

Statistical bulletin

# Employee earnings in the UK: 2022

Measures of employee earnings, using data from the Annual Survey for Hours and Earnings (ASHE).



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## Table of contents

1. [Other pages in this release](#)
2. [Main points: April 2022](#)
3. [Employee earnings and hours worked](#)
4. [Employee earnings data](#)
5. [Glossary](#)
6. [Measuring the data](#)
7. [Strengths and limitations](#)
8. [Related links](#)
9. [Cite this statistical bulletin](#)

# 1 . Other pages in this release

Commentary on topics covered in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is split between three separate bulletins in 2022. Other commentary from the latest ASHE data can be found on the following pages:

- [Low and high pay in the UK: 2022](#)
- [Gender pay gap in the UK: 2022](#)

## 2 . Main points: April 2022

- Over the coronavirus pandemic period, [earnings estimates were affected](#) by changes in composition of the workforce and the impact of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) making interpretation difficult; also data collection disruption and lower response rates mean that, for 2020 and 2021, data were subject to more uncertainty and should be treated with caution; we would encourage users to focus on long-term trends rather than year-on-year changes.
- Median weekly pay for full-time employees was £640 in April 2022, which is a 5.0% increase over the £610 in 2021.
- In real terms (that is, adjusted for inflation) in April 2022, median weekly pay for full-time employees fell by 2.6% on the year.
- Mean paid hours worked for all workers stayed the same between 2021 and 2022, after increasing 1.5% between 2020 and 2021; as with last year, those aged 60 years and over saw an increase in mean paid hours and those aged 18 to 21 years continued to decrease.
- In April 2022, median weekly earnings for full-time employees increased across all but one sector-level industries, compared with April 2021; this was particularly strong in the accommodation and food service activities sector, which increased 18.7%, mainly because of having a high furlough rate and associated loss of pay in 2021.
- Median weekly earnings for full-time employees saw strong growth across all major occupational groups, particularly for lower-paying occupations (with process, plant and machine operatives up 8.6% and elementary occupations up 6.9%); pay for professional occupations saw the smallest increase at 2.4%.

From 2021, we have moved our occupation coding to Standard Occupation Classification 2020 from 2010. This means estimates for earnings in April 2021 on a SOC 2020 basis represent a break in the ASHE time series. Estimates will not be directly comparable with estimates for earnings on a SOC 2010 basis and, as such, should not be used in direct comparison with each other. At the top level, earnings estimates produced on a SOC 2020 basis show minimal differences to those produced on a SOC 2010 basis.

### 3 . Employee earnings and hours worked

The Annual Survey for Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is based on employer responses for a 1% sample of employee jobs, using HM Revenue and Customs Pay As You Earn (PAYE) records to identify individuals' current employer. Throughout this bulletin, the terms "jobs" and "employees" are used interchangeably.

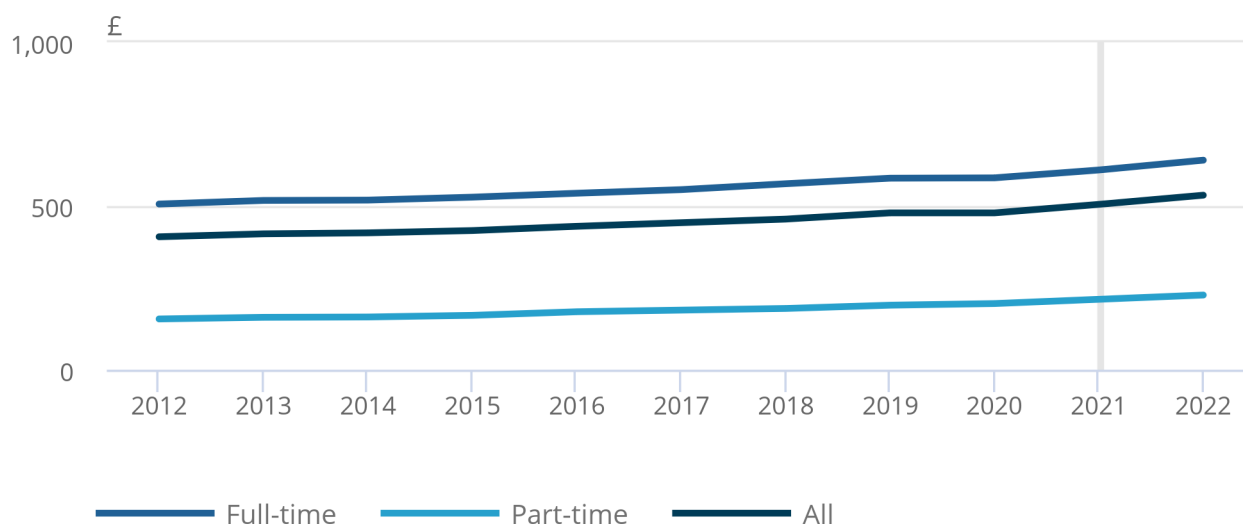
Over the coronavirus pandemic period, [earnings estimates were affected](#) by changes in composition of the workforce and the impact of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) making interpretation difficult; also data collection disruption and lower response rates mean that, for 2020 and 2021, data were subject to more uncertainty and should be treated with caution; we would encourage users to focus on long-term trends rather than year-on-year changes.

**Figure 1: Median weekly pay for full-time employees was £640 in April 2022**

Gross median weekly earnings by employment type, UK, April 2012 to April 2022

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Gross median weekly earnings by employment type, UK, April 2012 to April 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

**Notes:**

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. The plotline represents a discontinuity in 2021 because of a change in occupational coding.

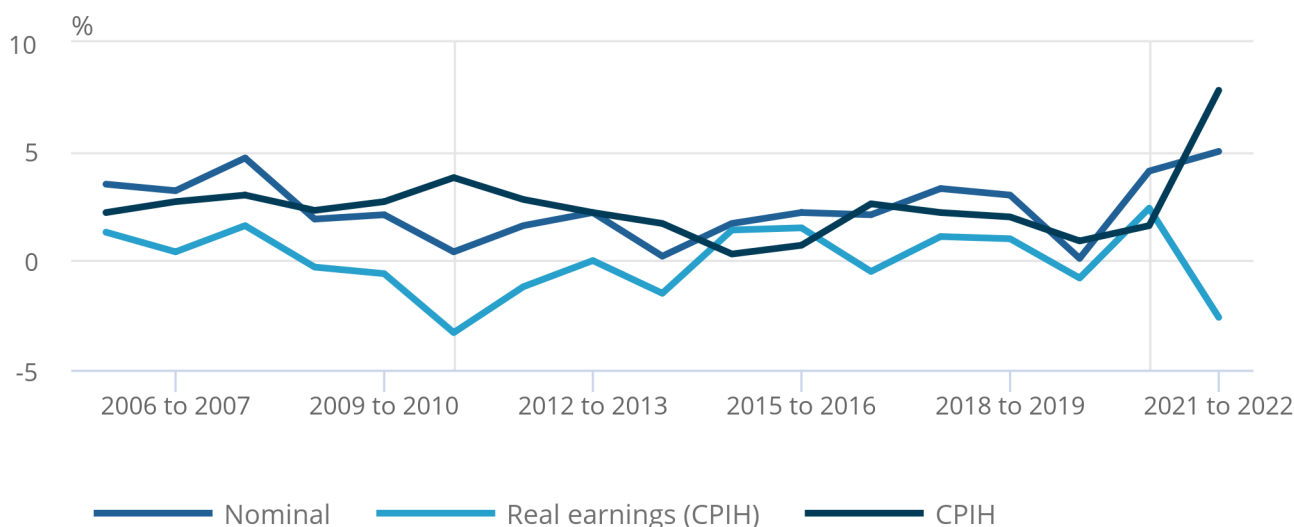
Median weekly pay for full-time employees was £640 in April 2022 and continues the upward trend we were seeing before the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 1). Median weekly pay for part-time employees was £228 in April 2022.

**Figure 2: For full-time employees, median weekly earnings in April 2022 increased by 5.0% from a year earlier on a nominal basis, and when adjusted for inflation, it fell by 2.6% on the year**

Annual percentage change in real and nominal median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees, UK, 2005 to 2022

Figure 2: For full-time employees, median weekly earnings in April 2022 increased by 5.0% from a year earlier on a nominal basis, and when adjusted for inflation, it fell by 2.6% on the year

Annual percentage change in real and nominal median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees, UK, 2005 to 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

#### Notes:

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. The data have been adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH). The CPIH figures are based on the All Items Consumer Prices Index (including owner occupiers' housing costs) of inflation for April.
4. Plotlines represent discontinuities in 2011 and 2021 because of changes in occupational coding.

Median weekly earnings among full-time employees increased by 5.0% in April 2022 compared with April 2021 (Figure 2). This growth is the highest since comparable records began in 1997 but is partially affected by employees on furlough in April 2021, which will lead to [base effects](#).

When [adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs \(CPIH\)](#), median weekly earnings for full-time employees fell on the year in April 2022 by 2.6%. In real terms, a fall on the year was seen for both full-time and part-time employees and are among the largest falls we have seen since comparable records began in 1997. The increasing difference between nominal and real growth rates is because of rising consumer price inflation including owner occupiers' housing costs; in April 2022, the CPIH annual rate was 7.8%.

Median weekly pay among part-time employees increased by 6.1% in nominal terms but fell by 1.6% in real terms. Part-time employees tend to be paid less per hour and are more affected by increases in National Minimum Wage rates, which increased by 6.6% from £8.91 in April 2021 to £9.50 in April 2022. However, other factors influence part-time earnings such as flexible working patterns, which can change employee job profiles from full time to part time, while retaining the higher hourly pay rates.

Growth rates will be particularly affected when comparing with 2020 and 2021 estimates because of the quality of these estimates in these years and compositional and base effects.

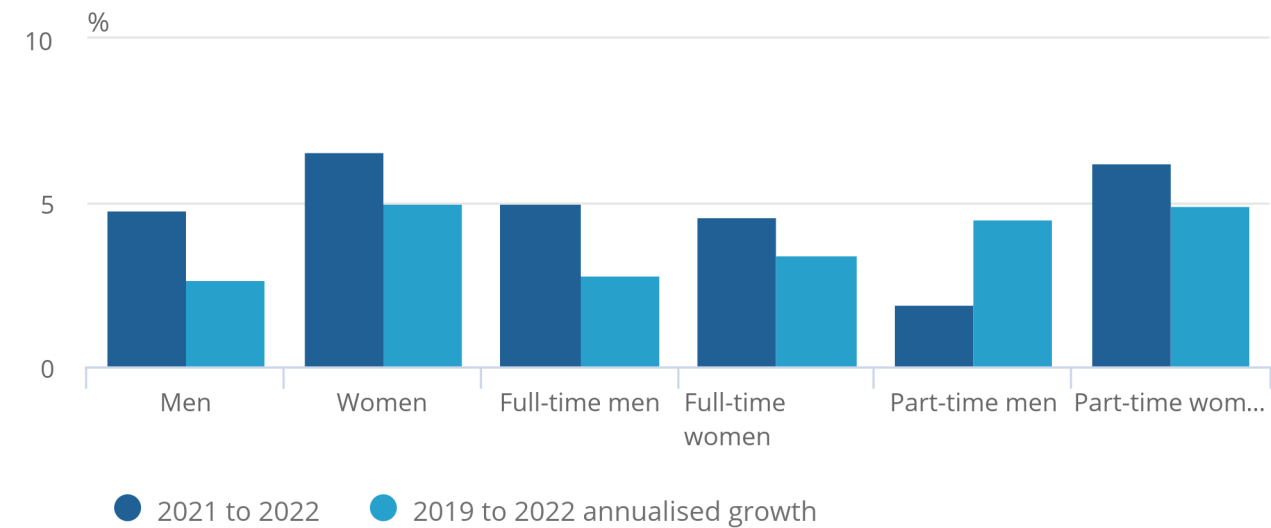
For April 2022, average year-on-year pay growth rates are likely to be slightly inflated mainly because in April 2021 some people were furloughed and on reduced pay, so causing a slight base effect. To help look over a slightly longer timeseries, we have included a three-year annualised growth rate in several of the charts. This is derived by comparing 2022 earnings with 2019 earnings and using that to calculate an annual average growth rate over the three years, which helps smooth the fluctuations from 2020 and 2021. These annualised growth rates are provided purely for contextual purposes and are not a replacement for year-on-year comparisons.

**Figure 3: Between 2021 and 2022, median weekly earnings increased by 6.6% among women, compared with a 4.8% increase for men**

Percentage change in gross median weekly earnings by employment type and sex, UK, 2021 to 2022 and 2019 to 2022 (annualised)

Figure 3: Between 2021 and 2022, median weekly earnings increased by 6.6% among women, compared with a 4.8% increase for men

Percentage change in gross median weekly earnings by employment type and sex, UK, 2021 to 2022 and 2019 to 2022 (annualised)



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

Notes:

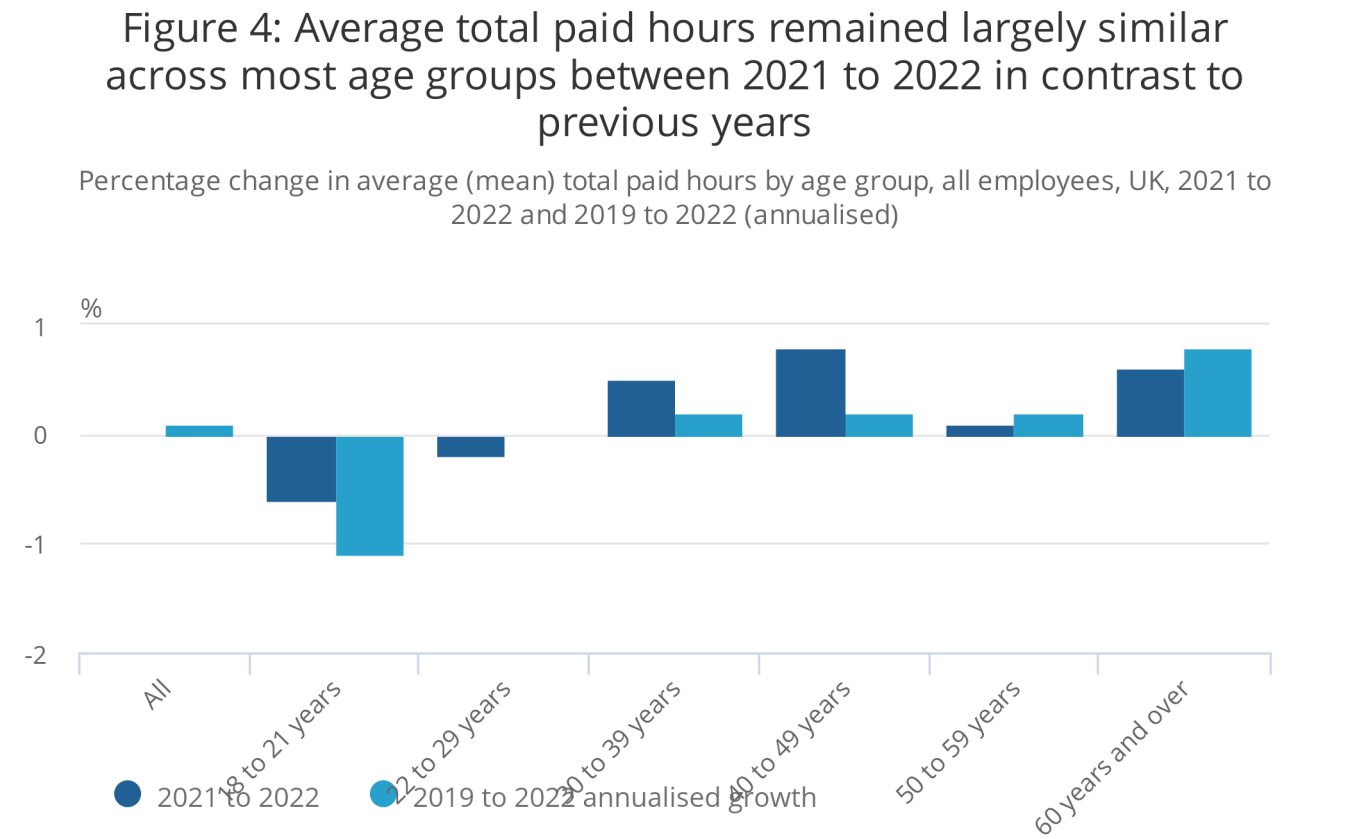
1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. These annualised growth rates are provided purely for contextual purposes and are not a replacement for year-on-year comparisons.

Median weekly pay for full-time men increased by 5.0% from £651 in April 2021 to £683 in April 2022. Median weekly pay for full-time women increased by 4.6% from £558 in April 2021 to £584 in April 2022 (Figure 3).

Growth rates in gross weekly pay for part-time employees vary greatly by sex, with median gross weekly earnings increasing by 1.9% for men and 6.2% for women between 2021 and 2022. This is largely driven by a 1.7% reduction in mean total hours worked by part-time men.

**Figure 4: Average total paid hours remained largely similar across most age groups between 2021 to 2022 in contrast to previous years**

Percentage change in average (mean) total paid hours by age group, all employees, UK, 2021 to 2022 and 2019 to 2022 (annualised)



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

Notes:

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. 16 to 17 year olds are excluded from the chart due to the variability associated with this group but are included in the "all estimates".
4. These annualised growth rates are provided purely for contextual purposes and are not a replacement for year-on-year comparisons.

Our headline estimate for hours worked uses the mean as an average instead of median. Mean hours worked is the ONS's preferred measure of hours worked since it is more responsive to changes in hours across the whole population because of the clustering of hours worked.

Mean paid hours worked for all workers stayed the same between 2021 and 2022, after increasing by 1.5% (0.5 hours) between 2020 and 2021. Overall, mean hours worked among all employees remain similar to pre-coronavirus levels after slight increases across previous years (Figure 4).

Employees aged 40 to 49 years saw a small increase in their hours (0.8%), alongside employees aged 60 years and over (0.6%) and those aged 30 to 39 years (0.5%).

The largest decrease between 2021 and 2022 occurred for employees aged 18 to 21 years (down 0.6%). This is consistent with previous years, where mean hours worked decreased substantially over the pandemic period, which was primarily driven by decreases between 2019 to 2021 where employers were inclined to cut employee hours ahead of pay rates in times of economic challenge.

Overall, the different changes to younger and older employees' mean working hours has meant that mean working hours have stayed the same between 2021 and 2022 across all age groups.

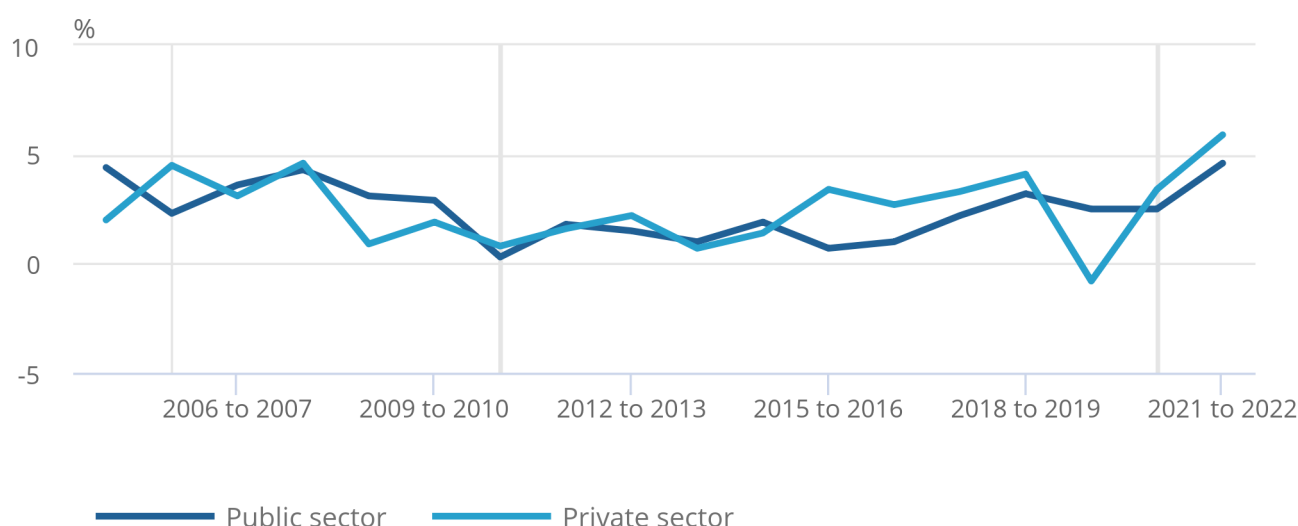
Mean hours worked among part-time employees is more mixed, with a larger variation in changes to hours worked across different age groups. When considering the longer-term trend, the mean hours worked for part-time employees have increased across all age groups.

**Figure 5: In April 2022, annual percentage growth in gross median weekly earnings was 5.9% in the private sector compared with 4.6% in the public sector**

Percentage change in average gross median weekly earnings for full-time employees in the public and private sector, UK, April 2004 to April 2022

**Figure 5: In April 2022, annual percentage growth in gross median weekly earnings was 5.9% in the private sector compared with 4.6% in the public sector**

Percentage change in average gross median weekly earnings for full-time employees in the public and private sector, UK, April 2004 to April 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

**Notes:**

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. Plotlines represent discontinuities in 2006, 2011 and 2021 because of changes in occupational coding.



Public sector gross median pay for full-time employees has increased 4.6% in 2022 compared with 2021, which is larger than the 2.5% growth rate seen between 2020 and 2021 (Figure 5). The private sector had a larger increase in 2022 (5.9%), compared with 2021, after having decreased between 2019 and 2020 (down 0.8%).

Given the caution we noted in [Section 2: Main points](#) regarding the higher than usual uncertainty around the 2020 and 2021 estimates, the public sector growth for 2022 is likely to be inflated when compared with 2021. This is reflected when comparing the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) public sector growth rate across other data sources such as Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) and Earnings and Employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, where ASHE is much higher. When looking at pay growth, the AWE estimate is our headline measure as it covers a large proportion of all employees and most public sector employees.

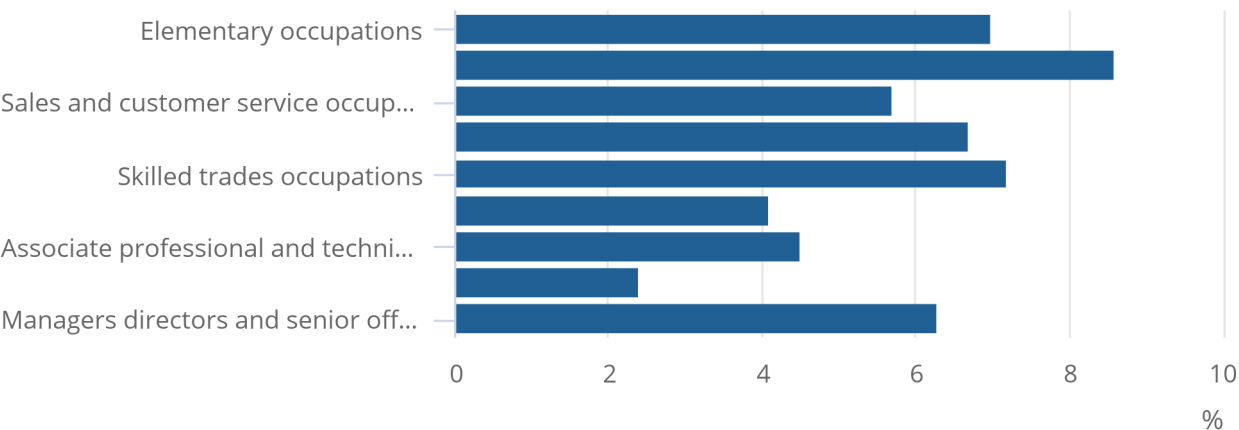
Industries that operate predominately in the private sector, such as construction, hospitality and retail, have been more heavily affected by the coronavirus pandemic than other industries, as they have a higher proportion of furloughed workers. The comparative analysis of private and public sector earnings is complex because of the different structural characteristics of the sectors.

**Figure 6: There was strong growth in median weekly earnings for full-time employees across all major occupational groups, particularly for lower paying occupations**

Growth in gross weekly full-time earnings by occupation for 2021 to 2022, UK

Figure 6: There was strong growth in median weekly earnings for full-time employees across all major occupational groups, particularly for lower paying occupations

Growth in gross weekly full-time earnings by occupation for 2021 to 2022, UK



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

Notes:

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. Occupations as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification 2020.

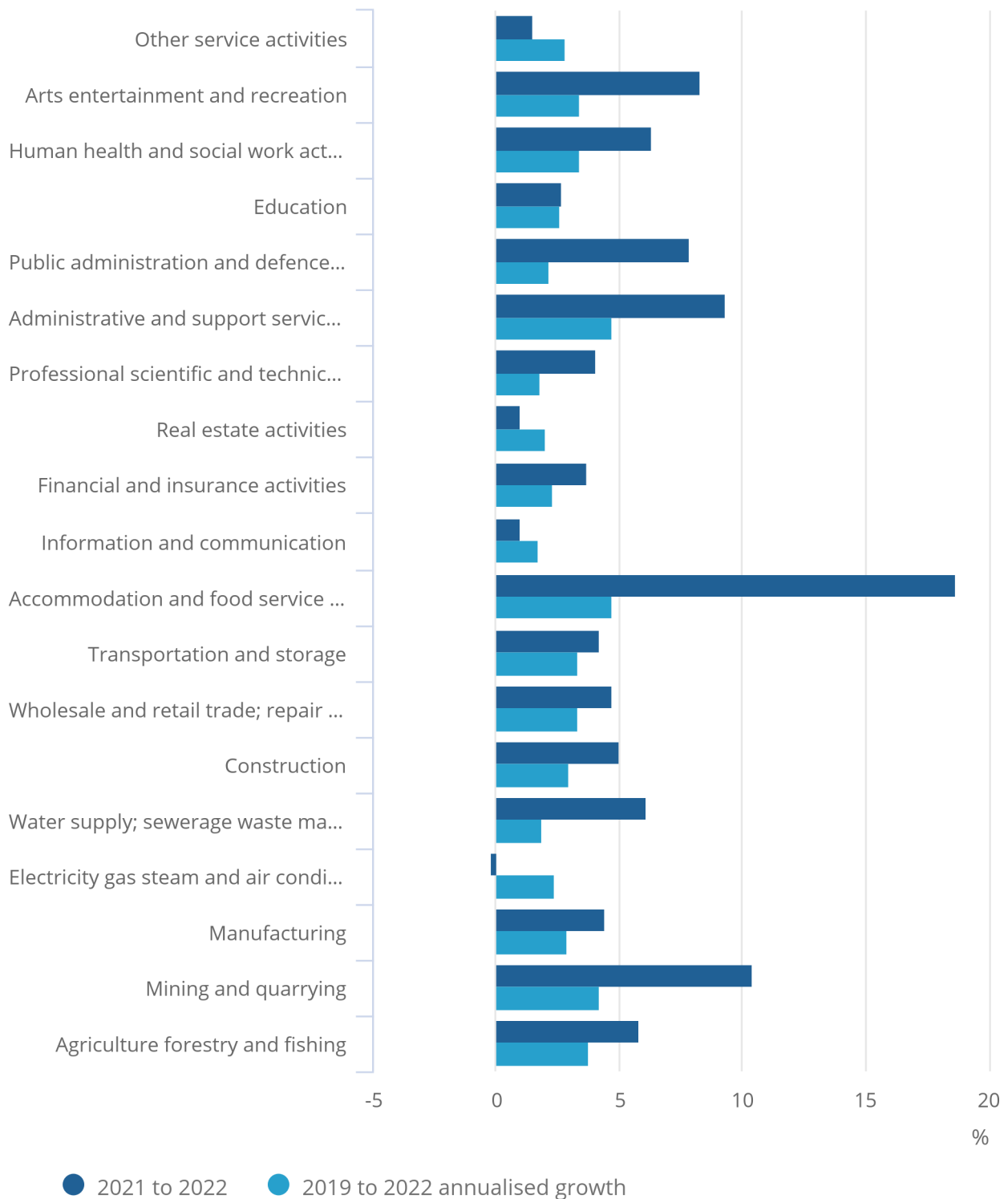
Among full-time employees, gross weekly pay increased between 2021 and 2022 across all major occupational groups (Figure 6). The lower-paid occupations saw the largest increases, including elementary occupations (6.9%), and process, plant and machine operatives (8.6%). The higher-paid occupations (with the exception of managers, directors and senior officials), such as professional occupations and associate professional occupations, have seen smaller increases. The lower-paid occupations have been most affected during the coronavirus pandemic; seeing people move on and off furlough, as well as a recovery in hours worked and increases in the National Minimum Wage, particularly affects workers in these occupations.

**Figure 7: Weekly full-time earnings increased across all sector-level industries except one in April 2022**

Growth in gross weekly full-time earnings by industry for 2021 to 2022 and 2019 to 2022 (annualised), UK

# Figure 7: Weekly full-time earnings increased across all sector-level industries except one in April 2022

Growth in gross weekly full-time earnings by industry for 2021 to 2022 and 2019 to 2022 (annualised), UK



Notes:

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. Industries as defined by the Standard Industrial Classification 2007.
5. These annualised growth rates are provided purely for contextual purposes and are not a replacement for year-on-year comparisons.

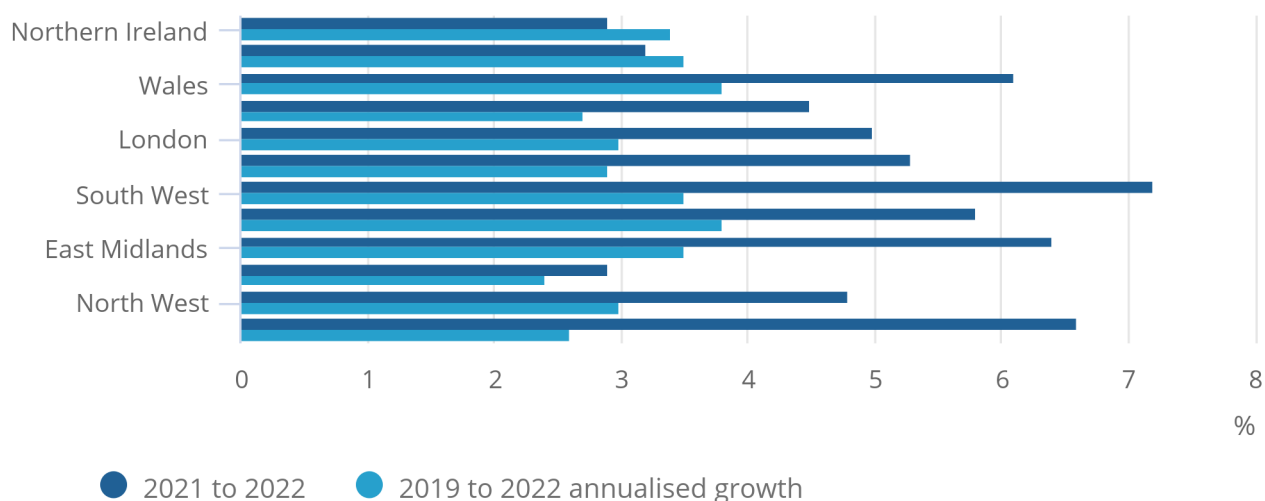
The increase in full-time gross weekly pay between 2021 and 2022 (5.0%) was driven by a number of industries, in particular accommodation and food service activities (18.7%), mining and quarrying (10.4%) and administrative and support service activities (9.3%). In April 2021, the accommodation and food service activities sector had the highest level of furlough with loss of pay (45% of employees).

**Figure 8: Weekly full-time earnings increased in all regions in April 2022 compared with April 2021**

Annual percentage change to median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees, by workplace regions and countries, UK, April 2021 to April 2022 and April 2019 to April 2022 (annualised)

## Figure 8: Weekly full-time earnings increased in all regions in April 2022 compared with April 2021

Annual percentage change to median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees, by workplace regions and countries, UK, April 2021 to April 2022 and April 2019 to April 2022 (annualised)



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

### Notes:

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. These annualised growth rates are provided purely for contextual purposes and are not a replacement for year-on-year comparisons.

The South West saw the highest growth in median gross weekly earnings among full-time employees (7.2%) in April 2022 compared with April 2021 (Figure 9); this follows below-average growth of 3.8% last year.

Pay in Northern Ireland and Scotland increased by the smallest percentage between April 2021 and April 2022; this follows high pay growth for both these regions between April 2020 and April 2021.

The interactive chart in Figure 9 allows you to view the median pay levels in all local authorities.

Find what the median gross weekly pay is in your local authority by searching for or selecting an area from the drop-down list in the interactive chart.

## Figure 9: Median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees for all local authorities by place of work

UK, April 2022

### Notes:

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).

### Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Median annual pay for full-time employees was £33,000 for the tax year ending on 5 April 2022, up 5.7% on the previous year. Median annual pay will be affected by furlough for the whole of the tax year in 2021 and for six months in 2022. Therefore, year-on-year comparisons of annual earnings will be affected by base effect.

The interactive chart in Figure 10 allows you to compare earnings across occupations, in terms of annual pay.

See what the median annual earnings are for your occupation by searching for or selecting your occupation from the drop-down list in the interactive tool.

## Figure 10: Annual full-time gross pay by occupation

UK, April 2022

### Notes:

1. Estimates for 2022 data are provisional.
2. Employees are on adult rates, and pay is unaffected by absence unless furloughed.
3. Full time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. Occupations as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification 2020.

### Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

## 4 . Employee earnings data

### [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings time series of selected estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 26 October 2022

Selected annual estimates of earnings and paid hours worked by UK employees using ASHE data from 1997 to 2022.

### [Earnings and hours worked, all employees: ASHE Table 1](#)

Dataset | Released 26 October 2022

Annual estimates of paid hours worked and earnings for UK employees by sex, and full-time and part-time.

### [Earnings and hours worked, age group: ASHE Table 6](#)

Dataset | Released 26 October 2022

Annual estimates of paid hours worked and earnings for UK employees by sex, and full-time and part-time, by age group.

### [Earnings and hours worked, place of work by local authority: ASHE Table 7](#)

Dataset | Released 26 October 2022

Annual estimates of paid hours worked and earnings for UK employees by sex, and full-time and part-time, by work-based region to local and unitary authority level.

### [Earnings and hours worked, occupation by four-digit SOC: ASHE Table 14](#)

Dataset | Released 26 October 2022

Annual estimates of paid hours worked and earnings for UK employees by sex, and full-time and part-time, by four-digit Standard Occupational Classification 2010.

### [Earnings and hours worked, industry by four-digit SIC: ASHE Table 16](#)

Dataset | Released 26 October 2022

Annual estimates of paid hours worked and earnings for UK employees by sex, and full-time and part-time, by four-digit Standard Occupational Classification 2010.

You can also access [a detailed set of data tabulations](#) containing employee earnings estimates from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) broken down by aspects such as age, region, occupation and industry.

## 5 . Glossary

### Full time and part time

Full time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions). Part time is defined as employees working less than or equal to 30 paid hours per week (or less than 25 hours for the teaching professions).

### Median

A measure of the average. The median is calculated by identifying the exact middle point in a set of observations. When the observations are ranked from lowest to highest, the median is the value in the exact middle of the observed values. It is the Office for National Statistics' preferred measure of average earnings as it is less affected by a relatively small number of very high earners than the mean is.



## National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) is a minimum amount per hour that most workers in the UK are entitled to be paid. There are different rates of minimum wage depending on workers' ages and whether they are apprentices. The NMW applies to employees aged 16 to 22 years. The government's National Living Wage (NLW) was introduced on 1 April 2016 and applies to employees aged 23 years and over.

On the ASHE reference date in April 2022, the NMW and NLW rates were:

- £9.50 for employees aged 23 years and over
- £9.18 for employees aged 21 to 22 years
- £6.83 for employees aged 18 to 20 years
- £4.81 for employees aged 16 to 17 years
- £4.81 for apprentices aged 16 to 18 years and those aged 19 years and over who are in the first year of their apprenticeship

## Real earnings

Real earnings (earnings adjusted for inflation) are calculated by adjusting nominal (unadjusted) earnings using the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH). The CPIH is the most comprehensive measure of inflation. It extends the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) to include a measure of the costs associated with owning, maintaining and living in one's own home, known as owner occupiers' housing costs (OOH), along with Council Tax.

## Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)

The [Standard Occupational Classification \(SOC\)](#) is a common classification of occupational information for the UK. The most recent version of SOC, SOC 2020, was used for revised 2021 ASHE estimates and provisional 2022 ASHE estimates. More information on the impact of the change from SOC 2010 to SOC 2020 can be found in the [Measures of employee earnings based on SOC 2020, UK: 2021](#) bulletin.

## 6 . Measuring the data

The analysis in this bulletin is based mainly on weekly pay, which is affected by both hourly rates of pay and hours worked or paid for (and the incidence of being furloughed in 2020 and 2021). The accompanying [Low and High Paid Jobs bulletin](#) looks in more detail at the distribution of pay based on hourly rates and is of particular use when considering policy around the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates.

The estimates in this bulletin are based on information gathered from a sample of 1% of employees in the UK. Prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the achieved sample size on the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) was approximately 180,000 each year. However, given the challenges to data collection during the coronavirus pandemic and response rates not recovering after, the final achieved sample size was 144,000 for 2020, 140,000 for 2021 and 147,000 for 2022. As such, ASHE estimates for 2020, 2021 and 2022 are subject to more uncertainty than usual.

All estimates for 2022 are provisional and relate to the pay period that includes 27 April 2022. Estimates for 2021 have been revised and relate to the pay period that includes 21 April 2021, at which time [3.7 million employees were furloughed](#) under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). For 2020, this was 8.8 million. Furloughed employee jobs received 80% of normal pay from the scheme, to a maximum £2,500 a month. Employers were able to top up employees' pay, but they were not required to; the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has estimated that approximately half of employees had their pay topped up for both years.

ASHE collected actual payments made to the employee and the hours on which this pay was calculated, which in the case of furloughed employees would be their usual hours.

The exclusion criteria for the 2020 and 2021 data tables were revised to be "those employees who were not furloughed but whose pay was affected by absence". This results in the ASHE data tables excluding 4.4% of employee jobs in 2021 and 6.0% in 2020 (compared with approximately 5% in previous years).

ASHE data are weighted to UK population totals from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) based on classes defined by region, occupation, age and sex.

LFS data for 2021 and 2022 have been impacted by an issue with the occupation coding using SOC20, as set out in [the latest update](#). Given the use of the one-digit occupation in the weighting process, the ASHE estimates will be subject to further review, but the impact is likely to be minimal based on the initial analysis.

Our [Guide to interpreting ASHE estimates](#) addresses common questions about the data. Further information about ASHE can be found in the quality and methodology information on our [Guidance and methodology page](#) and in the [Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\) report](#).

## 7 . Strengths and limitations

The strengths and limitations of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) can be found in the [Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\) report](#) and the [Income and earnings statistics guide](#).

## 8 . Related links

### [Earnings and working hours](#)

Webpage | Updated regularly

Average weekly earnings of people in the UK and information on the gender pay gap and low pay. Data from Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE).

### [An overview of and comparison between Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings \(ASHE\) and Average Weekly Earnings \(AWE\): 2017](#)

Article | Released 14 September 2017

An overview of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings and Average Weekly Earnings, comparing the differences between the two headline outputs.

### [UK labour market overview, UK: October 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 11 October 2022

Estimates of employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and other employment-related statistics for the UK.

### [Public and private sector earnings in the UK: 2019](#)

Article | Released 23 September 2020

The results of statistical models that explore the relationship between mean hourly earnings and a range of independent variables, based on Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2019 provisional data.

### [Comparison of labour market data sources](#)

Bulletin | Released 27 April 2022

The strengths and weaknesses of the main data sources we use to produce the labour market figures, including the advantages of new administrative data sources and limitations of some of our published figures.

## 9 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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