

CLAIMANT COUNT DATA

for December 2024

January 21st 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.

The claimant count is simply a count of people claiming relevant benefits, so it is subject to changes in benefit rules and welfare to work schemes. Since 2016 Gloucestershire has been in the process of transitioning to full Universal Credit with the process due to be completed in 2025. 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. In addition in May 2024 the Department for Work and Pensions rolled out an increase in the administrative earnings threshold (AET) for full work search conditionality. This means a cohort of claimants who are in work but on an income below the AET will now be required to search for work. This change is likely to affect around 180,000 claimants across the country over a period of around 6 months, increasing the Claimant Count over that time.

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



The Claimant Count* in the County increased by 165 persons to 10,560 a rate of 2.7%.

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

Area	Dec'24 Number	Dec'24 Rate	Nov'24 Number	Nov'24 Rate	Monthly change	% monthly change	Monthly change of rate %
UK	1,729,970	4.1	1,726,340	4.1	3,630	0.2	0.0
GB	1,690,595	4.1	1,685,710	4.1	4,885	0.3	0.0
England & Wales	1,583,180	4.2	1,577,415	4.2	5,765	0.4	0.0
England	1,517,155	4.3	1,511,445	4.2	5,710	0.4	0.1
South West	97,345	2.8	96,465	2.8	880	0.9	0.0
Gloucestershire	10,560	2.7	10,395	2.6	165	1.6	0.1
Cheltenham	2,095	2.8	2,050	2.7	45	2.2	0.1
Cotswold	985	1.9	990	1.9	-5	-0.5	0.0
Forest of Dean	1,480	2.9	1,465	2.9	15	1.0	0.0
Gloucester	3,140	3.7	3,100	3.7	40	1.3	0.0
Stroud	1,500	2.1	1,455	2.0	45	3.1	0.1
Tewkesbury	1,365	2.4	1,335	2.4	30	2.2	0.0

The Claimant Count* in Great Britain **increased** by 4,885 persons to **1,690,595** a rate of **4.1%**.

Gloucestershire's Claimant Count* rate remained at **2.7%**.

Cotswold saw **decrease** in the estimated number of unemployed claimants, whilst all other districts saw an **increase**.

The number of males unemployed in the County stands at **5,660 (2.9%)**, which represents an **increase** on last month. The number of females unemployed stands at **4,900 (2.5%)**, 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 **1.6 million** unemployed at a rate of **4.4%***. 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 **1.7 million** at a rate of **4.1%**.

NB: These figures cannot be replicated at a local level

* Sep - Nov 2024 unemployment rate:

From 17 December 2024, ONS has reweighted Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates.

Notes from ONS:

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 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.

Given time constraints, we have only been able to reweight LFS data from January to March 2019 onwards. Therefore, this reweighting exercise creates a discontinuity between December 2018 to February 2019 and January to March 2019 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 increases the levels of all labour market statuses but does not address issues surrounding increased LFS volatility, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes. An increased amount of volatility will remain until the recent improvements that have been implemented fully feed through the survey, so we would advise caution when interpreting change in headline rates and recommend using them 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.

These are official statistics in development.

[Impact of reweighting on Labour Force Survey key indicators: December 2024 - Office for National Statistics](#)