

CLAIMANT COUNT DATA

for January 2024

February 13th Release

The Claimant Count is a measure of the number of people who are unemployed and claiming benefits. From 1996 until the recent introduction of Universal Credit, this was based on the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. However, since its introduction some unemployment benefit claimants will be claiming Universal Credit instead. To reflect this change, the Claimant Count has been expanded to include people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and who are searching for work.

Gloucestershire is in the process of transitioning to full Universal Credit. This means a broader span of claimants will be required to look for work than previously under Jobseekers Allowance. As more people are brought within the coverage of Universal Credit, the Claimant Count is set to rise noticeably over time. This will happen irrespective of how the economy performs and is a feature of the design of Universal Credit which brings additional groups of people into 'Searching for Work' conditionality (and therefore the Claimant Count), to help encourage and support these claimants into work.

For more information about Universal Credit please see the [ONS website](#).



The Claimant Count* in the County increased by 295 persons to 10,010 a rate of 2.5%.

Claimant Count* for GB, England & Wales, SW, Gloucestershire and Districts

Area	Jan'24 Number	Jan'24 Rate	Dec'23 Number	Dec'23 Rate	Monthly change	% monthly change	Monthly change of rate %
UK	1,570,215	3.7	1,543,460	3.7	26,755	1.7	0.0
GB	1,535,150	3.7	1,507,975	3.7	27,175	1.8	0.0
England & Wales	1,429,260	3.8	1,402,515	3.7	26,745	1.9	0.1
England	1,367,420	3.8	1,341,150	3.8	26,270	2.0	0.0
South West	91,455	2.6	89,190	2.6	2,265	2.5	0.0
Gloucestershire	10,010	2.5	9,715	2.5	295	3.0	0.0
Cheltenham	2,060	2.7	1,990	2.6	70	3.5	0.1
Cotswold	970	1.8	955	1.8	15	1.6	0.0
Forest of Dean	1,380	2.7	1,320	2.6	60	4.5	0.1
Gloucester	2,970	3.5	2,890	3.4	80	2.8	0.1
Stroud	1,350	1.9	1,340	1.9	10	0.7	0.0
Tewkesbury	1,285	2.3	1,220	2.2	65	5.3	0.1

The Claimant Count* in Great Britain **increased** by 27,175 persons to **1,535,150** a rate of **3.7%**.

Gloucestershire's Claimant Count* rate **remained at 2.5%**.

All districts saw an **increase** in the estimated number of unemployed claimants.

The number of males unemployed in the County stands at **5,445 (2.8%)**, which represents an **increase** on last month. The number of females unemployed stands at **4,565 (2.3%)**, which also represents an **increase** on last month.

* Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5 and may be revised.

The figures quoted above cannot be compared with:

- 1) the UK figure of **1.3 million** unemployed at a rate of **3.8%***. This is based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of unemployment. It is obtained from an ongoing national household survey and updated on a quarterly basis.
- 2) the seasonally adjusted unemployment claimant count (which includes claimants of Jobseekers Allowance and Universal Credit) for the UK of **1.6 million** at a rate of **3.7%**.

NB: These figures cannot be replicated at a local level

* Oct - Dec 2023 unemployment rate:

From 13 February 2024, ONS has reinstated reweighted Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates.

Detailed notes from ONS:

The new reweighted LFS estimates incorporate our latest estimates of the size and composition of the UK population, improving the representativeness of our LFS estimates. Given time constraints, we have only been able to reweight LFS data from July to September 2022 onwards. Therefore, this reweighting exercise creates a discontinuity between June to August 2022 and July to September 2022 where there will be a step change in LFS estimates. However, we have modelled the seasonally adjusted UK levels of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity by sex and age-band back to June to August 2011, to ensure that headline rates and levels by sex and age-band (datasets A02SA and A05SA) can be assessed without a discontinuity.

Important note: Reweighting does not address the volatility we have seen in recent periods and which we expect to see to some extent going forwards, so we would advise caution when interpreting short-term changes in headline rates and recommend using them as part of our suite of labour market indicators, alongside Workforce Jobs, claimant count data and PAYE RTI estimates.

These are official statistics in development.

For further information, please see our Impact of reweighting on Labour Force Survey key indicators article:

[Impact of reweighting on Labour Force Survey key indicators - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/articles/impact-of-reweighting-on-labour-force-survey-key-indicators)