

[News story: UK House Price Index: new data reveals number of cash buyers](#)

Have you ever wondered how many properties were purchased using cash alone? From today, the UK House Price Index (UK HPI) will tell you the answer. You can now access the number of:

- cash sales transactions
- mortgage sales transactions
- registered new build and resold properties

We have found that while cash sales account for between 30% and 40% of all transactions at Great Britain level, there are some variations at regional level. London has the lowest proportion of cash sales (around 25%), while the South West has the highest (around 40%).

All the new sales volume data are available at national, regional, county, local authority and London borough levels, enabling easy comparison with existing data. You can explore the data further through our downloadable data tables or via our [Linked Data API](#).

The introduction of volume information improves the transparency of the number of new build properties registered across the UK. It also provides greater clarity on purchasing trends, helping users to understand the extent of household credit. To understand more about how this data is derived, refer to [Calculating the UK HPI \(section 4\)](#).

We will continue to make enhancements to the data based on user feedback. This includes making all data available in the [Search the UK House Price Index](#) app later this year.

You can help us shape one of the nation's most important indicators. Through our [LinkedIn UK HPI group](#) we are working with users, stakeholders and our partners to enhance the information and data supplied to ensure the index continues to offer maximum public value.

If you would like to share your feedback on the UK HPI, you can register your interest to [join the UK HPI group](#) or [contact us](#) for more information.

[News story: Government updates mergers regime to protect national security](#)

Today's proposals include enabling the Government to intervene in mergers

that raise national security concerns, even when they involve smaller businesses. These changes are targeted at key areas, specifically companies that design or manufacture military and dual use products, and parts of the advanced technology sector.

In these areas, currently the Government can only intervene in mergers involving companies with a UK turnover of more than £70 million or where the share of UK supply increases to 25% or over. Today's proposals will close these loopholes to enable greater scrutiny of foreign investment in a changing market.

In these areas, the Government will lower the threshold whereby ministers can scrutinise investment to businesses with a UK turnover of over £1 million, and remove the requirement for a merger to increase a business's share of supply of, or over, 25%.

Government is also consulting on longer-term proposals that will allow for better scrutiny of transactions that may raise national security concerns – this could include increasing risks of espionage, sabotage, or the ability to exert inappropriate leverage. The Government welcomes views on the changes it could make, including:

- introducing a 'call-in' power modelled on that in the Enterprise Act 2002 to allow Government to scrutinise a broader range of transactions for national security concerns within a voluntary notification regime; and/or
- introducing a mandatory notification regime for foreign investment in certain parts of the economy which are critical for national security, such as the civil nuclear or the defence sector. Mandatory notification could also be required for foreign investment in key new projects or specific businesses or assets.

Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark said:

Britain has and always has had a proud record of being open to the world as the foremost advocate of free trade. It is right that every so often the Government reviews its mergers regime to close loopholes where they arise and this is what these proposals do in the area of national security.

No part of the economy is off-limits to foreign investment and the UK will continue to be a vociferous advocate for free trade and a magnet for global talent.

The Green Paper delivers on the commitment made in the Queen's Speech to bring forward proposals to consolidate and strengthen Government's powers to protect national security.

Today's consultation will be split into two parts.

The consultation on amending the Enterprise Act through secondary legislation

will last four weeks. The proposals are to lower the turnover threshold from £70 million to £1 million and remove the current requirement for the merger to increase the share of supply to or over 25%. These changes will apply to the following sectors:

- the dual use and military sector – this relates to businesses who manufacture or design items that are subject to export controls; and
- companies that are involved in the design of computer chips and quantum technology.

The Government will report back in due course on the proposed secondary legislative changes.

The consultation on longer-term reforms including the expanded version of the 'call in' power and mandatory notification regime will last twelve weeks.

A final package of reforms could include some or all of these options.

The consultation will be published later today.

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Press release: Joint statement by Prime Minister Theresa May and President Jean-Claude Juncker

The following joint statement was issued by Prime Minister Theresa May and President Jean-Claude Juncker following their working dinner in Brussels on 16 October 2017:

The Prime Minister and the President of the European Commission had a broad, constructive exchange on current European and global challenges.

They discussed their common interest in preserving the Iran nuclear deal and their work on strengthening the security of citizens in Europe, notably on the fight against terrorism. They also prepared for the European Council that will take place later this week.

As regards the Article 50 negotiations, both sides agreed that these issues are being discussed in the framework agreed between the EU27 and the United Kingdom, as set out in Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. The Prime Minister and the President of the European Commission reviewed the progress made in the Article 50 negotiations so far and agreed that these efforts should accelerate over the months to come. The working dinner took place in a constructive and friendly atmosphere.

Press release: UK secures new EU sanctions against North Korea

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson will join his 27 EU counterparts in Luxembourg today to sign off measures taking aim at income streams supporting North Korea's illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

The sanctions also include expanding the ban on EU investment to all sectors

in North Korea, ending the EU export of oil to the country, and adding more names to the list of regime officials and companies that are subject to asset freezes and travel bans.

The measures will also review the current list of banned luxury goods, and lower the amount of personal payments that can be sent to North Korea from €15,000 to €5,000.

EU foreign ministers will also place tighter restrictions on North Korean workers in the EU, with a view to stopping money being sent back that could be used by the regime to fund its nuclear and ballistic missile programme.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

North Korea continues to pose an unacceptable threat to the international community, which is why the UK, working closely with our European allies, has secured a set of stringent new sanctions upon the regime.

As I have said before, the North Korean regime must bear full responsibility for the measures that the international community is enacting against it, including these sanctions.

Maximising diplomatic and economic pressure on North Korea is the most effective way to pressure Pyongyang to halt its illegal and aggressive actions.

Background

To add further impact to the UK's bilateral efforts, we have contributed to a European Union External Action (EEAS) proposal that it and EU member states should carry out parallel demarches in countries at risk of sanctions evasion by North Korean entities.

Additionally, the UK has instructed its diplomatic missions to lobby for urgent and comprehensive enforcement of UN sanctions against North Korea by those countries where the North Korean regime is most likely to try to evade sanctions.

There are no North Korean workers present in the UK.

Further information