

CLAIMANT COUNT DATA

for December 2023

January 16th 2024 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 115 persons to 9,755 a rate of 2.5%.

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

Area	Dec'23 Number	Dec'23 Rate	Nov'23 Number	Nov'23 Rate	Monthly change	% monthly change	Monthly change of rate %
UK	1,556,660	3.7	1,535,890	3.6	20,770	1.4	0.1
GB	1,520,720	3.7	1,500,115	3.7	20,605	1.4	0.0
England & Wales	1,414,735	3.8	1,394,645	3.7	20,090	1.4	0.1
England	1,353,295	3.8	1,332,875	3.7	20,420	1.5	0.1
South West	89,435	2.6	88,210	2.5	1,225	1.4	0.1
Gloucestershire	9,755	2.5	9,640	2.5	115	1.2	0.0
Cheltenham	2,005	2.7	1,975	2.6	30	1.5	0.1
Cotswold	960	1.8	940	1.8	20	2.1	0.0
Forest of Dean	1,275	2.5	1,280	2.5	-5	-0.4	0.0
Gloucester	2,925	3.5	2,890	3.4	35	1.2	0.1
Stroud	1,350	1.9	1,320	1.8	30	2.3	0.1
Tewkesbury	1,240	2.2	1,235	2.2	5	0.4	0.0

The Claimant Count* in Great Britain **increased** by 20,605 persons to **1,520,720** 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, except Forest of Dean which saw a **decrease**.

The number of males unemployed in the County stands at **5,215 (2.7%)**, which represents an **increase** on last month. The number of females unemployed stands at **4,540 (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 **1.5 million** unemployed at a rate of **4.2%***. This is based on experimental labour market estimates using administrative data to produce UK unemployment measures, seasonally adjusted.
- 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

* **Sep - Nov 2023 unemployment rate:**

These are from new ONS experimental labour market estimates using administrative data to produce adjusted UK employment, unemployment and economic inactivity measures, seasonally adjusted.

These experimental data can not be directly compared with the ILO figures quoted in previous releases.

Notes from ONS:

Because of the increased uncertainty around the Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates, the ONS are temporarily publishing an alternative series of estimates of UK employment, unemployment, and economic inactivity as experimental statistics. The experimental figures were derived using growth rates from Pay as You Earn Real-Time Information and the Claimant Count for the periods from May to July 2023 onwards. This is to provide a more holistic view of the state of the labour market while the LFS estimates are uncertain.

Latest update from ONS:

“While this work is progressing well, we need further time to complete quality assurance before we can publish an LFS-based dataset using these new adjusted data. As such, this month’s labour market publication will continue to use the adjusted series produced using administrative data that we have published in recent months”.

Please follow this link to the ONS website for further information:

[Statement on the Labour Force Survey - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandunemployment/unemployment/unemploymentintheuk)