

Weekly policy update from the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

A round-up of key policy changes from the past seven days (11-18 September 2025)

UK–US investment surge during State Visit

The US Presidential State Visit to the UK has been marked by a record-breaking series of investment announcements, with commitments across technology, life sciences, energy, and finance. Together, the package is valued at over £150 billion and is expected to generate more than 7,600 jobs, highlighting the strength of the transatlantic economic partnership. Alongside investment, new trade measures and sector-specific deals were unveiled, spanning nuclear energy, financial services, and advanced manufacturing, signalling a wider push to align regulatory approaches and accelerate joint projects.

[Read more](#)

Financial services commitments

The government announced over £1.25 billion of inward investment from US financial services companies, expected to generate 1,800 jobs across London, Edinburgh, Belfast, and Manchester. Commitments include Bank of America opening its first operation in Northern Ireland, Citi investing £1.1 billion in UK operations, BlackRock expanding in Edinburgh, and S&P Global growing in Manchester. Additional projects from PayPal and Broadridge further strengthen the UK's fintech and financial services sectors, underscoring the strength of the UK–US investment relationship.

[Read more](#)

Technology

The UK and US signed the first bilateral technology agreement, covering AI, quantum, and nuclear sectors. Alongside the deal, US technology firms announced over £31 billion of investment in UK infrastructure, including Microsoft's largest-ever UK commitment and new projects from Google, NVIDIA, OpenAI, and CoreWeave. The partnership aims to expand computing capacity, support AI adoption across sectors such as healthcare and finance, and accelerate the development of quantum technologies. The agreement also includes measures to simplify civil nuclear licensing and promote commercial fusion, with implications for energy security and long-term investment prospects.

[Read more](#)

Nuclear energy partnership

The UK and the US have signed the Atlantic Partnership for Advanced Nuclear Energy, aimed at reducing regulatory barriers to the construction of nuclear reactors in both countries. The agreement includes a £10 billion Centrica–X-energy project to deliver the UK's first modular reactors at Hartlepool, expected to supply power for 1.5 million homes. Regulatory recognition between the two countries is expected to halve approval times, with potential benefits for UK firms such as Rolls-Royce. The deal is designed to promote long-term energy security and create new investment opportunities.

[Read more](#)

AI Growth Zone

The government has announced the creation of an AI Growth Zone, which is expected to generate more than 5,000 jobs and attract up to £30 billion in private investment. Supported by £10 billion already committed by Blackstone, the initiative will feature new data centre projects and large-scale AI infrastructure delivered by NVIDIA, OpenAI, and UK-based Nscale. Universities will play a key role in workforce development, while the Growth Zone aims to boost AI adoption across various sectors, including healthcare, energy, finance, and manufacturing.

[Read more](#)

Employment Rights Bill returns to Commons

The Employment Rights Bill has returned to the House of Commons, with the Government planning to overturn Lords' amendments that would have limited key provisions. The legislation introduces day-one rights to parental and bereavement leave, extends statutory sick pay to an estimated 1.3 million low earners, restricts exploitative zero-hours contracts, and curtails the practice of 'fire and rehire'. Around 15 million workers are expected to benefit, affecting employers in work-force planning, contract design, and compliance.

[Read more](#)

Transforming Business Rates: Interim Report

HM Treasury has published an interim report on business rates reform, summarising stakeholder feedback to last year's discussion paper. Key areas under consideration include replacing the current 'slab' structure with a marginal 'slice' system, enhancing Small Business Rates Relief, and reviewing Improvement Relief once further data is available. The report also highlights concerns about valuation methodologies, empty property relief, and the balance between revaluation frequency and predictability. A further update is expected at the Autumn Budget 2025, alongside confirmation of new rate multipliers.

[Read more](#)

Commons report on jobs and careers service

The Work and Pensions Committee's Fifth Report (Session 2024–25) reviews plans to integrate Jobcentres with the National Careers Service. It recommends a joint DWP–DfE adult careers guidance strategy, maintaining the distinct role of careers advisers and their qualifications, and developing outcome measures that extend beyond short-term job placements. The report notes that £55m has been allocated for 2025–26 and highlights unresolved issues regarding contracts, accountability (including devolution), and scope. It requests a transition plan within six months and a Government response within two months.

[Read more](#)



TRA launches imports dashboard

The Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) has introduced an interactive dashboard to show trends in UK imports of goods subject to anti-dumping and countervailing measures. Drawing on HMRC trade statistics, the tool enables users to monitor import patterns over time and supports the TRA's monitoring and investigative activities. It aims to provide businesses and policymakers with accessible insights into the effects of trade remedies.

[Read more](#)

International Trade Week 2025

The government has confirmed that International Trade Week will take place from 3–7 November. The programme, led by the Department for Business and Trade and sponsored by Santander UK, will feature free workshops, webinars, and events designed to help businesses develop their export capabilities. It follows recent trade agreements with the US, the EU, and India, as well as the launch of the UK Trade Strategy.

[Read more](#)

ONS releases

GDP: July 2025

UK GDP expanded by 0.2% in the three months to July 2025, slowing from the 0.8% pace earlier this year. Services rose 0.4% and construction 0.6%, offsetting a 1.3% fall in production. The monthly figure was flat in July, following 0.4% growth in June, leaving output 1.4% higher than in July 2024.

[Read more](#)

Consumer price inflation: August 2025

CPIH rose 4.1% year-on-year (down from 4.2% in July) and CPI was unchanged at 3.8%. Both indices increased 0.3% month-on-month. Air fares eased, offset by higher prices for restaurants, hotels, and motor fuels. Core inflation moderated (core CPIH 4.0%, core CPI 3.6%), goods prices edged up (2.8%), while services slowed (4.9%). Food inflation accelerated to 5.1%, the highest since January 2024.

[Read more](#)



Retail sales: July 2025

Retail sales volumes declined 0.6% in the three months to July 2025, marking the end of four consecutive months of growth. July itself saw a 0.6% rise, supported by non-store and clothing retailers. The release also corrected seasonal adjustment errors between January and May 2025, leading to revised back data.

[Read more](#)

Earnings and employment: September 2025

UK payrolled employees fell by 127,000 (-0.4%) in the year to August 2025, with London recording the steepest regional drop (-0.8%). The capital's 4.35 million employees were most affected in the accommodation and food services sector. Median UK monthly pay rose 6.6% to £2,568, with London highest at £3,026, ranging from £2,541 in Enfield to £6,091 in the City.

[Read more](#)

Vacancies and jobs: September 2025

UK vacancies fell to 728,000 in June–August 2025, the 38th consecutive quarterly decline and 119,000 lower than a year earlier. Workforce jobs slipped by 182,000 from March to 36.8 million, mainly due to a fall in self-employment. In the year, jobs rose by 139,000, led by the health and social work sector.

[Read more](#)

Labour market: September 2025

In May to July 2025, London's employment rate was 75.4%, broadly in line with the UK average, while unemployment stood at 5.9% and inactivity at 19.7%. Compared with the previous quarter, employment rose by 1.1 percentage points and unemployment fell by 0.5 points. Over the year, London's employment rate was unchanged, with unemployment up by 0.5 points and inactivity down by 0.5 points. PAYE data for August showed a decline in payrolled employees in the capital, in line with trends across most UK regions.

[Read more](#)



UK trade: July 2025

Goods imports rose by £2.7 billion (5.4%) in July 2025, split almost evenly between EU and non-EU sources, while goods exports increased by £1.9 billion (6.6%), with stronger growth to non-EU markets. Exports to the United States increased by £0.8 billion, although they remain below pre-tariff levels. Over the three months to July, the trade in goods deficit widened by £3.0 billion to £61.9 billion, partly offset by a £2.6 billion increase in the services surplus to £51.6 billion.

[Read more](#)

Business Insights, September 2025

The latest ONS survey shows only 12% of firms reported higher turnover in August, the weakest reading since 2022, while 28% reported a fall. Looking ahead, 16% expect turnover to decline in October, with economic uncertainty and labour costs the main pressures. Input costs rose for 23% of firms, against 9% reporting higher output prices. Worker shortages were stable at around 18% of larger employers, while weak demand was the most cited concern for October.

[Read more](#)

