Statistical bulletin

Employee earnings in the UK: 2026

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

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1 . Overview

Median weekly earnings for full-time employees were £811.20 in April 2026, compared with £766.60 in April 2025. This was an increase of 5.8% on the year, continuing the upward trend observed in recent years.

Median weekly earnings for all employees increased by 4.9% during the same period. This is less than the increase observed for full-time employees (5.8%). The difference can partly be explained by:

- the higher proportion of part-time employee jobs in April 2026 compared with April 2025
- a decrease in average hours worked by part-time employees

Median weekly earnings for part-time employees increased by 2.9% on the year to April 2026. This was also affected by the reduction in average hours worked by part-time employees.

Figure 1: Median weekly earnings for full-time, part-time and all employee jobs continued increasing in April 2026

Gross median weekly earnings by employment type, UK, April 2012 to April 2026

Notes

1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.
2. Employee jobs include those on adult rates with pay unaffected by absence.
3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. Dashed line represents discontinuities in 2021 because of a change in occupational coding.
5. Because of methodological changes, data from 2023 onwards might not be directly comparable with data for 2022 and earlier years (see Section 9: Quality, methods and data sources).
6. Data for 2020 and 2021 are subject to more uncertainty and should be treated with caution because of the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the data and collection.

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Median weekly earnings for full-time employees increased on the year to April 2026 for all major occupations, sector-level industries and regions and countries. This is a trend that is observed in most years. Some of the largest increases were observed for managers, directors and senior officials (6.7%), in human health and social work activities (7.3%), and in London (8.2%).

The increases observed in these different groups were partly driven by composition changes (see Section 2: How to use these statistics).

Hourly and annual pay for full-time employee jobs also increased on the year:

- median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for full-time employees were £20.81 in April 2026, compared with £19.68 in April 2025, a 5.7% increase

- median gross annual earnings for full-time employees who had been in their job for at least a year were £40,911 in April 2026, compared with £39,157 in April 2025, a 4.5% increase

In this statistical article, we mainly focus on median weekly earnings for full-time employee jobs. For more pay statistics, including hourly and annual pay and more detailed breakdowns, please see our accompanying datasets . For hourly pay, see also our Low and high pay in the UK: 2026 statistical article and our Gender pay gap in the UK: 2026 statistical article.

Upcoming revisions

All estimates for 2026 are provisional. The final 2026 data will be published in October 2027, as per our annual revision policy.

2 . How to use these statistics

With these statistics, you can:

- learn about earnings for different types of employee jobs, such as a specific occupation or working pattern; the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) collects information on employee jobs rather than employees, but because most employees have one job only (97% in April 2026), we use the terms "employee" and "employee job" interchangeably

With these statistics, you cannot:

- attribute all the differences in levels and growth rates in pay to changes in earnings only, because ASHE is a sample-based survey and its estimates are also affected by the composition of the employee workforce (both in the UK population and in the ASHE sample), which varies year on year; find more information on the quality of ASHE in Section 9: Quality, methods and data sources

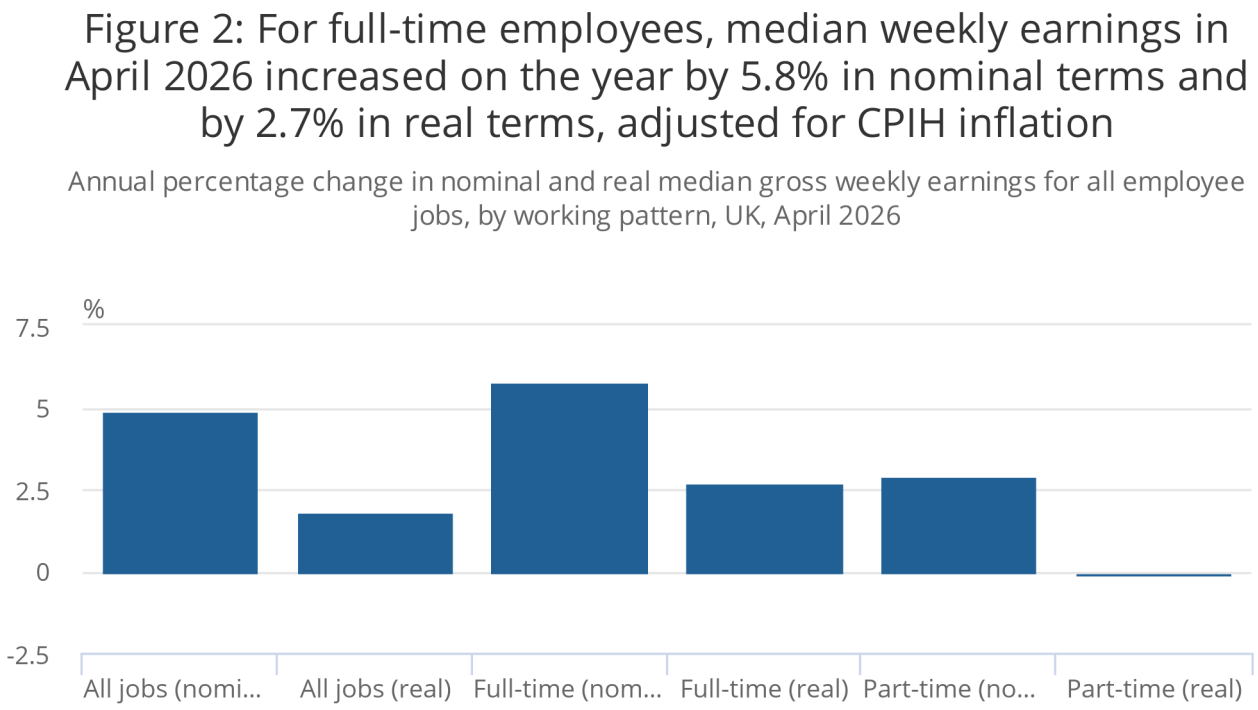
- directly compare with Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) or Pay As You Earn Real Time Information (PAYE RTI) data, because ASHE statistics are mainly based on weekly pay for full-time employee jobs, whereas AWE and PAYE RTI statistics are based on weekly pay or monthly pay (PAYE RTI) for all employee jobs, which are affected by both pay rates and hours worked; find more information on differences between these data sources in our Income and earnings statistics guide

3 . Earnings growth

Median weekly earnings for full-time employees increased by 5.8% on the year in nominal terms and by 2.7% in real terms (adjusting for inflation using the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH)). For part-time employees, they increased by 2.9% in nominal terms and decreased by 0.1% in real terms.

Figure 2: For full-time employees, median weekly earnings in April 2026 increased on the year by 5.8% in nominal terms and by 2.7% in real terms, adjusted for CPIH inflation

Annual percentage change in nominal and real median gross weekly earnings for all employee jobs, by working pattern, UK, April 2026



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

Notes:

1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.
2. Employee jobs include those on adult rates with pay unaffected by absence.
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 data has 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 2026.

As explained in Section 2: How to use these statistics, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) pay growth estimates are affected both by pay increases and by changes in the workforce composition of the UK employee workforce and the ASHE sample.

Differences in pay annual growth rates between full-time and part-time employee jobs are also affected by differences in the share of employees in part-time jobs. In April 2026, weekly pay growth was lower for all employees (4.9%) than for full-time employees (5.8%). This is partly explained by these differences:

- the share of part-time employee jobs in April 2026 (29.0%) was larger than in April 2025 (27.0%)
- mean weekly total paid hours were lower in April 2026 (32.7) than in April 2025 (32.8) (see Figure 3)

Figure 3: In April 2026, mean weekly total paid hours were 32.7, down from 32.8 in April 2025

Mean weekly total paid hours for all employee jobs, UK, April 2012 to April 2026

Notes

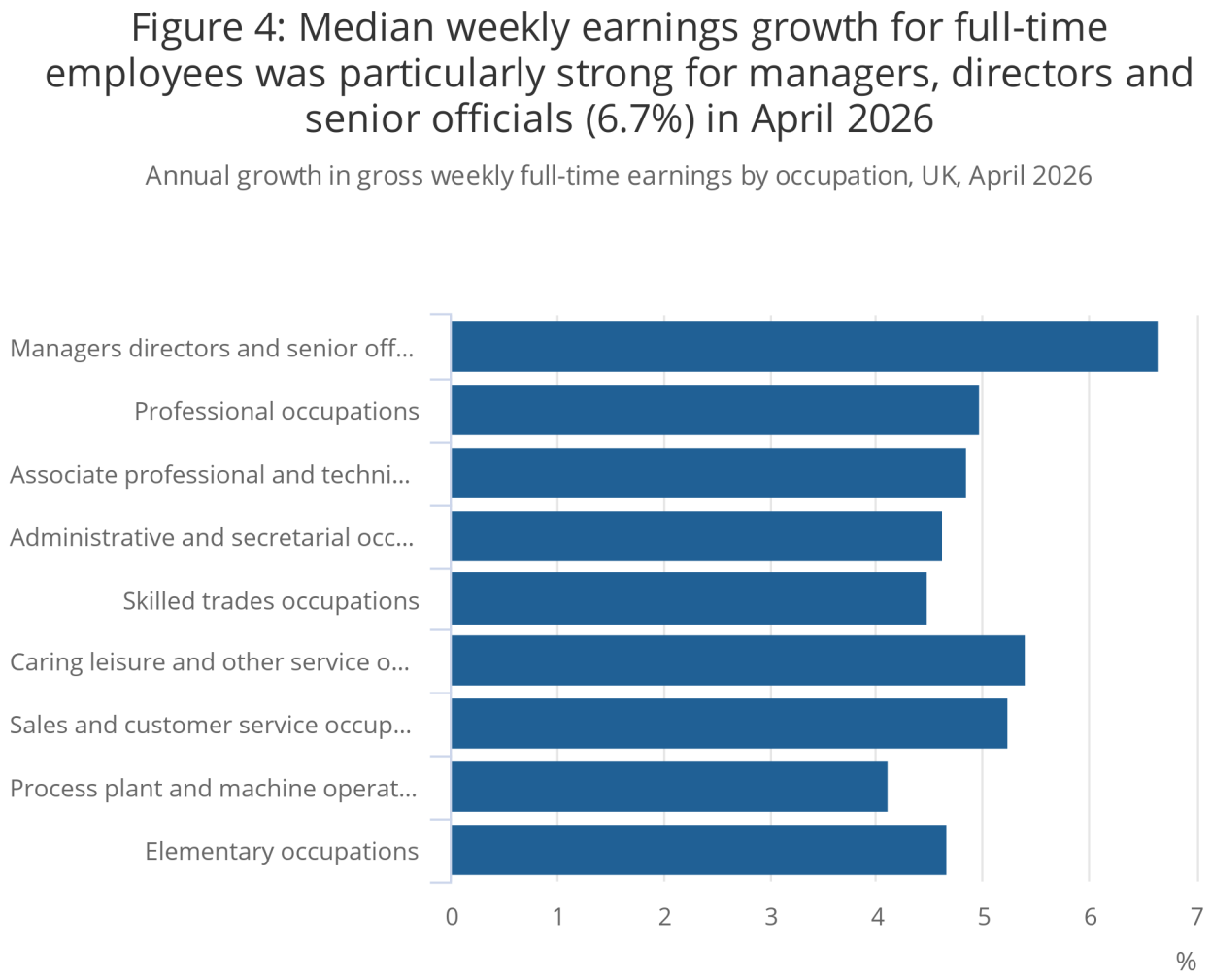
1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.
2. Employee jobs include those on adult rates with pay unaffected by absence.
3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. Dashed line represents discontinuities in 2021 because of a change in occupational coding.
5. Because of methodological changes, data from 2023 onwards might not be directly comparable with data for 2022 and earlier years (see Section 9: Quality, methods and data sources).
6. Data for 2020 and 2021 are subject to more uncertainty and should be treated with caution because of the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the data and collection.

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4 . Earnings by occupation

Figure 4: Median weekly earnings growth for full-time employees was particularly strong for managers, directors and senior officials (6.7%) in April 2026

Annual growth in gross weekly full-time earnings by occupation, UK, April 2026



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

Notes:

1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.
2. Employee jobs include those on adult rates with pay unaffected by absence.
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.

Median gross weekly earnings for full-time employee jobs increased across all major occupational groups between 2025 and 2026. The largest increase was observed for managers, directors and senior officials (6.7%), and is partly explained by the increase in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) achieved sample of the proportion of chief executives and senior officials within this occupation group. Caring, leisure and other service occupations also saw a large increase (5.4%) in median gross weekly earnings for full-time employee jobs.

Process, plant and machine operatives (4.1%) and elementary occupations (4.7%) had lower growth than most other occupation groups. These groups contain a high proportion of jobs earning near the National Living Wage (NLW), and their pay growth is similar to the increase in the NLW between 2025 and 2026 (4.1%). More information on low pay and the NLW is available in our Low and high pay in the UK: 2026 statistical article and in our accompanying tables.

Our interactive chart in Figure 5 allows you to compare annual earnings for full-time employee jobs across occupations at our most granular level. Explore 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 5: Annual gross earnings for full-time employee jobs by occupation

UK, April 2026

Notes

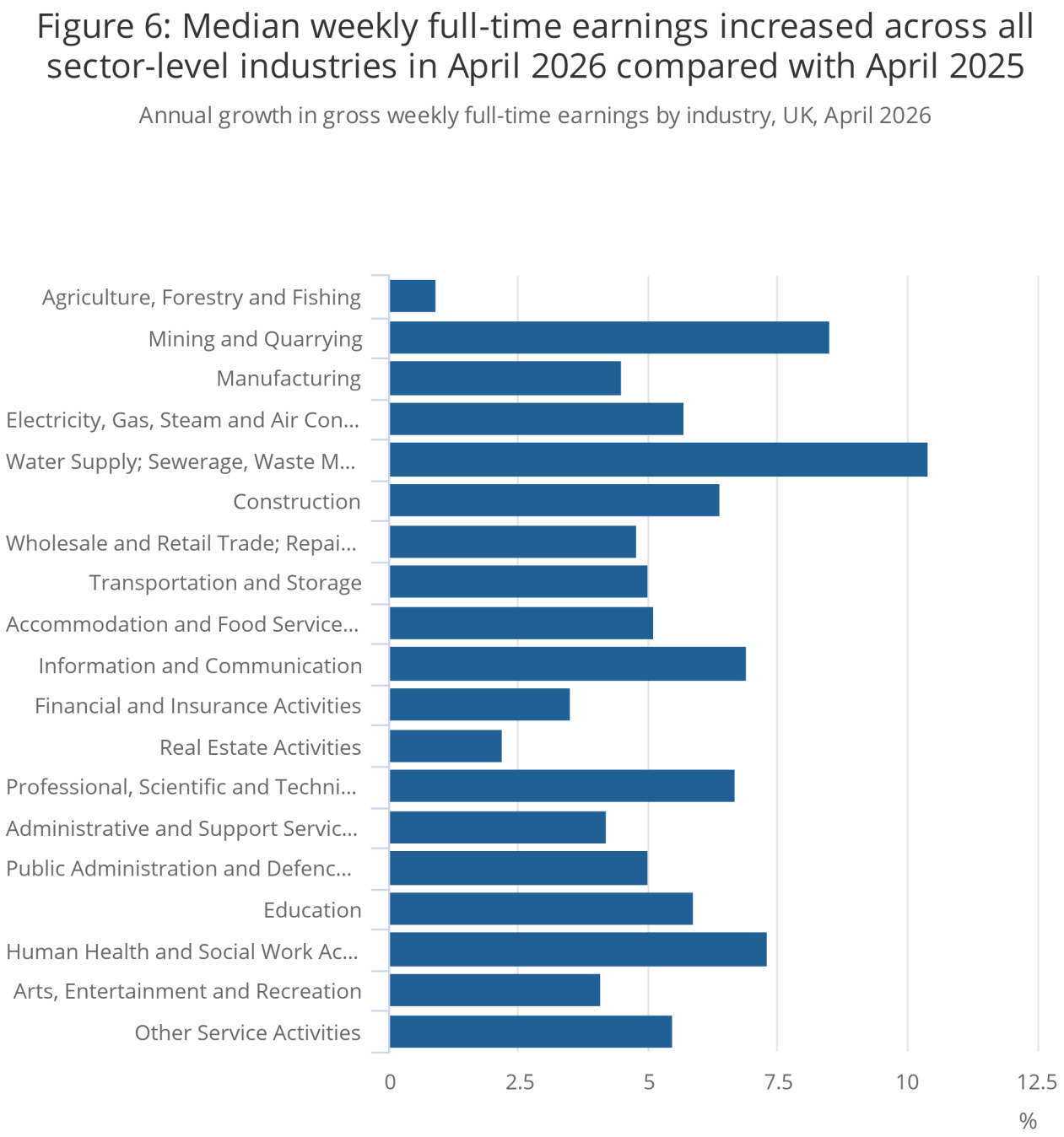
1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.
2. ASHE annual pay figures capture pay in employee jobs for employees that have been in the job for a year or more, and include pay affected by absence (for example, special leave or parental leave). Therefore, ASHE annual figures are not directly comparable to weekly or hourly pay figures.
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.
5. Some data are unavailable, as they are considered unreliable because of their small sample size.
6. The quality of earnings estimates varies by occupation. Quality measures are available in our accompanying datasets.

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5 . Median weekly earnings by industry

Figure 6: Median weekly full-time earnings increased across all sector-level industries in April 2026 compared with April 2025

Annual growth in gross weekly full-time earnings by industry, UK, April 2026



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

Notes:

1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.

2. Employee jobs include those on adult rates with pay unaffected by absence.

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.

Median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees increased across all industries between 2025 and 2026. The industries with the largest growth were water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (10.4%) and mining and quarrying (8.5%). These sectors have a small number of employees and therefore their estimates are not precise and can experience large variations from one year to the next.

Human health and social work activities had the third largest increase (7.3%). This is largely explained by a change in the composition of this industry, with an increase in the number of healthcare professionals in 2026 compared to 2025 in this sector, who are paid above average for this industry sector.

In April 2026, median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees were £862.20 in the public sector (a 6.5% increase on the year) and £794.40 in the private sector (a 5.5% increase on the year). These different rates of pay growth are partly explained by the different composition of industries within the public and private sectors.

The human health sector makes up a large proportion of the jobs in the public sector (36%), and this industry had large growth between 2025 and 2026 (7.3%). This contributes to the public sector having an overall stronger growth than the private sector.

6 . Median weekly earnings by location

Figure 7: Weekly full-time earnings increased in all regions in April 2026 compared with April 2025

Annual percentage change to median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees, by workplace regions and countries, UK, April 2026

Notes

1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.

2. Employee jobs include those on adult rates with pay unaffected by absence.

3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).

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Across all regions and countries of the UK, London saw the highest annual growth in median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees (8.2%) in April 2026. Part of this increase in London can be explained by an increase in professional jobs in London in 2026 compared to 2025. The regions with the smallest growth in median full-time earnings were the East Midlands (4.0%) and the North West (4.1%).

Figure 8: Median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees for all local authorities by place of work

Great Britain, April 2026

Notes

1. Estimates for 2026 are provisional.
2. Employee jobs include those on adult rates with pay unaffected by absence.
3. Full-time is defined as employees working more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).
4. Some data are unavailable, as they are considered unreliable because of their small sample size.
5. The quality of earnings estimates varies by occupation. Quality measures are available in our accompanying datasets.

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Our interactive chart in Figure 8 allows you to explore the median pay levels in all local authorities in April 2026. Find what the median gross weekly earnings were in April 2026 in your local authority by searching for or selecting an area from the drop-down list in the interactive chart.

7 . Definitions

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).

Standard Occupational Classification

The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) is a common classification of occupational information for the UK. The current SOC for the UK is SOC 2020, and it has been used in ASHE data since the ASHE 2021 revised estimates.

Information on the impact of the change from SOC 2010 to SOC 2020 is available in our Measures of employee earnings based on SOC 2020, UK: 2021 bulletin.

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 our preferred measure of average earnings because the median is less affected by changes in the relatively small number of very high earners, compared with the mean.

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.

8 . Data on employee earnings

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings: 2026 provisional and 2025 revised results
Dataset | Released 22 October 2026
Employee earnings estimates from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) broken down by age, region, occupation and industry.

9 . Quality, methods and data sources

Data sources

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) collects information on actual payments made to the employee and the hours on which this pay was calculated. It is based on employer responses for a 1% sample of employees, using HM Revenue and Customs Pay As You Earn (PAYE) records to identify individuals' current employers. All estimates for 2026 are provisional and relate to the pay period that includes 22 April 2026. Estimates for 2025 have been revised and relate to the pay period that includes 30 April 2025.

Employers are asked to report employees' pay for the pay period including the ASHE reference date, which is set in April but varies year on year. The ASHE reference date is determined by the need to capture new minimum wage rates that start in early April and is dependent on when the Easter Holidays fall each year. In 2026, the ASHE reference date was 22 April, but in 2025 it was the last day of April, 30 April. Seasonal differences and the timing of Easter may lead to changes in businesses' responses to ASHE year on year.

The ASHE achieved sample in 2026 was 197,000. This is its largest size on record. The ASHE sample size was reduced during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic because of the challenges to data collection, from around 180,000 each year to less than 150,000 in 2020, 2021 and 2022. The ASHE achieved sample started recovering in 2023 and has reached its largest size in 2026.

The ASHE 2025 achieved sample has increased from 174,000 in the provisional data published in October 2025 to 182,000 in the revised data we are publishing in October 2026 as part of our standard revision policy.

Data methods

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

From 2021, we moved our occupation coding to Standard Occupation Classification 2020 (SOC 2020), from SOC 2010. This means that estimates for earnings in April 2021 on an SOC 2020 basis represent a break in the ASHE time series. Estimates will not be directly comparable with estimates for earnings on an SOC 2010 basis and, as such, should not be used in direct comparison with each other.

The composition of the employee workforce (the types of workers and the types of jobs) affects ASHE estimates. This can vary year on year. Differences in levels and growth rates in ASHE estimates reflect both changes in earnings and changes in the composition of the employee workforce, both in the overall UK population and in the ASHE sample.

In 2024, we introduced changes to the way we validated data, particularly returns from higher earners. More information on this is available in (Section 9: Data sources and quality of our Employee earnings in the UK: 2025 bulletin.

In 2026, ASHE has become fully digital, moving its remaining paper questionnaire to electronic questionnaires. The impact of this move has been positive, increasing considerably our achieved sample and capturing more data from micro-businesses. The response rate for micro businesses (with less than 10 employees) has increased from 36% in ASHE 2025 to 41% in ASHE 2026.

ASHE median pay growth was similar to PAYE RTI median pay growth in April 2026, but there are differences between ASHE and other data sources, especially since 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic had an impact on reducing the ASHE achieved sample. There are inherent reasons for differences between ASHE and other earnings data sources, such as our Average Weekly Earnings dataset and our Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information datasets, as set out in our Comparison of labour market data sources methodology.

Additionally, it is likely that the following factors have been contributing to the divergence between ASHE and other data sources since 2020:

- differential non-response
- weighting to the LFS
- increased variance because of sample size reduction
- the way the bonus element of ASHE is captured

We are currently investigating possible further reasons for these differences, including carrying out reviews of our statistical methods to ensure they are up-to-date and adequate for the wider uses of ASHE data. Our plans to continue improving the quality of ASHE is available in our accompanying blog, A year of progress for our annual earnings survey.

ASHE is currently undergoing an end-to-end transformation that includes reviewing our methods. Progress on this work will also be covered in an upcoming update to our ASHE, Low pay and ASHE pension results quality and methods information (QMI) report.

Uncertainty

Sampling variability for ASHE estimates are provided in our accompanying datasets.

More quality and methodology information

Our Guide to interpreting ASHE estimates methodology addresses common questions about our data.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our ASHE methodology and guidance and in our ASHE, Low pay and ASHE pension results QMI.

Accredited official statistics

These accredited official statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation in June 2013. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality, and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled "accredited official statistics".

10 . Related links

Average weekly earnings in Great Britain
Bulletin | Released 14 October 2025
Monthly estimates of growth in employee earnings before tax and other deductions from pay.

Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, UK
Bulletin | Released 14 October 2025
Experimental monthly estimates of payrolled employees and their pay from HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC's) Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) 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.

Income and earnings statistics guide
Bulletin | released 22 May 2024
Explains the relationship between income and earnings data and outlines the statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics, Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenue and Customs.

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.

11 . Cite this statistical article

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 22 October 2026, ONS website, statistical article, Employee earnings in the UK: 2026