meetings World\)](#)

LIGHTER NOTE

The red squirrel population on the Isle of Wight is flourishing

A new study has found that the red squirrel population on the Isle of Wight is thriving and could potentially double. This is primarily due to the island's unique location, as it is separated from the mainland by the Solent. On the mainland, red squirrel numbers have dramatically decreased due to overcompetition for resources by the invasive grey squirrels which also carry the squirrel pox virus. The study also found that while there were once two distinct genetic groups of red squirrels on the island, they are now beginning to mix, which will help to improve the health and genetic diversity of future generations of red squirrels.