Statistical bulletin

Labour market in the regions of the UK: November 2026

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

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Table of contents

1. Other pages in this release

2. Main points

3. Latest headline estimate

4. Data on regional labour market

5. Glossary

6. Data sources and quality

7. Related links

8. Cite this statistical bulletin

1 . Other pages in this release

- Labour market overview
- Average weekly earnings in Great Britain
- Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, UK
- Employment in the UK
- Vacancies and jobs in the UK

2 . Main points

- Estimates from January to March 2025 include the full effect of the improvements in Labour Force Survey (LFS) data collection and sampling methods introduced from January 2024 onwards.
- Some volatility remains, particularly for estimates for mid-2023 and throughout 2024, and for granular breakdowns, where sample sizes are smaller.
- We recommend using the LFS estimates as part of our suite of labour market indicators, alongside workforce jobs, Claimant Count, and Pay As You Earn Real Time Information (PAYE RTI) estimates.
- The highest employment rate in the UK was in the South West (79.4%), while the lowest was in the North East (70.9%); the highest unemployment rate was in London (6.4%), while the lowest was in Northern Ireland (2.2%); and the highest economic inactivity rate was in Northern Ireland (25.8%), while the lowest was in both the South East and the South West (17.6%), in July to September 2026.
- The number of payrolled employees has decreased for all regions and countries of the UK except Northern Ireland, where it has increased by 1.0%, when comparing October 2026 with the same period the previous year; figures for October 2026 should be treated as provisional estimates and are likely to be revised when more data are received next month.

These labour market statistics, based on the Labour Force Survey and the Annual Population Survey, are official statistics. Read more in Section 6: Data sources and quality.

3 . Latest headline estimate

Table 1: Summary of latest headline estimates and quarterly changes, for regions of the UK, seasonally adjusted, July to September 2026 [Notes 1, 5 and 6]

	Employment rate (%) aged 16 to 64 years [Note 2]	Change on April to June 2026	Unemployment rate (%) aged 16 years and over [Note 3]	Change on April to June 2026	Inactivity rate (%) aged 16 to 64 years [Note 4]	Change on April to June 2026
UK	75.4	0.3	4.6	-0.3	20.8	-0.1
Great Britain	75.5	0.3	4.7	-0.3	20.7	-0.1
England	75.7	0.3	4.8	-0.2	20.4	-0.1
North East	70.9	-0.2	5.0	-0.4	25.2	0.1
North West	75.2	0.5	4.4	-0.6	21.4	0.1
Yorkshire and The Humber	72.9	-0.4	4.8	-0.7	23.2	1.0
East Midlands	76.9	1.4	4.3	-0.8	19.7	-0.6
West Midlands	73.0	0.0	5.6	0.0	22.5	-0.1
East	77.4	-0.9	4.1	0.6	19.0	0.3
London	74.2	0.3	6.4	-0.1	20.7	0.0
South East	78.8	0.6	4.3	0.2	17.6	-0.8
South West	79.4	1.2	3.5	-0.5	17.6	-0.9
Wales	73.5	1.1	3.4	-1.3	23.8	0.0
Scotland	74.0	0.1	4.7	-0.3	22.1	0.2
Northern Ireland	72.5	0.4	2.2	0.2	25.8	-0.6

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Caution should be taken when drawing conclusions from short-term changes, given volatility of Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates, and we advise users to focus on long-term movements in the data.

2. Calculation of headline employment rate: number of employed people aged 16 to 64 years, divided by the population aged 16 to 64 years. Population is the sum of employed, plus unemployed, plus inactive.

3. Calculation of headline unemployment rate: number of unemployed people aged 16 years and over divided by the sum of employed people aged 16 years and over plus unemployed people aged 16 years and over.

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

5. The estimates in this table come from a survey and are therefore subject to sampling variability.

6. More information on the quality of these estimates is available in Table A11 of the labour market overview and Dataset S02 from this release.

Table 2: Summary of latest headline estimates and annual changes, for regions of the UK, seasonally adjusted, July to September 2026 [Notes 1, 5 and 6]

	Employment rate (%) aged 16 to 64 years [Note 2]	Change on July to September 2025	Unemployment rate (%) aged 16 years and over [Note 3]	Change on July to September 2025	Inactivity rate (%) aged 16 to 64 years [Note 4]	Change on July to September 2025
UK	75.4	0.4	4.6	-0.3	20.8	-0.1
Great Britain	75.5	0.3	4.7	-0.3	20.7	-0.1
England	75.7	0.3	4.8	-0.4	20.4	0.0
North East	70.9	2.0	5.0	-0.9	25.2	-1.2
North West	75.2	1.5	4.4	-0.6	21.4	-1.2
Yorkshire and The Humber	72.9	0.3	4.8	-0.7	23.2	0.1
East Midlands	76.9	1.5	4.3	-0.9	19.7	-0.7
West Midlands	73.0	-0.7	5.6	-0.4	22.5	1.1
East	77.4	-0.6	4.1	-0.6	19.0	1.1
London	74.2	-0.2	6.4	-0.3	20.7	0.5
South East	78.8	0.1	4.3	0.2	17.6	-0.3
South West	79.4	0.0	3.5	0.1	17.6	-0.2
Wales	73.5	2.3	3.4	-1.9	23.8	-0.9
Scotland	74.0	-0.3	4.7	1.0	22.1	-0.6
Northern Ireland	72.5	1.4	2.2	-0.1	25.8	-1.3

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Caution should be taken when drawing conclusions from short-term changes, given volatility of Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates, and we advise users to focus on long-term movements in the data.

2. Calculation of headline employment rate: number of employed people aged 16 to 64 years, divided by the population aged 16 to 64 years. Population is the sum of employed, plus unemployed, plus inactive.

3. Calculation of headline unemployment rate: number of unemployed people aged 16 years and over divided by the sum of employed people aged 16 years and over plus unemployed people aged 16 years and over.

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

5. The estimates in this table come from a survey and are therefore subject to sampling variability.

6. More information on the quality of these estimates is available in Table A11 of the labour market overview and Dataset S02 from this release.

4 . Data on regional labour market

Regional labour market: Claimant Count denominators
Dataset S03 | Released 21 April 2026
Work-placed based denominators used for calculating Claimant Count rates for regions and countries of the UK.

Regional labour market: headline Labour Force Survey indicators for all regions
Dataset HI00 | Released 17 November 2026
Labour market indicators for UK constituent countries and English regions, including employment, unemployment, economic inactivity, workers' hours, jobs and Claimant Count, published monthly.

Regional labour market: Claimant Count by unitary and local authority (official statistics in development)
Dataset CC01 | Released 17 November 2026
Claimant Count by sex for local and unitary authorities, counties and regions in the UK, published monthly. These are official statistics in development.

Regional labour market summary
Dataset S01 | Released17 November 2026
Labour market indicators for UK countries and regions, including employment,unemploymentand economic inactivity, rolling three-monthly figures published monthly, seasonally adjusted. Labour Force Survey.

Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities
Dataset LI01 | Released 20 October 2026
Labour market indicators for local authorities, unitary authorities, counties and regions in Great Britain for a 12-month period, published quarterly. These are official statistics.

Earnings and employment from PayAsYou Earn Real Time Information, seasonally adjusted
Dataset | Released17 November 2026
Earnings and employment statistics from PayAsYou Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI), UK, NUTS 1, 2 and 3 areas and local authorities, monthly, seasonally adjusted.

All regional labour market datasets used in this bulletin are available on ourRelated data page. Alternatively,Nomis provides free access to the most detailed and up-to-date UK labour market statistics.

5 . Glossary

Actual and usual hours worked

Statistics forusual hours workedmeasure how many hours people usually work per week. Compared with actual hours worked, they are not affected by absences and so can provide a better measure of normal working patterns. For example, a person who usually works 37 hours a week, but who was on holiday for a week, would be recorded as working zero actual hours for that week, while usual hours would be recorded as 37 hours.

Claimant Count

The Claimant Count is anofficial statistic in developmentthat measures the number of people who are receiving a benefit principally for the reason of being unemployed. Currently, the Claimant Count consists of those receiving Jobseekers' Allowance and Universal Credit claimants in the "searching for work" conditionality group.

Economic inactivity

People not in the labour force (also known aseconomically inactive) are not in employment, but do not meet the internationally accepted definition of unemployment because they have not been seeking work within the last four weeks, or they are unable to start work in the next two weeks. The economic inactivity rate is the proportion of people aged between 16 and 64 years who are not in the labour force.

Employment

The termemploymentrefers to the number of people in paid work or those who had a job that they were temporarily away from (for example, because they were on holiday or off sick). This differs from the number of jobs because some people have more than one job. The employment rate is the proportion of people aged between 16 and 64 years who are in employment. A more detailed explanation is available inourGuide to labour market statistics methodology.

Unemployment

The term unemployment refers to the number of people without a job who have been actively seeking work within the last four weeks and are available to start work within the next two weeks. The unemployment rate is not the proportion of the total population who are unemployed. It is the proportion of the economically active population (those in work plus those seeking and available to work) who are unemployed.

Local labour market indicators

Local labour market indicators cover employment, unemployment, economic inactivity, and jobs density for subregional geographical areas (such as local and unitary authorities,countiesand 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 years.

Pay As You Earn Real Time Information

These data come from HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC's) PayAsYou Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) system. They cover thewhole populationrather than a sample of people or companies, and they will allow for more detailed estimates of the population. The release is now accredited as official statistics.

PAYE is the system employers and pension providers use to take Income Tax and National Insurance contributions before they pay wages or pensions to employees and pensioners. This publication relates to employees only and not pensioners.

For more terms relating to the labour market, amore detailed glossaryis available in our Guide to labour market statistics methodology.

6 . Data sources and quality

From our December 2024 labour market release, Labour Force Survey (LFS) periods from January to March 2019 onwards have been reweighted. The reweighted LFS estimates incorporate information on the size and composition of the UK population, based on 2022 mid-year estimates. For England, Wales and Northern Ireland, they are projected forward using scaling factors from 2021-based national population projections, published in January 2024. For Scotland, they are projected forward using scaling factors from 2020-based national population projections, published in January 2023.

This reweighting creates a discontinuity between December 2018 to February 2019 and January to March 2019. Users should account for this discontinuity when considering long-term movements in the series.

We have modelled the seasonally adjusted UK levels of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity by sex and age band back to the start of the population revisions in June to August 2011. This has been done by scaling to the latest population estimates, while accounting for the relative revisions to population by sex and age band in each year over the revision period. While UK measures have been modelled, estimates for the regions and countries have not. Therefore, LFS estimates for the regions and countries of the UK will be inconsistent with UK totals for periods between June to August 2011 and December 2018 to February 2019.

For further information, please seeourImpact of reweighting on Labour Force Survey key indicators article.

The Annual Population Survey (APS) estimates have not been weighted to the same populations as the LFS. Therefore, all APS tables will be inconsistent with those used for the LFS in the latest periods.

Estimates from January to March 2025 include the full effect of the improvements in LFS data collection and sampling methods introduced from January 2024 onwards. Since then, further changes that were introduced to help increase response levels may have an ongoing impact on the survey. Some volatility remains, particularly for estimates for mid-2023 and throughout 2024, and for granular breakdowns, where sample sizes are smaller. Caution should be taken when drawing conclusions from short-term changes, and we advise users to focus on long-term movements in the data.

It should be noted that LFS, APS and Real Time Information (RTI) estimates are based on the region where someone lives, as opposed to the region where they may happen to work, which may be different.

Alongside the labour market publication in October 2026, we published our Labour Force Survey quality update article. The article provides information about current response rates and known biases in LFS data and provides users with information to better understand the current quality of the data.

An operational error occurred in May 2026, which led to temporary under-resourcing in LFS telephone collection operations. Our analysis to date indicates that the error had a minimal impact on the headline estimates, although it does suggest there is a small but noticeable impact on the estimates of average hours and so the total actual hours worked. As the longitudinal dataset does not include imputed cases, the impact of the operational error results in flows estimates for this period being based on a smaller dataset and so they will be subject to lower accuracy and greater volatility.

Official statistics

Since late 2023, we have taken a series of actions to recover the LFS and improve its quality, including:

- returning to face-to-face interviewing
- increasing respondent incentives
- reinstating the sample boost
- recruiting additional interviewers
- updating the survey weighting.

These measures have improved response levels from their lowest point to levels similar to those seen before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

On 11 August 2026, the ONS wrote a letter to the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) about the designation of LFS and Annual Population Survey (APS) outputs. Outputs derived from the LFS and APS are currently official statistics. We will not be seeking reaccreditation. Instead, our priority is for outputs based on the Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) – the online-first sustainable replacement for the LFS and APS – to achieve the standards required to become accredited official statistics, and for the OSR to consider their accreditation at the earliest opportunity.

More quality and methodology information (QMI) on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our Labour Force Survey quality and methodology information (QMI).

Uncertainty

The estimates presented in this bulletin contain uncertainty, as defined in our Uncertainty and how we measure it for our surveysmethodology. The LFS gathers information from asample of householdsacross the UK. The sample is designed to be asaccurateas possible, given practical limitations. This can have an impact on how changes in the estimates should be interpreted, especially for short-term comparisons.

As the number of people in the sample gets smaller, the variability of the estimates that we can make from that sample gets larger. Estimates for small groups, which are based on small subsets of the sample, are less reliable and tend to be more volatile than for larger aggregated groups.

In general, changes in the numbers (and especially the rates) reported between three-month periods are small and are not usually greater than the level that is explained by sampling variability. For a fuller picture, short-term movements in reported rates should be considered alongside longer-term patterns in the series and corresponding movements in other sources.

The data in this bulletin follow internationally accepted definitions specified by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This ensures that the estimates for the UK are comparable with those for other countries. More information is available in theILO'sResolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization publication.

Reliability of the main indicators in this bulletin can be obtained by monitoring the size of revisions. These measures are available in our Regional labour market: sampling variability and revisions summary dataset.

7 . Related links

Working and workless households in the UK: April to June 2026
Bulletin | Released 2 September 2026
The economic status of households in the UK and the people living in them, where at least one person is aged 16 to 64 years. Taken from the Labour Force Survey.

Workless households for regions across the UK: 2025
Bulletin | Released 29 July 2026
Annual information at a local level about households and the adults and children living in them, by their economic activity status.

Welsh Government labour market overview
External web page | Released17 November 2026
Monthly data on employment,unemploymentand economic inactivity.

Scottish Government labour market statistics
External publication | Released 17 November 2026
Statistical publications relating to Scotland's labour market.

Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency labour market overview
External article | Released17 November 2026
A monthly overview of the main labour market statistics for Northern Ireland, from household and business surveys, plus administrative sources, from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Labour market transformation – update on progress and plans: August 2026
Article | Released 11 August 2026
Labour market transformation overview, building on previous engagement on the Transformed Labour Force Survey.

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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