Statistical bulletin

# Regional labour market statistics in the UK: Dec 2016

Regional, local authority and parliamentary constituency breakdowns of changes in UK employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and other employment-related statistics.

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# 1 . Main points

For the 3 months ending October 2016, the highest employment rate in the UK was in the South East (78.1%) and the lowest was in Northern Ireland (69.5%). The employment rate estimates for those aged 16 to 64, for August to October 2016 compared with May to July 2016, showed a range of reasonably large increases and decreases for the regions and countries of the UK.

For the 3 months ending October 2016, the highest unemployment rate in the UK was in the North East (6.5%) and the lowest was in the South East (3.5%). The unemployment rate estimates for August to October 2016 compared with May to July 2016, are showing some large changes, both increases and decreases, for the regions of the UK.

For November 2016, the highest Claimant Count rate in the UK was in the North East (4.1%) and the lowest was in the South East (1.3%). Compared with October 2016, the majority of regions saw no change in the Claimant Count rate. The exception was Northern Ireland, which saw a decrease of 0.1 percentage point.

For the 3 months ending October 2016, the highest economic inactivity rate in the UK was in Northern Ireland (26.2%) and the lowest was in the South East (19.0%). The largest change in the economic inactivity rate, compared with the same period last year, was in the West Midlands, which decreased by 1.5 percentage points.

Between June 2016 and September 2016, the largest increase in workforce jobs in the UK was in the South West, at 41,000. The largest decrease was in Scotland at 27,000.

In September 2016, the region with the highest proportion of workforce jobs in the service sector was London at 92.5%, which had increased by 0.6 percentage points since June 2016. The East Midlands had the highest proportion of jobs in the production sector at 13.8%.

The highest average actual weekly hours worked, for the 12 months ending June 2016, was in London at 33.5 hours and lowest in the North East, Yorkshire and The Humber, the South West and Scotland, all at 31.3 hours. For full-time workers, it was highest in London at 38.1 hours and for part-time workers it was highest in Northern Ireland at 16.9 hours.

# 2 . In this bulletin

This bulletin shows the latest main labour market statistics for the regions and countries of the UK, along with statistics for local authorities, travel-to-work areas and parliamentary constituencies.

Data for Northern Ireland, although included in this bulletin, are available separately, in full, in the Northern Ireland Labour Market Report on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) website.

**Updated this month**

Labour Force Survey estimates for the period August to October 2016
Claimant Count for November 2016
Public and private sector employment for September 2016
Workforce jobs estimates for September 2016

**Also in this release**

Annual Population Survey estimates for the period July 2015 to June 2016

# 3 . Summary of latest regional labour market statistics

Table 1 shows the latest estimates for employment, unemployment and economic inactivity for August to October 2016 and a comparison with the previous quarter (May to July 2016). Comparing non-overlapping periods (August to October 2016 with May to July 2016) provides a more robust short-term comparison. Table 2 shows the latest Claimant Count rate for November 2016 and shows how these figures compare with the previous month (October 2016) and the previous year (November 2015).

**Table 1: Summary of latest headline estimates for regions of the UK, seasonally adjusted, August to October 2016**

UK regions

| | Employment rate[1] (%) aged 16 to 64 | Change on May to Jul 2016 | Unemployment rate[2] (%) aged 16 and over | Change on May to Jul 2016 | Inactivity rate[3] (%) aged 16 to 64 | Change on May to Jul 2016 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North East | 70.9 | -0.1 | 6.5 | -1.0 | 24.1 | 0.9 |
| North West | 72.5 | -0.5 | 5.3 | 0.3 | 23.3 | 0.3 |
| Yorkshire and The Humber | 73.3 | 1.0 | 5.3 | -0.6 | 22.5 | -0.5 |
| East Midlands | 75.3 | -0.4 | 4.7 | 0.4 | 20.9 | 0.0 |
| West Midlands | 72.8 | 0.9 | 5.3 | -0.9 | 23.0 | -0.2 |
| East | 76.6 | -1.6 | 4.7 | 1.5 | 19.6 | 0.4 |
| London | 73.7 | 0.3 | 5.5 | -0.6 | 22.0 | 0.2 |
| South East | 78.1 | -0.2 | 3.5 | -0.1 | 19.0 | 0.3 |
| South West | 77.3 | -0.1 | 3.7 | -0.5 | 19.6 | 0.5 |
| England | 74.8 | -0.1 | 4.8 | -0.1 | 21.4 | 0.2 |
| Wales | 72.9 | -0.3 | 4.3 | 0.1 | 23.7 | 0.1 |
| Scotland | 73.3 | -0.8 | 5.3 | 0.6 | 22.5 | 0.4 |
| Great Britain | 74.6 | -0.1 | 4.8 | 0.0 | 21.6 | 0.2 |
| Northern Ireland | 69.5 | 0.1 | 5.7 | 0.1 | 26.2 | -0.1 |
| UK | 74.4 | -0.1 | 4.8 | 0.0 | 21.7 | 0.2 |

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Calculation of headline employment rate: Number of employed people aged from 16 to 64 divided by the population aged from 16 to 64. Population is the sum of employed plus unemployed plus inactive.

2. Calculation of headline unemployment rate: Number of unemployed people aged 16 and over divided by the sum of employed people aged 16 and over plus unemployed people aged 16 and over.

3. Calculation of headline economic inactivity rate: Number of economically inactive people aged from 16 to 64 divided by the population aged from 16 to 64. Population is the sum of employed plus unemployed plus inactive.

**Table 2: Summary of latest Claimant Count estimates for regions of the UK, seasonally adjusted, November 2016 (experimental statistics)**

UK regions

| | Level (thousands) aged 18 and over | Change on Oct 2016 | Change on Nov 2015 | Rate[1] (%) aged 18 and over | Change on Oct 2016 | Change on Nov 2015 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North East | 52.3 | 0.3 | 4.4 | 4.1 | 0.0 | 0.4 |
| North West | 109.5 | -0.3 | -0.3 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Yorkshire and The Humber | 78.9 | -0.1 | 0.2 | 2.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| East Midlands | 46.5 | 0.2 | -1.2 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| West Midlands | 87.9 | 0.7 | 7.3 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 |
| East | 49.7 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| London | 118.5 | 2.2 | 6.8 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| South East | 62.9 | 0.0 | 3.6 | 1.3 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| South West | 42.5 | -0.1 | 3.5 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| England | 648.6 | 3.2 | 24.9 | 2.2 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| Wales | 43.5 | -0.2 | -1.2 | 2.9 | 0.0 | -0.1 |
| Scotland | 83.4 | -0.2 | 5.4 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.2 |
| Great Britain | 775.4 | 2.9 | 29.1 | 2.3 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| Northern Ireland | 33.6 | -0.5 | -5.6 | 3.7 | -0.1 | -0.6 |
| UK | 809.0 | 2.4 | 23.5 | 2.3 | 0.0 | 0.1 |

Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Notes:

1. Calculation of headline Claimant Count rate: Denominator is the number of people aged 18 and over claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus some Universal Credit claimants plus Workforce Jobs.

# 4 . Understanding and working with labour market statistics

Labour market statistics measure many different aspects of work and jobs and provide an insight into the economy. They are also very much about people, including their participation in the labour force, the types of work they do, the earnings and benefits they receive and their working patterns.

We have developed a framework for labour market statistics to describe the concepts within the labour market and their relationship to each other. The framework is based on labour supply and demand.

Labour supply consists of people who are employed, as well as those people defined as unemployed or economically inactive, who are considered to be potential labour supply. Our framework distinguishes between these 3 categories of worker, and also between the different working arrangements of those in employment such as employees, the self-employed and those on government schemes.

Labour demand is represented by employers, who have a need for work to be done, and who offer compensation for this work to the employees who undertake it. Employers group this work to form jobs.

This approach has wide international acceptance, including by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Users of labour market statistics include central and local government, economists, financial analysts, journalists, businesses, trade unions, employer associations, students, teachers, industrial tribunals, academic researchers and lobby groups.

They use them for the analysis, evaluation, monitoring and planning of the labour market and economy. Labour market statistics are also used for social analysis and help inform a wide range of government policies towards population groups of particular concern (women, young people, older people and jobless households).

## Labour market statuses

Everybody aged 16 or over is either employed, unemployed or economically inactive. The employment estimates include all people in work including those working part-time. People not working are classed as unemployed if they have been looking for work within the last 4 weeks and are able to start work within the next 2 weeks. A common misconception is that the unemployment statistics are a count of people on benefits; this is not the case as they include unemployed people not claiming benefits.

Jobless people who have not been looking for work within the last 4 weeks or who are unable to start work within the next 2 weeks are classed as economically inactive. Examples of economically inactive people include people not looking for work because they are students, looking after the family or home, because of illness or disability, or because they have retired.

A Glossary of Labour Market terms is also available.

## What is the relationship between the Annual Population Survey (APS) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS)?

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a household survey using international definitions of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity and compiles a wide range of related topics such as occupation, training, hours of work and personal characteristics of household members aged 16 years and over. Estimates are produced every month for a rolling 3-monthly period; for example, February to April data in a release will be followed by data for March to May in the next release.

The Annual Population Survey (APS), which began in 2004, is compiled from interviews for the LFS, along with additional regional samples. The APS comprises the main variables from the LFS, with a much larger sample size. Consequently the APS supports more detailed breakdowns than can be reliably produced from the LFS. Estimates are produced every quarter for a rolling annual period; for example, January to December data will be followed by data for April to March when they are next updated.

This bulletin includes labour market estimates at a regional level from the LFS on total employment, unemployment and economic inactivity. More detailed regional estimates for employment by age, full-time and part-time working, economic activity and economic inactivity by age, and reasons for economic inactivity are provided using the APS. Any estimates for geographic areas below regional level are provided using the APS. In tables where APS estimates are provided for detailed geographic areas, regional and national estimates are also provided from APS for comparability.

## Making comparisons with earlier data

The most robust estimates of short-term movements in estimates derived from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are obtained by comparing the estimates for August to October 2016 with the estimates for May to July 2016, which were first published on 14 September 2016. This provides a more robust estimate than comparing with the estimates for July to September 2016. This is because the August and September data are included within both estimates, so observed differences are only between July and October 2016. The LFS is representative of the UK population over a 3-month period, not for single month periods.

## Accuracy and reliability of survey estimates

Most of the figures in this statistical bulletin come from surveys of households or businesses. Surveys gather information from a sample rather than from the whole population. The sample is designed carefully to allow for this, and to be as accurate as possible given practical limitations such as time and cost constraints, but results from sample surveys are always estimates, not precise figures. This means that they are subject to a margin of error which can have an impact on how changes in the numbers should be interpreted, especially in the short term.

Changes in the numbers reported in this statistical bulletin (and especially the rates) between 3-month periods are usually not greater than the margin of error. In practice, this means that small, short-term movements in reported rates (for example, within plus or minus 0.3 percentage points) should be treated as indicative, and considered alongside medium and long-term patterns in the series and corresponding movements in administrative sources, where available, to give a fuller picture.

Further information is available in Quality information, in the Quality and methodology section.

## Seasonal adjustment

All estimates discussed in this statistical bulletin are seasonally adjusted except where otherwise stated. Like many economic indicators, the labour market is affected by factors that tend to occur at around the same time every year; for example, school leavers entering the labour market in July and whether Easter falls in March or April. In order to compare movements other than annual changes in labour market statistics, the data are seasonally adjusted to remove the effects of seasonal factors and the arrangement of the calendar.

A Glossary of Labour Market terms is also available.

## Where to find explanatory information

We have produced a number of items to help aid understanding and highlight common misunderstandings of labour market statistics, all of which are available on our website:

- interpreting labour market statistics

- a detailed guide to labour market statistics

- a glossary of labour market terms

# 5 . Employment

Employment measures the number of people in work; it differs from the number of jobs because some people have more than one job.

Employment consists of employees, self-employed people, unpaid family workers and people on government supported training and employment programmes. Unpaid family workers are people who work in a family business who do not receive a formal wage or salary but benefit from the profits of that business. The government supported training and employment programmes series does not include all people on these programmes; it only includes people engaging in any form of work, work experience or work-related training who are not included in the employees or self-employed series. People on these programmes not engaging in any form of work, work experience or work-related training are not included in the employment estimates; they are classified as unemployed or economically inactive.

An article comparison between estimates of employment and jobs is available on our website.

A Glossary of Labour Market terms is also available.

## Regional employment

The employment rate for people aged from 16 to 64 for the UK was 74.4% for the period August to October 2016. This is a decrease of 0.1 percentage points compared with the previous period (May to July 2016).

The UK region with the highest employment rate was the South East at 78.1%, followed by the South West at 77.3% and the East of England at 76.6%. The highest rate for the same period last year was in the South West at 77.9%. Notably, the employment levels and rates for Yorkshire and The Humber and London are at record highs.
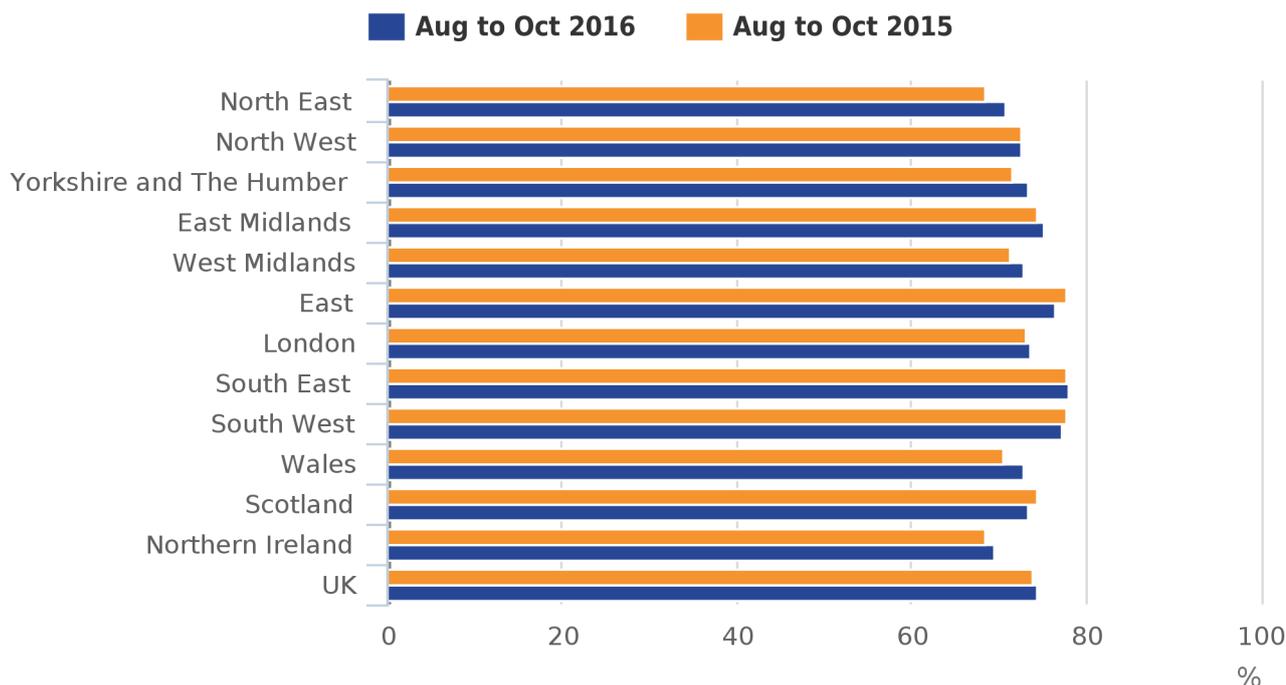
The region with the lowest employment rate was Northern Ireland at 69.5%, followed by the North East at 70.9% and the North West at 72.5%. The lowest rate for the same period last year was also in Northern Ireland at 68.4%.

The region with the largest increase in the employment rate on the previous period (May to July 2016), was Yorkshire and The Humber, with an increase of 1.0 percentage point, followed by the West Midlands, with an increase on the previous period of 0.9 percentage points. Recent estimates for both Yorkshire and The Humber and the West Midlands have been showing a period of growth over the last year, although at a steadier rate than suggested by the latest figures.

The East of England had the largest decrease in the employment rate of 1.6 percentage points, followed by Scotland, which has decreased by 0.8 percentage points. The fall in the East of England is a particularly large decrease, partially due to the estimate for the May to July 2016 period being a record high employment rate. It is too early to say whether the latest figure is going to be part of a sustained period of falls.

**Figure 1: Employment rates by region and comparison year on year, seasonally adjusted, August to October 2015 and August to October 2016**

UK regions



Source: Labour Force Survey: Office for National Statistics

Over the year, the regions with the largest increase in the employment rate were Wales and the North East, both with an increase of 2.3 percentage points, followed by the West Midlands and Yorkshire and The Humber, both with an increase of 1.6 percentage points.

The East of England had the largest decrease in the employment rate at 1.3 percentage points, followed by Scotland at 1.0 percentage point and the South West at 0.6 percentage points. The North West was the only region where the employment rate was unchanged.

## Where to find data about employment

Employment estimates are available for each region in Dataset HI00 – Headline LFS indicators for all UK regions and HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tabs 1 and 2), and Datasets LI01 to LI05 Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain, for this and further estimate breakdowns by age or geographies.

These tables contain data produced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS). A note in the section Understanding and working with labour market statistics on the relationship between the LFS and APS entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin.

# 6 . Workforce jobs

Workforce jobs measures the number of filled jobs in the economy. The estimates are mainly sourced from employer surveys such as the Short-Term Employment Surveys (STES) and the Quarterly Public Sector Employment Survey (QPSES). Workforce jobs is a different concept from employment, which is sourced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), as employment is an estimate of people and some people have more than 1 job.

A comparison between estimates of employment and jobs article is published on our website.

A Glossary of Labour Market terms is also available.

The service sector consists of the following industries:

- wholesale and retail trade

- repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles, transport and storage

- accommodation and food service activities

- information and communication

- financial and insurance activities

- real estate activities

- professional, scientific and technical activities

- administrative and support service activities

- public administration and defence

- compulsory social security

- education

- human health and social work activities

- arts, entertainment and recreation

- other service activities

- people employed by households

The production sector consists of the following industries:

- mining and quarrying

- manufacturing

- electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply

- water supply, sewerage, waste and remediation activities

The "other" sector consists of agriculture, forestry, and fishing and construction industries.

The Northern Ireland self-employed component of the workforce jobs is published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) as part of the Economic and Labour Market Statistics.

# Regional workforce jobs

Workforce jobs increased in 6 of the 12 regions of the UK between June 2016 and September 2016. The largest increase of 41,000 was in the South West, followed by the West Midlands, which increased by 29,000.

The largest decrease was in Scotland, which decreased by 27,000, followed by Wales, which decreased by 16,000.

Compared with the same month last year (September 2015), the largest increase in workforce jobs was in the South East, with an increase of 118,000. This was also the largest overall change. The largest decrease was in Scotland, at 7,000.

**Figure 2: Change in workforce jobs, by region, seasonally adjusted, September 2015 and September 2016**
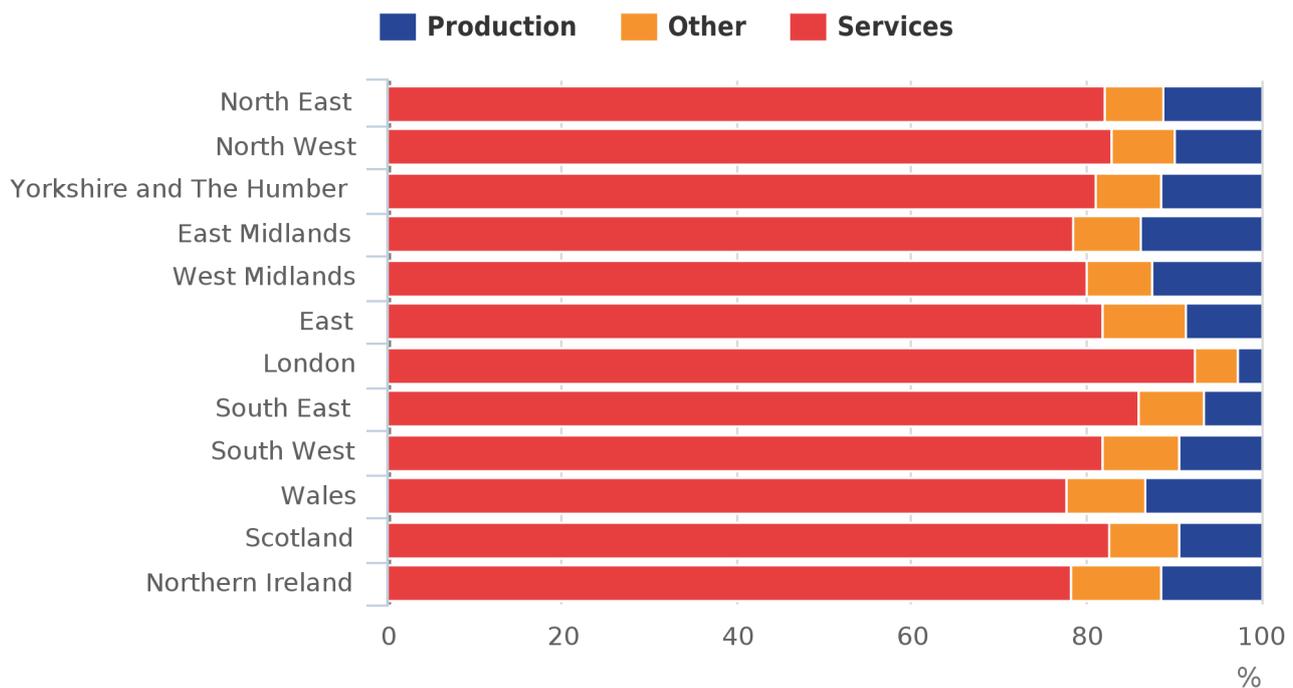
**UK regions**
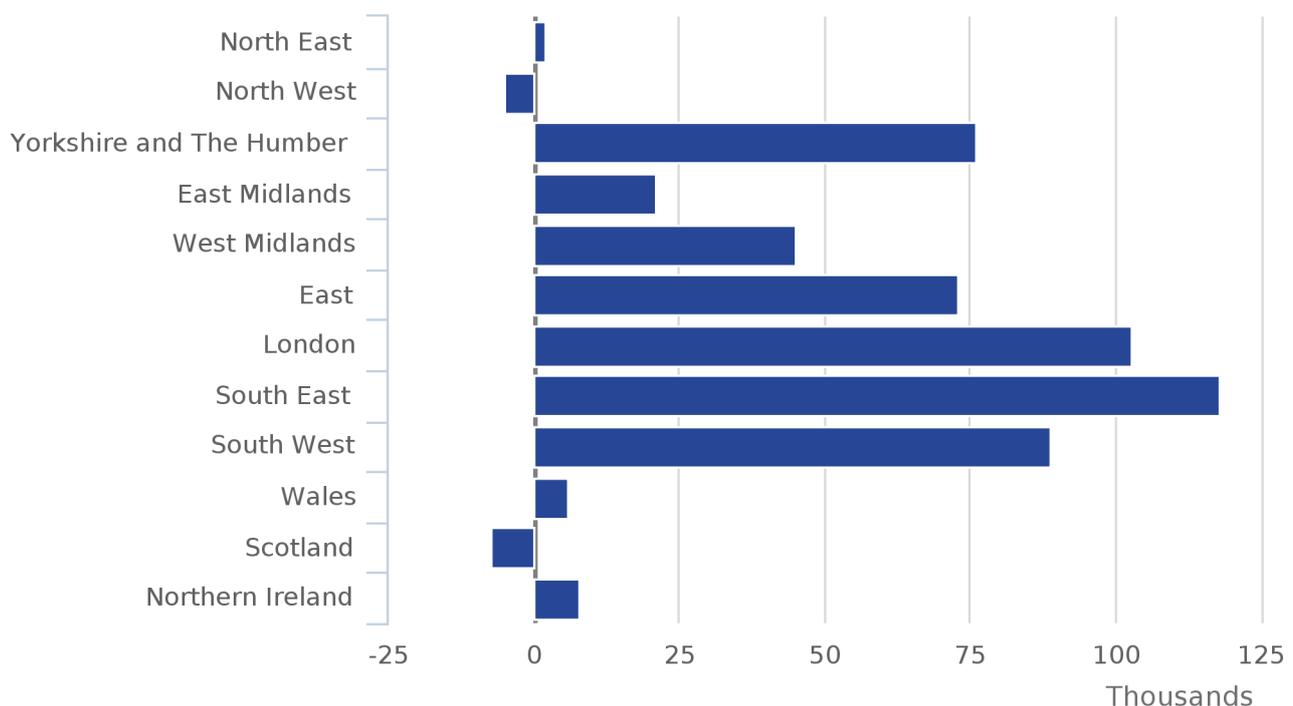


**Source: Office for National Statistics**

The East Midlands had the highest proportion of jobs in the production sector, at 13.8%, while London had the lowest proportion, at 2.7%. This is due to London having primarily service-based industries within its region, such as financial and administrative sectors.

For the service sector, London had the highest proportion, at 92.5%, whilst Wales had the lowest proportion at 77.8%. The service sector currently accounts for 83.7% of the total workforce jobs in the UK.

**Figure 3: Proportion of workforce jobs by broad industry group, by region, September 2016**

**UK regions**



Source: Office for National Statistics

## Where to find data about workforce jobs

Workforce jobs estimates are available for each region in Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tabs 4 and 5).

While comparable estimates for workforce jobs by industry begin in 1978, there is information back to 1841, based on census data (not comparable with the latest estimates), available from 2011 Census Analysis on our website.

# 7 . Actual hours worked (first published 19 October 2016)

Actual hours worked measures the number of hours worked in the economy. Changes in actual hours worked reflect changes in the number of people in employment and the average hours worked by those people.

A Glossary of Labour Market terms is also available

## Regional actual hours worked

For the period July 2015 to June 2016, the UK region with the highest average actual weekly hours worked (for all workers) was London at 33.5 hours, followed by Northern Ireland at 33.2 hours. The North East, Yorkshire and The Humber, the South West and Scotland had the lowest number of hours worked, each at 31.3 hours.

The UK region with the largest increase in the average hours worked, compared with the same period last year (July 2014 to June 2015) was London, with an increase of 0.3 hours, a percentage increase of 0.9%. This was followed by the East Midlands and the South East, both with an increase of 0.2 hours (percentage increases of 0.5% and 0.7% respectively). The largest decrease in the average hours worked was in Yorkshire and The Humber, with a decrease of 0.4 hours (1.3%).

The region with the highest average actual weekly hours worked in full-time jobs was London, at 38.1 hours. This represents an increase of 0.1 hours and a percentage increase of 0.1%, compared with the same period last year. The lowest was Scotland at 36.4 hours, which has decreased by 0.3 hours, a percentage decrease of 0.9%. For part-time jobs, the region with the highest average hours worked was Northern Ireland at 16.9 hours and the lowest was the South West and South East, each at 15.7 hours.

For men, the region with the highest average hours worked was Northern Ireland, at 38.5 hours and for women it was London, at 29.0 hours. The largest difference in average hours worked between men and women was in Northern Ireland, where men worked on average 11.3 more hours a week than women. The largest change compared with the same period last year (July 2014 to June 2015), was seen for women in the East Midlands, where the average hours worked increased by 3.0%: an increase from 26.6 hours to 27.4 hours per week.

The regions with the largest difference in total hours worked between men and women were the South East and London, where men in each worked a total of 33.0 million more hours than women. The region with the smallest difference was Northern Ireland, where men worked only 6.0 million more hours than women.

**Figure 4: Average (mean) actual weekly hours of work, by region and by sex, July 2015 to June 2016**

**UK regions**
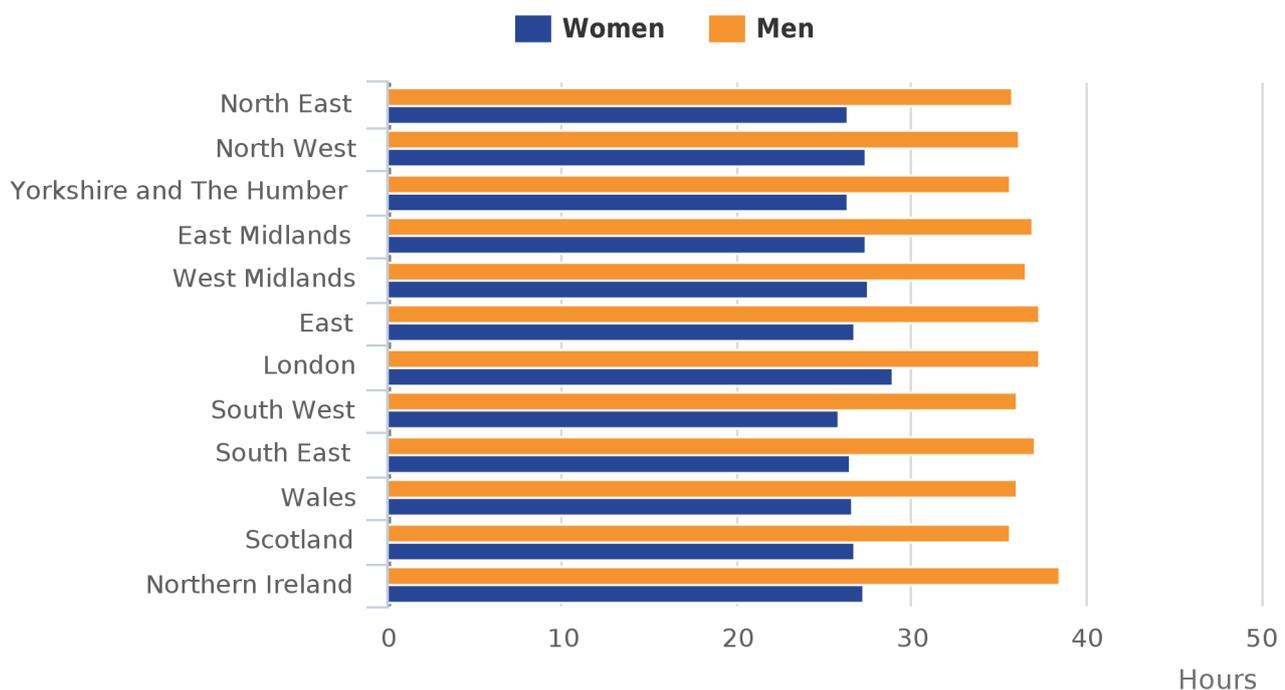


**Source: Annual Population Survey: Office for National Statistics**

# Where to find data about hours worked

Hours worked estimates are available for each region in Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tab 6). These estimates are based on data from the Annual Population Survey (APS).

The national data is also available at the UK labour market statistical bulletin in Datasets  Hour1-Actual weekly hours worked (seasonally adjusted) and Hour2–Usual weekly hours worked (seasonally adjusted). These estimates are based on data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

# 8 . Unemployment

Unemployment measures people without a job who have been actively seeking work within the last 4 weeks and are available to start work within the next 2 weeks.

A Glossary of Labour Market terms is also available

## Regional unemployment

Regional estimates for the unemployment rate are quite volatile, which needs to be allowed for when considering the pattern of change over time.

The unemployment rate for people aged 16 and over for the UK was 4.8%, for the period August to October 2016. This is unchanged compared with the previous period (May to July 2016).

The UK region with the highest rate was the North East at 6.5%. This was also the region with the highest rate for the same period last year at 8.8%. The next highest rates were seen in Northern Ireland, at 5.7% and London, at 5.5%; notably, the unemployment rate for London is at a record low. The region with the lowest rate was the South East at 3.5%, followed by the South West at 3.7%.

The region with the largest decrease in the unemployment rate on the previous period (May to July 2016), was the North East at 1.0 percentage point, followed by the West Midlands at 0.9 percentage points and Yorkshire and The Humber and London, both at 0.6 percentage points. For the North East the recent pattern has been for falling unemployment rates, although at a much steadier rate than suggested by these latest estimates. Meanwhile for the West Midlands, the latest estimates show a return to a more normal level after a few unusually high estimates.

The largest increases in the unemployment rate on the previous period (May to July 2016) were seen in the East of England, at 1.5 percentage points and Scotland, at 0.6 percentage points. The latest increase in the East of England is driven by the fall in the employment rate from a record high in the May to July period. It is too early to tell whether this figure is going to be part of a change in pattern for the region.

**Figure 5: Unemployment rates by region, seasonally adjusted, August to October 2016**

UK regions



Source: Labour Force Survey: Office for National Statistics

Most regions are showing decreases in the unemployment rate compared with a year ago, with the exception of the East of England, the East Midlands and the North West, which increased by 0.6, 0.3 and 0.2 percentage points respectively. The largest decrease was in the North East at 2.2 percentage points, followed by Wales at 1.4 percentage points.

We are currently unable to produce the interactive chart relating to unemployment rate by government region, due to compatibility issues. We aim to develop an improved version of this in the near future.

## Where to find data about unemployment

Unemployment estimates are available for each region in Dataset HI00 – Headline LFS indicators for all UK regions and HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tab 2(2)), and Datasets LI01 to LI05 – Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain, for further estimate breakdowns by age or geographies.

These tables contain data produced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS). A note in the section Understanding and working with Labour Market Statistics on the relationship between the LFS and APS entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin.

# 9 . Claimant Count (Experimental Statistics)

## What is the Claimant Count?

The Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming benefit principally for the reason of being unemployed.

Prior to the introduction of Universal Credit, the Claimant Count was measured using the number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Since its introduction in May 2013, the Claimant Count now includes some claimants of Universal Credit as well as JSA claimants. These Universal Credit estimates are still being developed by the Department for Work and Pensions. We have therefore decided that the Claimant Count estimates will continue to be designated as Experimental Statistics while this development is ongoing.

- From April 2015, the Claimant Count includes claimants of Universal Credit who are required to seek and be available for work, as well as all JSA claimants.

- Between May 2013 and March 2015, the Claimant Count includes all out-of-work Universal Credit claimants, as well as all JSA claimants.

- Between October 1996 and April 2013, the Claimant Count is a count of the number of people claiming JSA.

- Between February 1971 and September 1995, the Claimant Count is an estimate of the number of people who would have claimed unemployment-related benefits if JSA had existed at that time.

- The Claimant Count includes people who claim unemployment-related benefits but who do not receive payment. For example some claimants will have had their benefits stopped for a limited period of time by Jobcentre Plus. Some people claim JSA in order to receive National Insurance Credits.

See Notes for Claimant Count at the end of this section and Background notes for further information.

# Regional Claimant Count

The seasonally adjusted Claimant Count rate for the UK was 2.3% in November 2016, remaining unchanged from October 2016, with the level up 2,400.

The UK region with the highest rate was the North East at 4.1%. The next highest rates were in Northern Ireland at 3.7% and Scotland, the West Midlands and the North West, all at 3.0%. For the same period last year, Northern Ireland was the region with the highest rate at 4.4%.

The region with the lowest rate was the South East at 1.3%, followed by the South West at 1.4% and the East of England at 1.6%.

The largest increase in the Claimant Count level compared with the previous month (October 2016) was seen in London, with an increase of 2,200, followed by the West Midlands which increased by 700. The largest decrease in the Claimant Count level was in Northern Ireland, at 500.

Over the last 12 months, the average monthly change in the Claimant Count rates saw small increases in 6 of the 12 regions of the UK, with the East of England, East Midlands, Yorkshire and The Humber and the North West all being unchanged. The remaining 2 regions saw an average increase, of which the largest was in the Northern Ireland, at 0.05 percentage points, followed by the Wales at 0.01 percentage points. Northern Ireland was also the largest overall average change.

The Claimant Count levels for men are showing decreases for the majority of regions of the UK. The only increases in the Claimant Count level for men were in London and the West Midlands, which decreased by 1,000 and 200, respectively. However, the levels for women showed a majority of increases, with the exception of Northern Ireland and Wales, which were unchanged. There were no decreases in the levels for women, compared with the previous month.

# Figure 6: Claimant Count rate by region, seasonally adjusted, April 1974 to November 2016

**UK regions**

Interactive chart: move the cursor onto each plot line to see the Claimant Count rate for that region.
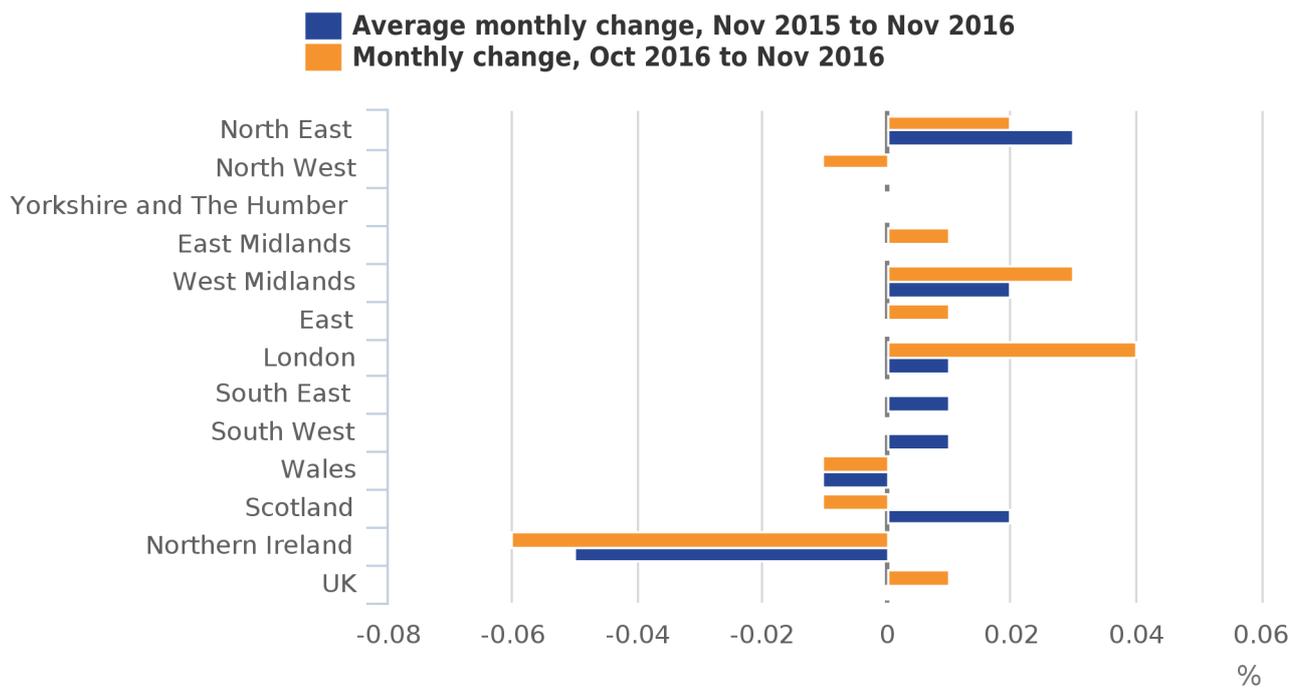
# Figure 7: Claimant Count rate by region, seasonally adjusted, November 2014 to November 2016

**UK regions**

Interactive chart: move the cursor onto each plot line to see the Claimant Count rate for that region.

**Figure 8: Comparison of Claimant Count rate, annual average change and monthly change, November 2016**

**UK regions**



**Source: Office for National Statistics: Department for Work and Pensions**

# Notes for Claimant Count

1. The Claimant Count now includes people claiming Universal Credit. The background notes to this statistical bulletin have further details.

2. The Claimant Count includes people who claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) but who do not receive payment. For example, some claimants will have had their benefits stopped for a limited period of time by Jobcentre Plus; this is known as "sanctioning". Some people claim JSA in order to receive National Insurance Credits.

3. An article explaining how unemployment and the Claimant Count series are defined and measured and the difference between the 2 series is available, along with an article to help users interpret labour market statistics and highlight some common misunderstandings.

4. Universal Credit has not yet been introduced in Northern Ireland and so the "Claimant Count" for Northern Ireland will only be the number of people claiming JSA.

5. Estimates of Claimant Count by region are available on a comparable basis back to April 1974. The figures from April 1974 to September 1996 are estimates of the number of people who would have claimed unemployment-related benefits if JSA had existed. The national records start in 1971, and some data back to 1881 (which do not have National Statistics status) are available from the "Historic Data" worksheet within Dataset CLA01 – Claimant Count (experimental statistics) in the UK Labour Market bulletin.

## Where to find data about the Claimant Count

Claimant Count estimates are available for each region at Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tab 7) and at Datasets CC01 – Claimant Count by unitary and local authority, CC02 – Claimant Count by parliamentary constituency, CC02.1 – Claimant Count for constituencies of the Scottish Parliament and CC03 – Claimant Count for Local Enterprise Partnerships, for further estimate breakdowns by geographies.

Datasets showing estimates of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) are still available at HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tabs 7(1), 8 and 8(2)), and in Datasets JSA01 – Jobseeker's Allowance for local and unitary authorities in the UK, JSA02 – Jobseeker's Allowance for Westminster parliamentary constituencies in the UK, JSA02.1 – Jobseeker's Allowance for constituencies of the Scottish Parliament and JSA03 – Jobseeker's Allowance for Local Enterprise Partnerships in England, for further estimate breakdowns by sub-regional geographic areas. However, these estimates are not designated as National Statistics. The back data for JSA, at a regional level, is available from Nomis. Workplace-based denominators used for the Claimant Count are also available at Dataset (S03) – Claimant Count denominators.

# 10 . Economic inactivity

Economically inactive people are not in employment but do not meet the internationally accepted definition of unemployment. This is because they have not been seeking work within the last 4 weeks and/or they are unable to start work within the next 2 weeks.

A Glossary of Labour Market terms is also available

## Regional economic inactivity

The economic inactivity rate for people aged from 16 to 64 for the UK was 21.7%, for the period August to October 2016. This is an increase of 0.2 percentage points compared with the previous period (May to July 2016). The UK region with the highest rate was Northern Ireland at 26.2%, followed by the North East at 24.1%. The region with the lowest rate was the South East at 19.0%, followed by the East of England and the South West, both at 19.6% and the East Midlands at 20.9%.

The region with the largest increase in the economic inactivity rate on the previous period (May to July 2016) was the North East, with an increase of 0.9 percentage points, followed by the South West, with an increase of 0.5 percentage points. Yorkshire and The Humber had the largest decrease in the rate, of 0.5 percentage points, followed by the West Midlands, with a decrease of 0.2 percentage points.

Over the year from August to October 2015 to August to October 2016, the region with the largest increase in the economic inactivity rate was Scotland, with an increase of 1.4 percentage points, followed by the East of England and the South West, both with an increase of 0.8 percentage points. The largest decrease in the rate was in the West Midlands, at 1.5 percentage points, followed by the East Midlands, at 1.4 percentage points.

Northern Ireland also had the highest economic inactivity rate at 27.1%, in the same period in 2015. The current rate is now 4.5 percentage points higher than the UK rate.

**Figure 9: Economic inactivity rate by region and comparison year-on-year, seasonally adjusted, August to October 2015 and August to October 2016**
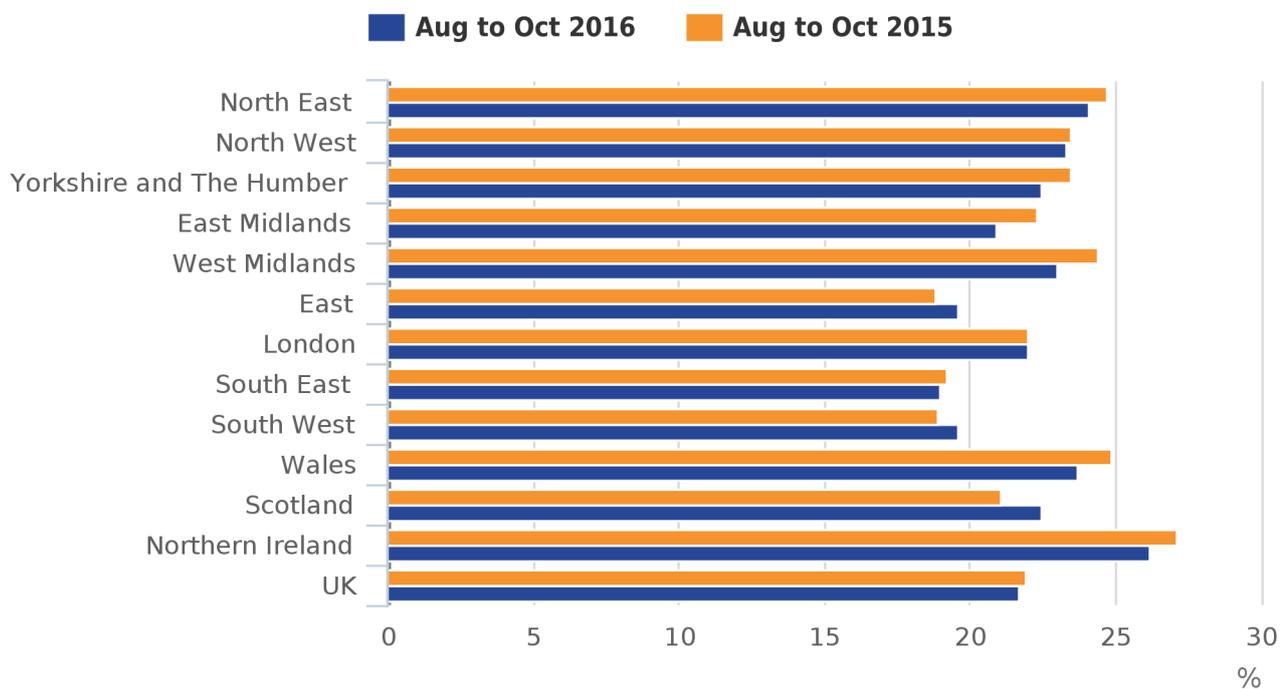
**UK regions**



**Source: Labour Force Survey: Office for National Statistics**

# Where to find data about economic inactivity

Economic inactivity estimates are available for each region at Dataset HI00 – Headline LFS indicators for all UK regions and HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tabs 10 and 11), and Datasets LI01 to LI05 – Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain, for further estimate breakdowns by age, reason or geographies.

These tables contain data produced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS). A note in the section Understanding and working with labour market statistics on the relationship between the LFS and APS entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin.

# 11 . Local labour market indicators

Local labour market indicators cover employment, unemployment, economic inactivity, Claimant Count and jobs density, for sub-regional geographic areas such as local and unitary authorities, counties and regions in the UK for the most recent 12-month period available of the Annual Population Survey (APS). The jobs density of an area is the number of jobs per head, of resident population, aged 16 to 64.

## Indicators from the Annual Population Survey (first published on 19 October 2016)

For the period July 2015 to June 2016, the local authorities with the highest employment rate in Great Britain were the Shetland Islands at 89.4%, Stroud at 88.8%, Derbyshire Dales at 87.7% and Orkney Islands at 87.6%. Birmingham is the local authority with the lowest rate at 60.9%, followed by Liverpool, Leicester and Canterbury, all at 62.6%. For the same period last year, the highest rates were in Winchester at 87.4% and the Orkney Islands at 86.3%.

For the period July 2015 to June 2016, the local authorities with the highest unemployment rate in Great Britain were Middlesbrough and Birmingham, both at 10.0%, followed by Hartlepool at 9.8%. The local authorities with the lowest rate were Derbyshire Dales at 2.0%, followed by Harborough at 2.1% and South Northamptonshire and Eden, both at 2.2%. These were followed by a further 47 local authorities all under 3.0%. For the same period last year, there were only 26 local authorities with a rate of less than 3.0%.

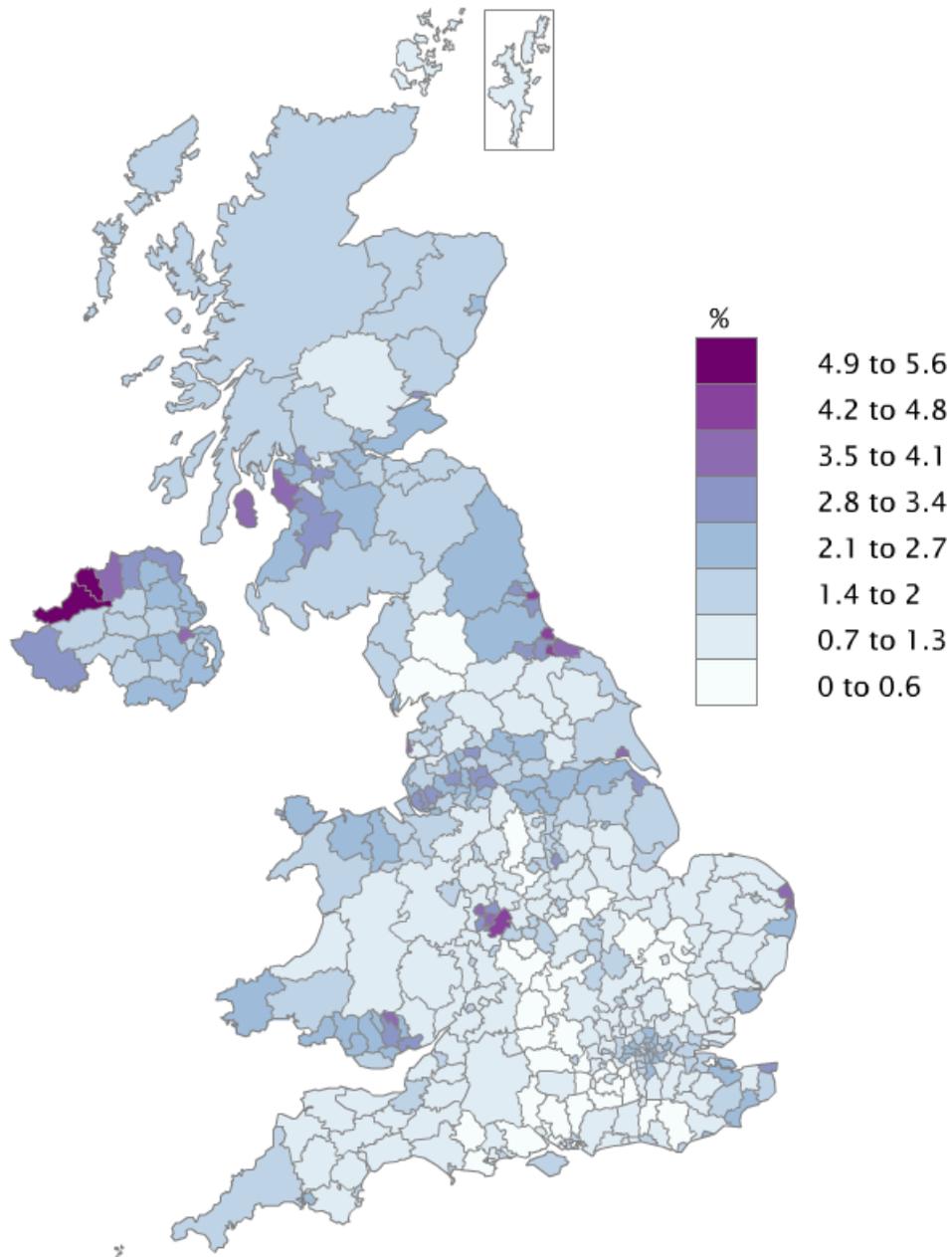## Indicators using Claimant Count data (Experimental Statistics)

In November 2016, the UK local authorities (excluding the Isles of Scilly) with the lowest proportion of the population aged from 16 to 64 years, claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or work-seeking Universal Credit were Stratford-on-Avon and Hart in Hampshire, both at 0.4%. These were followed by 14 local authorities at 0.5% and 20 other local authorities at 0.6%. There were a further 67 local authorities with a proportion of less than 1.0%.

The proportion was highest in Derry City and Strabane at 5.4%, followed by Hartlepool and Middlesbrough, both at 4.7% and South Tyneside at 4.4%. There were a further 25 local authorities with a proportion of 3.0% or more in the UK.

The local authority map in Figure 9 reflects the Claimant Count for the total amount of people claiming JSA and Universal Credit only. Due to technical issues it is not currently possible to show the latest Northern Ireland districts on this map. In the meantime we will continue to show the Northern Ireland districts as they were prior to the April 2015 reorganisation. We are also unable to produce the interactive version of this map, due to compatibility issues. We aim to develop an improved version of this map in the near future.

**Figure 10: Claimant Count map, November 2016**

**Claimant Count proportion of people aged 16 to 64 in local authorities in the UK**



%

| | |
|---|---|
| ▆ | 4.9 to 5.6 |
| ▆ | 4.2 to 4.8 |
| ▆ | 3.5 to 4.1 |
| ▆ | 2.8 to 3.4 |
| ▆ | 2.1 to 2.7 |
| ▆ | 1.4 to 2 |
| ▆ | 0.7 to 1.3 |
| ▆ | 0 to 0.6 |

# Jobs densities

The jobs density of an area is the number of jobs per head, of resident population, aged 16 to 64. In 2014, the highest jobs density in Great Britain was the City of London at 84.36 and the lowest was East Renfrewshire at 0.42. Westminster (4.32) and Camden (2.26), both in London, were the next highest jobs densities. The highest jobs density outside London was the Isles of Scilly at 2.15. After East Renfrewshire, the lowest jobs densities were Lewisham at 0.43, followed by East Dunbartonshire and Waltham Forest, both at 0.46 and Redbridge, and Barking and Dagenham, both at 0.47.

## Where to find data about local labour market indicators

Annual Population Survey (APS) estimates are available at Datasets LI01 to LI05 – Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain and Claimant Count estimates are available at Datasets CC01 – Claimant Count by unitary and local authority and CC02 – Claimant Count by parliamentary constituency, CC02.1 – Claimant Count for constituencies of the Scottish Parliament, and CC03 – Claimant Count for Local Enterprise Partnerships in this statistical bulletin.

These tables contain data produced from the APS. A note in the section Understanding and working with labour market statistics entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin.

# 12 . Where to find more information about labour market statistics

Other datasets within the regional labour market release:

- Guide to tables in regional labour market statistical bulletin

- Summary of headline indicators (S01)

- Sampling variability and revisions summary (S02)

- Model-based estimates of unemployment (M01)

- Estimates of employment by age (experimental statistics) (X01)

- Estimates of unemployment by age (experimental statistics) (X02)

- Estimates of economic inactivity by age (experimental statistics) (X03)

- Regional public and private sector employment (RPUB1)

Other regularly published labour market releases:

- UK Labour Market statistics

- Public sector employment

- Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

- Labour Productivity

- Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

- Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)

- regional and local area statistics are also available at NOMIS®

We have also produced:

- [ad hoc data and analysis related to employment and employee types](#)

- [methodological articles related to employment and employee types](#)

## Historic articles published in Economic and Labour Market Review and Labour Market Trends

Articles about labour market statistics were published in Labour Market Trends (up until 2006) and in Economic and Labour Market Review (from 2007 to 2011). Editions of [Labour Market Trends](#) are available from July 2001 until January 2006, when the publication was discontinued. Editions of [Economic and Labour Market Review](#) are available from the first edition, published in February 2007, up until the last edition, published in May 2011.

# 13 . Quality and methodology

## Quality information

One indication of the reliability of the main indicators in this bulletin can be obtained by monitoring the size of revisions. These summary measures are available in Dataset [S02 Regional labour market: Sampling variability and revisions summary](#) spreadsheet and show the size of revisions over the last 5 years.

The revised data may be subject to sampling or other sources of error. Our standard presentation is to show 5 years' worth of revisions (that is, 60 observations for a monthly series, 20 for a quarterly series). Further information on the quality of and methods for workforce jobs estimates can be found in the [quality and methodology information report](#).

## Other quality information

The Quality and Methodology Information documents for labour market statistics contain important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data and how it compares with related data

- users and uses of the data

- how the output was created

- the quality of the output including the accuracy of the data

[Labour market Quality and Methodology Information](#)
[Labour Force Survey Quality and Methodology Information](#)
[Claimant count Quality and Methodology Information](#)
[Vacancy Survey Quality and Methodology Information](#)
[Workforce Jobs Quality and Methodology Information](#)
[Average weekly earnings (AWE) Quality and Methodology Information](#)

Further information about the Labour Force Survey (LFS) is available from:

- [the Labour Force Survey user guide](#)

- [Labour Force Survey performance and quality monitoring reports](#)

# 14. Background notes

1. **Changes in this month's bulletin**

   In this month's release we have updated population estimates used for producing Claimant Count and Jobseeker's Allowance proportions for parliamentary constituencies and travel-to-work areas using the latest mid-year population estimates.

   There have been revisions to estimates of Workforce Jobs going back several years caused by benchmarking to the latest estimates from the annual Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), updating seasonal factors and taking on board late information.

   There have also been revisions to estimates of public sector employment back to the start of the time series caused by taking account of late information, updating seasonal factors and some reclassifications.

2. **Next month's bulletin**

   In next month's release we intend to update population estimates used in the local indicator tables (LI01 to LI05) using the latest mid-year population estimates.

   We also intend to release Jobs Density figures for the year 2015 in the same tables. These have previously been released in April, but will now be released earlier due to processing improvements.

3. **Incorporation of estimates of Universal Credit into the Claimant Count**

   The Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. Between October 1996 and April 2013, the only unemployment-related benefit in the UK was Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and the Claimant Count was therefore a count of the number of people claiming JSA.

   Universal Credit is replacing a number of means-tested benefits including the means-tested element of JSA. It will not replace the contributory-based JSA.

   The Universal Credit programme started on 29 April 2013, with the introduction of this new benefit in 1 Jobcentre Plus office. This has since been extended to some claimants in all Jobcentre Plus offices across Great Britain. The range of claimants eligible for Universal Credit varies in different offices across Great Britain. A list of Jobcentres where Universal Credit is available and which claimants are eligible is available on GOV.UK

   Following a consultation in 2012, it was decided that, with the introduction of Universal Credit, the Claimant Count would aim to include:

- people claiming contribution-based JSA (which is not affected by the introduction of Universal Credit)

- people claiming income-based JSA during the transition period while this benefit is being gradually phased out

- people claiming Universal Credit who are not working and who are subject to a full set of labour market jobseeker requirements, that is, required to be actively seeking work and available to start work

The experimental estimates of Universal Credit are still being developed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and they currently include Universal Credit claimants who are required to seek and be available for work. This will include a small number of claimants in work with very low earnings. These experimental Claimant Count estimates are available at Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tab 7).

It is not currently possible to produce estimates of inflows and outflows for the new measure of the Claimant Count; however, estimates of JSA inflows and outflows continue to be available at Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tab 7(1)).

Similarly, it is not currently possible to produce a regional age and duration breakdown for the new measure of the Claimant Count. Estimates of JSA by age and duration continue to be available and are now published at Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions (Tabs 8(1) and 8 (2)). Regional age breakdowns are available from Nomis.

A breakdown for local geographies for the new measure of the Claimant Count is now available at Datasets CC01 – Claimant Count by unitary and local authority, CC02 – Claimant Count by parliamentary constituency, CC02.1 – Claimant Count for constituencies of the Scottish Parliament and CC03 – Claimant Count for Local Enterprise Partnerships. Estimates of JSA continue to be available and are published at Datasets JSA01 to JSA03 – Jobseeker's Allowance for sub-regional areas of the UK.

The JSA estimates are no longer designated as National Statistics because they are no longer the best estimate of the number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits, as explained in correspondence between the National Statistician and the UK Statistics Authority:

- letter from National Statistician to UK Statistics Authority, 9 June 2015

- reply from UK Statistics Authority to National Statistician, 10 June 2015

The article Jobseeker's Allowance, Universal Credit and the Claimant Count: Changes to the measurement of the Claimant Count provides further information.

4. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the UK Statistics Authority website.