

Sunbelievable – enough tickets sold in rail sale to reach the sun

News story

Runaway success Great British Rail Sale sees more than 128 million miles of discounted journeys travelled on UK railways this spring.



- Great British Rail Sale ends on a high with more than 1.3 million tickets sold
- total tickets sold would cover a ticket journey to the sun – 128,250,000 miles
- first of its kind sale offered massive savings for travellers struggling with the cost of living

With more tickets sold than the entire population of Britain's second-largest city, Birmingham, the Great British Rail Sale has been a runaway success. Through this first-of-its-kind sale, this spring will see over 128 million miles of discounted journeys travelled on UK railways.

This first-ever industry-wide sale saw more than one million rail tickets slashed by up to 50%, saving passengers over £7 million (or [15,000 years' worth of takeaways](#)). The total distance of the journeys sold would create a rail trip from the Earth to the sun and beyond, boldly going where no train has gone before.

The Great British Rail Sale was launched to help ease some of the pressure on family finances at a time when the cost of living is increasing for people in the UK and across the wider world.

The average price of tickets was around £7.50 during the sale and the most popular routes have been:

- Newcastle to York
- London to Nottingham
- Oxford to London Paddington
- London to Sheffield

- Cambridge to London

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The Great British Rail has been unprecedented in its scale, and equally unprecedented in its success.

It has been fantastic to see so many of you jumping at the chance to head out onto our brilliant railway network, reconnecting with loved ones and exploring your favourite places across the country.

The whole rail family has come together to help passengers facing rising costs of living by saving hard-working people millions on their journeys across Britain this spring.

Jacqueline Starr, CEO of the Rail Delivery Group, said:

We are delighted that so many people have been able to take advantage of the Great British Rail Sale and are exploring the fantastic locations that are accessible by rail for less at a time when we're all feeling the squeeze.

Customers who are planning to travel by train this summer can still make great savings on their next train journey by booking in advance, travelling off-peak or with a Railcard that provides one-third off most fares.

The government is listening to people's concerns about rising living costs and is taking action with more than £22 billion of support in 2022 to 2023 alone – which includes helping with the cost of energy bills and efforts to ensure people keep more of their money. Offering half-price rail tickets is one of the ways the government is further supporting families with the cost of living.

The average annual spend on takeaways is £450.

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[Export package launched to promote world-class UK seafood overseas](#)

The UK Government has today announced a £1 million package to boost seafood

exports and promote the industry's high-quality produce overseas.

The package will target growing overseas markets and provide new export opportunities for the UK fishing industry and seafood sector following our departure from the European Union.

Global exports of UK seafood amounted to over £1.6 billion in 2021, with salmon the UK's fourth top food and drink product exported in 2021, totalling around £730 million. The investment announced today will help grow seafood exports even further.

The Seafood Exports package will:

- identify new overseas buyers and connect them with UK seafood companies
- promote UK seafood at international events
- increase expertise on British seafood produce in our Embassies and Consulates overseas

Seafood specialists funded by the package will work closely with existing Agri-food and drink attachés who help broaden market access for UK businesses and resolve any technical barriers preventing businesses from reaching global markets. The specialists will bring vital insight to help address industry-specific challenges and offer a more tailored approach to promoting seafood in new and existing markets.

Fisheries Minister, Victoria Prentis, said:

We exported £1.6 billion worth of UK seafood in 2021 and we want this to increase. We are unlocking export opportunities in new markets around the world, and the £1 million we are announcing today will help seafood businesses across the UK take advantage of them.

Minister for Export, Mike Freer, said:

This funding will provide a real boost to businesses, particularly SMEs. It's a genuine step change for current exporters, as well as those looking to access new seafood markets for the first time.

These new funds will strengthen the UK's position as a global leader in the sector and enable more countries than ever to enjoy Great British seafood.

The UK Government is committed to working with businesses to help them succeed in the global marketplace through a first-class export support framework that will support jobs and economic growth across the UK.

This includes recently co-hosting a UK Seafood Pavilion at the Seafood Expo

Global in Barcelona, providing an opportunity for some UK businesses to exhibit at the show for the first time, as well as bolstering support for businesses with an already-established presence at the show.

Hannah Thompson, Head of International Trade and UK Regions (West) at Seafish, said:

The seafood sector in the UK has had a tough couple of years with the pandemic and some of the challenges of leaving the EU. It was a pleasure to support seafood businesses to get back in front of their global customers at the world's biggest seafood trade show in Barcelona last month. The UK pavilion was a huge success and this new funding will give the sector another boost to help it showcase the high quality and sustainable seafood that comes from our passionate seafood producers in the UK.

Louise Kelly, Director at Edwin Jenkinson Limited, said:

The opportunity and support given by Seafish, Defra and DIT during our first time as exhibitor at the Global Seafood show was invaluable. Visiting as an exhibitor allowed us to meet face to face with all potential new clients and really understand their businesses, allowing our rapport to grow faster. Only one week later we are already exporting to new markets and have many more prospective clients!

This package complements the wide range of export support the UK Government already provides for the UK's world leading food industry. Food and drink is an important part of our Made in the UK and Great campaigns, supported by HM Trade Commissioners, Trade Envoys and Export Champions.

- The £1 million investment is the final part of the [£100m UK Seafood Fund](#). The UK Seafood Fund also includes the £24m science and innovation scheme which is helping to enhance the sustainability of the sector through data collection, research and innovation; at least £65m available to improve infrastructure and strengthen supply chains; and up to £10m for skills and training to generate new jobs and upskill fishermen.

[Hundreds more mobile generators to provide vital power for Ukraine](#)

- More than 850 generators in total will help to run relief centres,

hospitals, phone masts, and water pumping stations

- new generators – enough to power equivalent of around 8,000 homes – will be used for essential services in face of ongoing destruction in Eastern Ukraine
- government also relaxes rules on support for overseas fossil fuels to boost supply of vital energy to Ukraine

Hospitals, shelters and other essential services will be given more power to operate in the face of ongoing Russian attacks with a further 287 mobile generators donated from the UK government.

It follows a request from the Ukrainian Ambassador Vadym Prystaiko who welcomed the previous shipment of generators by saying [“the light will always win over darkness”](#).

This takes the total number of generators from the UK government to Ukraine to 856.

This follows an initial 569 generators from 5 UK companies who have all supplied mobile units to help Ukraine.

The new generators – enough to power the equivalent of around 8,000 additional homes – will be used for larger buildings such as hospitals and shelters following the brutal onslaught in Eastern Ukraine. The government has purchased these from Merseyside-based supplier Speedy Hire, with some of the 287 being loaded at a depot in Stoke-on-Trent.

Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Putin’s atrocities have continued to escalate, and so we are ramping up our support to the Ukrainian people in their time of need. Our donation of a further 287 generators will ensure more essential services in Ukraine can keep running.

Russell Down, Chief Executive of Speedy, said:

Our position as the UK’s leading tools and equipment provider has enabled us to react promptly and assist the UK government in supporting the Ukrainian people.

The generators will be delivered to a Polish government hub. From there, the Ukrainian government and the country’s energy networks will distribute the generators across the country to where they are needed most.

As part of the ongoing effort to support Ukraine, the UK government has also introduced 2 time-limited exemptions to its [international fossil fuel support policy](#), one applying to Ukraine, and one to Eastern Europe. The policy prevents the UK providing any new direct financial or promotional support for the fossil fuel energy sector overseas. These exemptions have been introduced

to allow the UK to provide support for Ukraine's energy and fuel needs.

This will mean the UK can join international efforts to address the regional energy security impact of the crisis in Ukraine and quickly respond to requests for assistance. These temporary measures could see the UK supporting Ukraine to ensure there is enough fuel for vehicles involved in food production and other basic services, and to help build up energy reserves ahead of winter.

However, the UK is clear that longer-term solutions in the region and globally must focus on clean energy, to prevent long-term dependence on fossil fuels. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has highlighted the vulnerability caused by our reliance on fossil fuels. Accelerating the shift to clean power generation is the most effective route to both climate and energy security.

Suppliers of initial 569 generators include:

- Generator Power
- Electricity North West
- Woodlands Power
- SP Energy Networks
- Finning

Members of the Ukraine Electricity Network Support Task Group include:

- Energy Networks Association
- Electricity North West
- Western Power Distribution
- UK Power Networks
- Northern PowerGrid
- Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks
- SP Energy Networks
- National Grid Electricity System Operator
- National Grid Electricity Transmission

On 31 March 2021, the UK government implemented its policy to no longer provide any new direct financial or promotional support for the fossil fuel energy sector overseas.

About Speedy Hire Plc

Founded in 1977, Speedy is the UK's leading provider of tools and equipment hire services to a wide range of customers in the construction, infrastructure and industrial markets, as well as to local trade and industry.

PM call with President Macron: 6 May 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to President Emmanuel Macron of France.



The Prime Minister spoke to President Emmanuel Macron of France earlier today to congratulate him on his recent election victory.

The leaders committed to reinvigorate the Anglo-French relationship, working together to tackle shared issues including the cost of living, threats from autocratic states and global energy security.

On Ukraine, the Prime Minister and President Macron were united in their condemnation of Putin's deadly folly and agreed to coordinate more closely on longer-term security and economic support for Ukraine, as well as measures to isolate Russia.

The Prime Minister updated on his visit to Kyiv last month and shared his conviction that Ukraine would win, supported with the right level of defensive military assistance. He urged against any negotiations with Russian on terms that gave credence to the Kremlin's false narrative for the invasion, but stressed that this was a decision for the Ukrainian government.

They shared concerns about the fallout from the invasion of Ukraine for global energy and food prices, and agreed to work through the G7 to mitigate the impacts domestically and on developing economies. The leaders also discussed opportunities for greater economic and technological collaboration between the UK and France, boosting jobs and growth in both countries.

On the Northern Ireland Protocol, the Prime Minister noted the UK's serious and ongoing concerns with the operation of the Protocol and reiterated the need to make significant changes to protect peace and stability in Northern Ireland.

The leaders looked forward to speaking again with the wider G7 in the coming days, and agreed to remain in close contact.

[Business Council Meeting: 5 May 2022](#)

Press release

The Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer chaired a meeting of the Business Council.



The Prime Minister and Chancellor hosted senior business leaders in No10 for the second meeting of the Business Council yesterday afternoon. They were joined by the Business Secretary, Education Secretary, Trade Secretary and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

The Prime Minister began by updating the Council on the action that government is taking to promote innovation, skills and infrastructure investment. He stressed the need for business and government to work together in partnership to drive growth across the country and reduce pressures on family finances.

Council members, including representatives from Burberry, Lloyds Banking Group and Scottish Power, delivered a series of progress reports across each of the ten Business Council missions. These included creating a regulatory system that enables innovation, ensuring quality skills training is available in all parts of the UK and finding new ways of increasing private sector investment into infrastructure.

The Business Secretary provided an update on the government's new Energy Security Strategy, which is set to boost the UK's long-term energy independence, security and prosperity. He said that these commitments would see 95% of Great Britain's electricity become low carbon by 2030.

The Chancellor noted that despite global pressures, the economy was recovering well from the pandemic, with record job vacancies and unemployment back at pre-crisis levels. The Government would continue to support families

deal with cost-of-living pressures with a £22 billion package of support, while helping firms to upskill, innovate and drive growth, including by cutting taxes on business investment.

The Prime Minister ended by thanking members for their valued advice and said that he looked forward to reconvening the Council to discuss their work programme as plans developed.

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