

**Flight Searches Monthly Update**  
**ForwardKeys, an Amadeus company**  
**Data up to May 2026**

VisitBritain/VisitEngland Research

(Published June 2026)

*If you would like the data in a different format, please contact [research@visitbritain.org](mailto:research@visitbritain.org)*

# Key takeouts

**The story: Overall flight searches to the UK in May 2026 were on par with 2025, similar to April growth. In May, growth was seen from short haul in aggregate whilst continued declines were seen from long haul in aggregate.**

- The demand for the UK, measured by flight searches x the number of passengers searched for, was on par with May 2025. This was similar to April growth but a decline vs March when there was a boost in searches following the start of the Middle East conflict.
- Long haul markets in aggregate saw a YoY decline of 9% in May, with Canada the only market to see YoY growth. Declines from Saudi Arabia and the UAE continued with double digit declines also observed from Australia and Norway.
- Short haul markets saw 13% growth in aggregate with double digit growth from Spain, Italy and Germany.
- For a competitor view, the Irish Republic saw a decline of 2% in demand in May 2026.
- May 2026 growth was led by searches to Scotland and Northern Ireland. England destinations in aggregate saw a decline of 2% YoY.

# About the data

These slides show data from ForwardKeys *Flight Searches* module on the volume of flight searches to the UK, and the growth rate compared to comparison years. Data shown is for searches to the UK and to the Irish Republic, where stated.

## Some notes on this data:

- The ForwardKeys database aggregates searches for the largest travel agencies and metasearch engines; kiwi.com, kiwi's partners (Edreams, eSky) and other metasearch engines (Google Flight, Kayak, Skyscanner, Momondo and wego) and Kiwi's airline partners (around 800). This amounts to 40 billion searches a day of the global market and please note that repeated searches across different platforms are present in the data.
- Data is available from 2019 to present day with a 2 week lag.
- The measure of '**searches**' within the report and dashboard is based on a calculation of the **number of searches which took place x the number of passengers** included within each search (i.e. travel party size), giving us an estimation of the total potential demand for the destinations.
- The origin and destination refers to the location of the airport being searched for rather than where the search is being made from.
- Data can be analysed by **destination** at the UK/Irish Republic level as well as by UK nation and city level.
- Data can be analysed by origin market and city for which we have access to **15 markets** – Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, USA and the UAE. The **total** in the report and dashboard **refers to a sum/average of these 15 markets**.
- This analysis only includes searches which include a stay in the UK or Irish Republic and therefore excludes day trips, one-way trips or those returning home to the UK.
- When comparing to other inbound searches also bear in mind that this data does not capture any passengers/bookings made via train/ferry.
- Penetration of flight searches is higher in Europe and North America, and low in Asian markets.
- This report uses data that was most recently **updated on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2026**.

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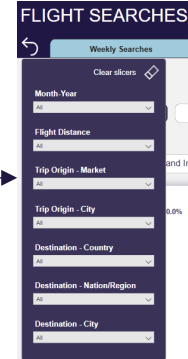
# Additional data available on vb.org

See more data on the [Flight Searches Dashboard](#) on visitbritain.org.

## Different geographies

Destination – Country (UK vs Irish Republic)  
Destination – Nation (Eng, Scot, Wales)  
Destination - City  
Trip Origin - Market  
Trip Origin - City

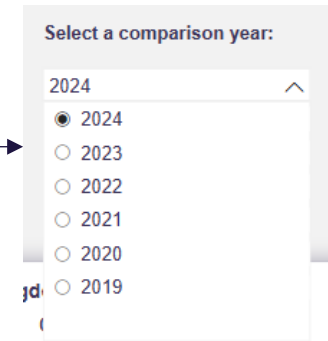
Click on the slicer icon in the top left of the dashboard. Select a 'Trip Origin' or 'Destination' filter to select the geography of your choice.



## Multiple years of data

2019  
2021  
2022  
2023  
2024  
2025  
2026

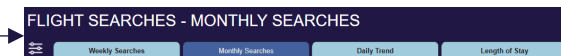
At the top of each tab you can select the year you want to show and the year you want to compare to.



## View granular insights

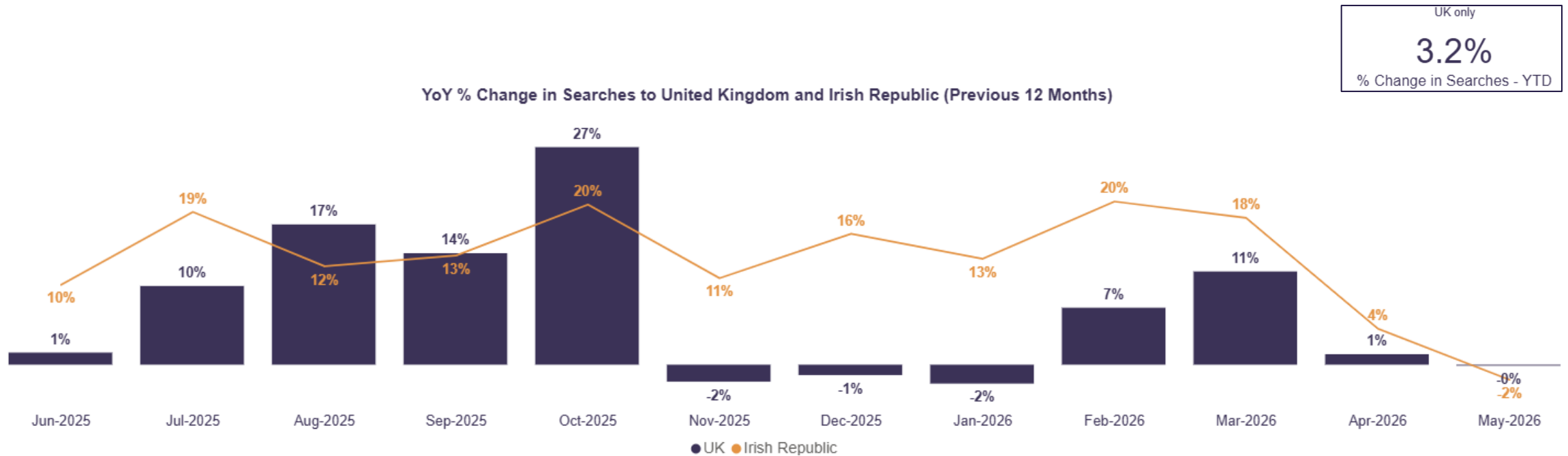
Daily Search Trends (*currently under review*)  
Weekly Search Trends  
Monthly Search trends  
Length of stay Trends

Select the different tabs to view data at different date levels



# Flight search trends | UK flight searches were on par in May 2026

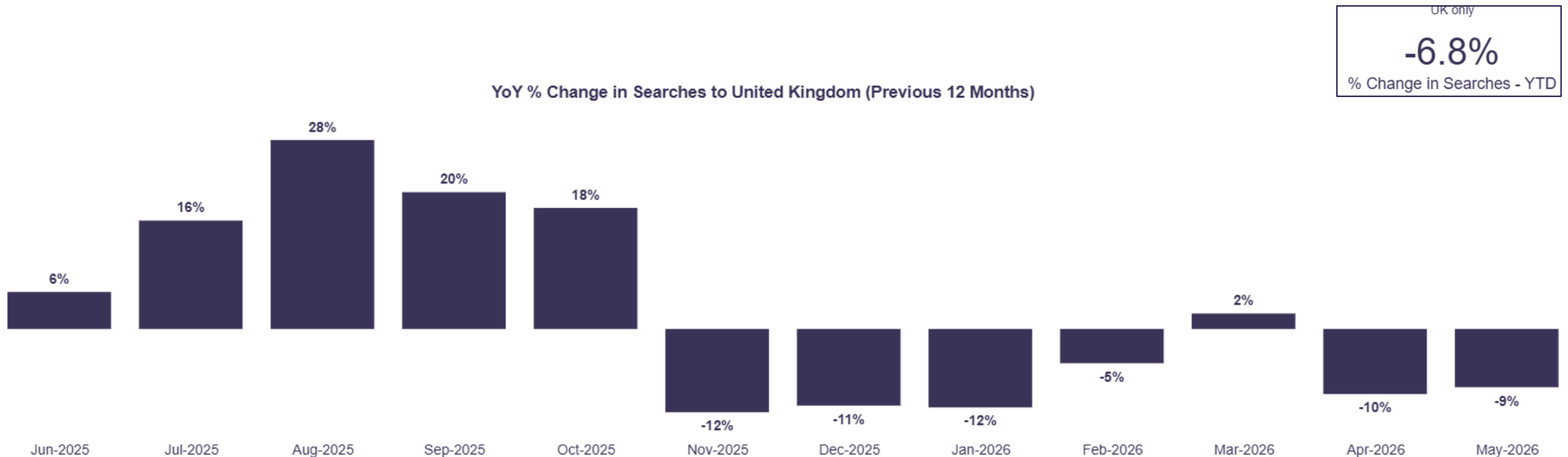
- Overall flight searches to the **UK** in May 2026 were on par with the previous year, with a slowdown vs the beginning of the year. Year-to-date searches to the UK were up 3%.
- Searches for the **Irish Republic** were down 2% in the latest month.



Source: ForwardKeys Flight Searches refreshed 09/06/26. % growth vs previous year shown. YTD may be different to the dashboard as the dashboard is updated weekly. Overall flight searches refer to the average of 15 inbound markets within our subscription. Flight searches is a calculation of the number of searches which took place x the number of passengers included within each search (i.e. travel party size).

# Long haul search trends | YoY declines from long haul in aggregate

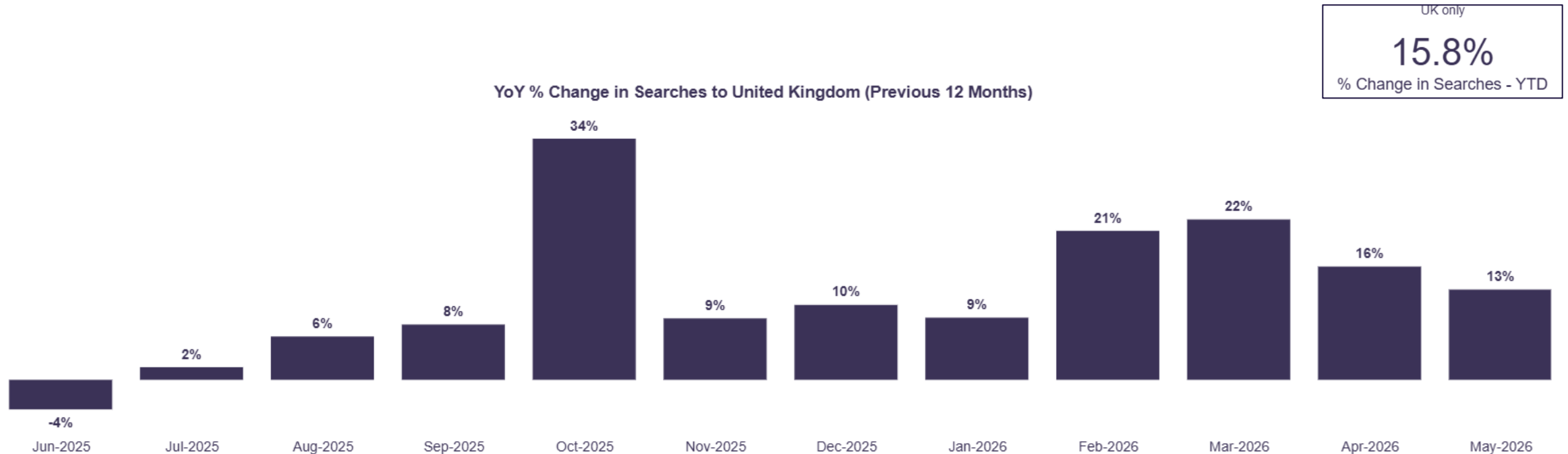
- Searches from **long haul markets** in aggregate (USA, Australia, Canada, India, UAE, Saudi Arabia and China), showed a YoY decline of 9% in May 2026 similar to April 2026.
- Year-to-date searches from long haul markets were down 7%.



Source: ForwardKeys Flight Searches refreshed 09/06/26. % growth vs previous year shown. YTD may be different to the dashboard as the dashboard is updated weekly. Overall flight searches refer to the average of 15 inbound markets within our subscription. Flight searches is a calculation of the number of searches which took place x the number of passengers included within each search (i.e. travel party size).

# Short haul search trends | Continued YoY growth from short haul markets

- Searches from **short haul markets** (Spain, Germany, Italy, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and Norway) saw continued YoY growth into May 2026, up 13%.
- Year-to-date searches were up 16%.



Source: ForwardKeys Flight Searches refreshed 09/06/26. % growth vs previous year shown. YTD may be different to the dashboard as the dashboard is updated weekly. Overall flight searches refer to the average of 15 inbound markets within our subscription. Flight searches is a calculation of the number of searches which took place x the number of passengers included within each search (i.e. travel party size).

## Origin market trends | Europe led YoY growth in May 2026

Market	Jan-2026	Feb-2026	Mar-2026	Apr-2026	May-2026
Australia	-10%	-9%	26%	-12%	-18%
Canada	-1%	7%	-1%	-15%	9%
China	4%	-7%	27%	8%	-8%
France	1%	10%	13%	19%	8%
Germany	7%	20%	31%	23%	12%
India	-11%	-14%	35%	-4%	-7%
Italy	27%	46%	37%	19%	20%
Netherlands	-2%	1%	19%	5%	-3%
Norway	8%	2%	21%	-3%	-11%
Saudi Arabia	-10%	-14%	1%	-32%	-29%
Spain	10%	25%	19%	21%	26%
Sweden	-7%	-2%	15%	-9%	-9%
Switzerland	-3%	-1%	3%	-3%	-3%
U.S.A.	-15%	-5%	-4%	-4%	-9%
United Arab Emirates	-2%	-4%	-31%	-50%	-25%

Latest month – May 2026 vs May 2025:

- **Spain (+26%), Italy (20%) and Germany (12%)** led YoY growth in May. Canada and France seeing saw single digit growth.
- Demand from **Saudi Arabia (-29%) and the UAE (-25%)** continued to see the largest declines likely due to the ongoing Middle East conflict, although they observed a softer decline vs April.
- **Australia (-18%) and Norway (-11%)** also saw double digit declines in demand whilst gentler declines were seen from Sweden, the USA, China, India, Netherlands and Switzerland.

Source: ForwardKeys Flight Searches refreshed 09/06/26. % growth vs previous year shown. %s may be different to the dashboard as the dashboard is updated weekly. Overall flight searches refer to the average of 15 inbound markets within our subscription. Flight searches is a calculation of the number of searches which took place x the number of passengers included within each search (i.e. travel party size). Penetration of flight searches is higher in Europe and North America, and low in Asian markets.

# Destination nation trends | Northern Ireland and Scotland led growth in May 2026

- **Northern Ireland** (11%) and **Scotland** (10%) led growth in searches in May 2026.
- Demand for **England** was down 2%, with declines also seen from **UK Crown Dependencies** (-6%) and **Wales** (-13%).

YoY % Change in Searches to United Kingdom by Destination Nation/Region (Previous 12 Months)

Nation/Region	Jun-2025	Jul-2025	Aug-2025	Sep-2025	Oct-2025	Nov-2025	Dec-2025	Jan-2026	Feb-2026	Mar-2026	Apr-2026	May-2026
England	0.54%	7.09%	16.04%	11.86%	27.69%	-4.13%	-4.08%	-5.11%	4.34%	10.75%	-0.18%	-1.87%
Scotland	5.69%	22.99%	23.70%	22.35%	22.01%	10.70%	15.82%	12.11%	20.71%	15.13%	9.91%	10.32%
Wales	-2.01%	-4.72%	-26.05%	-7.17%	22.28%	16.76%	3.43%	-1.26%	19.89%	6.04%	-11.02%	-12.64%
Northern Ireland	31.07%	35.58%	32.33%	43.54%	5.20%	-16.49%	-16.19%	-9.17%	-3.53%	-1.55%	-1.54%	11.14%
UK Crown Dependencies	9.75%	-0.48%	-9.10%	-5.71%	-6.78%	-8.78%	-10.21%	-12.04%	-6.08%	12.01%	4.55%	-5.83%

Source: ForwardKeys Flight Searches refreshed 09/06/26. % growth vs previous year shown. %s may be different to the dashboard as the dashboard is updated weekly. Overall flight searches refer to the average of 15 inbound markets within our subscription. Flight searches is a calculation of searches x number of passengers searched for.

# Destination city trends | Scottish destinations led May growth

- Within the top 5 ranking UK cities by volume in May 2026 (London, Edinburgh, Manchester, Glasgow and Birmingham), Glasgow (+19%) saw the largest YoY growth in searches followed by Edinburgh (+9%). Searches to London, Manchester and Birmingham were just below 2025 levels in the latest month.

Searches to United Kingdom Ranked by Destination City  
(Latest Month: May-2026)

City	Rank	Searches
London	1	20.0M
Edinburgh	2	3.6M
Manchester	3	2.1M
Glasgow	4	891.8K
Birmingham	5	726.1K
Bristol	6	424.7K
Liverpool	7	236.0K
Belfast	8	221.3K
Newcastle	9	215.2K
Leeds	10	160.7K
Cardiff	11	124.5K
Nottingham	12	108.5K
Inverness	13	105.2K
Aberdeen	14	100.8K
Southampton	15	71.5K

YoY % Change in Searches to United Kingdom Ranked  
by Destination City (Latest Month: May-2026)

City	Rank	YoY % Change in Searches
Tiree, Inner Hebrides *	1	304%
Benbecula *	2	72%
Islay *	3	55%
Campbeltown *	4	51%
Kirkwall *	5	28%
Stornoway, Outer Stat H...*	6	27%
Humberside	7	22%
Glasgow	8	19%
Shetland Islands *	9	18%
Newquay	10	16%
Bournemouth	11	15%
Derry	12	14%
Aberdeen	13	13%
Guernsey	14	12%
Isle Of Man	15	11%

Source: ForwardKeys Flight Searches refreshed 09/06/26. % growth vs previous year shown. %s may be different to the dashboard as the dashboard is updated weekly. Overall flight searches refer to the average of 15 inbound markets within our subscription. Flight searches is a calculation of searches x number of passengers searched for.\*YoY searches based on a low volume of searches <10k. Destinations are based on UK airports.

**For more information, please contact**

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