



CAPITAL CITY PARTNERSHIP

Edinburgh and South East Regional Claimant Count January 2021 Update

Summary: February 2020 to January 2021

Scottish Claimant Count Increase by 80%

↑ The Claimant Count in Scotland was 206,160 in January 2021. In February there were 114,605 claimants.

Edinburgh Claimant Count Increase by 148%

↑ The Claimant Count in Edinburgh was 17,600 in January 2021. In February there were 7,105 claimants.

City Region Claimant Count Increased by 96% between February 2020 and January 2021

↑ The Claimant Count in the 6 Local Authorities that make up the City Region was 24,385 in February 2020 and 47,780 in January 2021.

Across the region there has been an increase of 101% in 18-24 year old claimants

↑ The Claimant Count for 18-24 year olds across the City Region has increased from 4,400 in February 2020 to 8,865 in December 2020.

Across the region there has been a 132% increase in people in work claiming UC

↑ Currently 39% of all Universal Credit claimants across the entire City Region area are people in work.

Claimants Leaving the Claimant Count

↓ Across the Region, between 6,000-9,500 claimants have left the claimant count each month since May.

Wards with high Claimant Counts

📍 Of the 15 wards in the City Region that are recording the highest claimant rate, 7 of those are within Fife.

Overall Claimant Count

The data published on the 23rd February indicates that the claimant count across the UK is still far higher than it was at the start of the pandemic- 105% higher for the UK and 80% higher for Scotland.

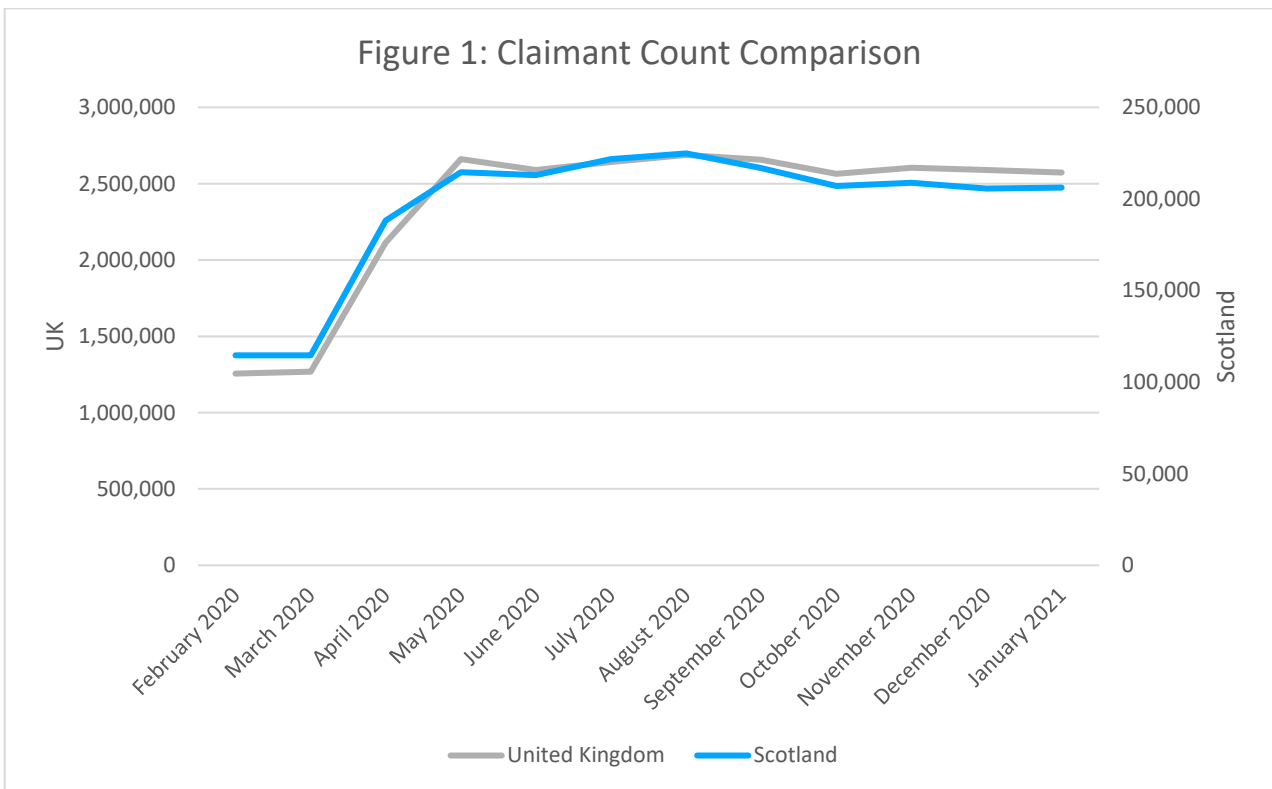
Table 1: National Claimant Count Picture

Area	February 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Change Feb-20 to Jan 21	Change Dec-20 to Feb 21
Northern Ireland	29,910	57,130	55,820	87%	-2.3%
Scotland	114,605	205,610	206,160	80%	0.3%
United Kingdom	1,255,770	2,589,740	2,572,015	105%	-0.7%

Wales	60,375	110,215	109,065	81%	-1.0%
England	1,050,875	2,216,785	2,200,965	109%	-0.7%
East	89,890	203,105	200,410	123%	-1.3%
East Midlands	80,915	159,575	158,155	95%	-0.9%
London	184,765	489,250	485,180	163%	-0.8%
North East	75,560	117,085	116,815	55%	-0.2%
North West	167,055	312,470	310,885	86%	-0.5%
Northern Ireland	29,910	57,130	55,820	87%	-2.3%
South East	119,620	288,820	286,545	140%	-0.8%
South West	75,595	165,640	163,755	117%	-1.1%
West Midlands	141,095	261,890	260,100	84%	-0.7%
Yorkshire and The Humber	116,390	218,945	219,120	88%	0.1%

Source: NOMIS 23/02/2021

However, we can see in Table 1 that the month to month change between December and January tended to be relatively small. In fact, generally what we have seen over the last 12 months is a claimant count that peaked quickly and from then on has remained relatively static. This can be seen in the Figure below that highlights the claimant count, both in the UK and in Scotland, rose rapidly between March and May and since then has remained pretty stable. The Scotland data is to be read from the right hand axis and the UK data is from the left hand axis.



Source: NOMIS 23/02/2021

What we can see is that after the initial shock there has been little to change the situation either in a positive or negative way and is likely to be like this due to government intervention through programs such as the Job Retention scheme. The big unknown is what will happen when the Job Retention scheme is removed. More positively will there be a bounce back and associated recruitment drives when restrictions are removed and we return to a familiar society with, hospitality, leisure and retail can operate as they did in the heady days of 2019? At that point, when state led interventions are removed, we will likely see more erratic changes in the claimant count.

Table 2 below looks at the position across Scotland based on the claimant count data published on NOMIS. From this table we can see that between February and January, Edinburgh has recorded the largest percentage increase in claimant count in Scotland which was 148% higher in January than it was in February 2020. By comparison Inverclyde had recorded the lowest percentage increase, 30% increase, between the same dates. In the City Region whilst Edinburgh has the largest percentage increase, Fife had the lowest at 63%.

Table 2: Claimant Count - Scottish LAs

	February 2020		January 2021		Change Feb 2020-Jan 2021	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Percentage	Rate
Aberdeen City	4,150	2.6	9,475	6.0	128%	3.40
Aberdeenshire	2,975	1.8	6,520	4.0	119%	2.20
Angus	2,040	2.9	3,725	5.4	83%	2.50
Argyll and Bute	1,530	3.0	2,805	5.5	83%	2.50
City of Edinburgh	7,105	1.9	17,600	4.8	148%	2.90
Clackmannanshire	1,390	4.3	2,045	6.4	47%	2.10
Dumfries and	2,950	3.4	4,495	5.2	52%	1.80
Dundee City	4,530	4.6	6,785	6.8	50%	2.20
East Ayrshire	3,685	4.8	5,645	7.4	53%	2.60
East Dunbartonshire	1,230	1.9	2,480	3.8	102%	1.90
East Lothian	1,765	2.7	3,295	5.0	87%	2.30
East Renfrewshire	950	1.7	2,115	3.7	123%	2.00
Falkirk	3,300	3.2	5,830	5.7	77%	2.50
Fife	8,765	3.8	14,255	6.1	63%	2.30
Glasgow City	20,055	4.5	35,815	8.0	79%	3.50
Highland	3,715	2.6	7,355	5.1	98%	2.50
Inverclyde	2,255	4.6	2,935	6.0	30%	1.40
Midlothian	1,470	2.6	2,940	5.1	100%	2.50
Moray	1,550	2.6	2,830	4.8	83%	2.20
Na h-Eileanan Siar	465	3.0	725	4.7	56%	1.70
North Ayrshire	4,600	5.6	6,635	8.1	44%	2.50
North Lanarkshire	8,230	3.7	14,130	6.4	72%	2.70
Orkney Islands	195	1.4	360	2.7	85%	1.30
Perth and Kinross	1,865	2.0	4,080	4.4	119%	2.40
Renfrewshire	4,025	3.5	6,955	6.1	73%	2.60
Scottish Borders	1,860	2.7	3,505	5.2	88%	2.50
Shetland Islands	265	1.9	450	3.2	70%	1.30
South Ayrshire	2,790	4.2	4,725	7.1	69%	2.90
South Lanarkshire	7,015	3.5	12,245	6.1	75%	2.60
Stirling	1,540	2.5	2,680	4.4	74%	1.90
West Dunbartonshire	2,930	5.2	4,535	8.0	55%	2.80
West Lothian	3,425	2.9	6,190	5.3	81%	2.40
Column Total	114,605	3.3	206,160	5.9	80%	2.60

Source: NOMIS 23/02/2021

From the claimant rate statistics, we can see that the highest figures recorded are in the West of the country with North Ayrshire at 8.1, Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire at 8.0 and East Ayrshire at 7.4. The highest rate in the city region was Fife at 6.1.

Turning now to look in more detail at the position of the authorities in the city region. Table 3 illustrates how the claimant count across the region has increased over the last 12 months. The picture painted is similar to what it was like in last months report with Edinburgh recording the highest percentage increase in claimants but a claimant rate in January that is lower than elsewhere in the region.

Table 3: Claimant Count Change Over the City Region

	February 2020		December 2020		January 2021		% Change Feb 2020-Jan 2021	% Change Dec 2020-Jan 2021
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate		
Edinburgh	7,105	1.9	17,780	4.9	17,600	4.8	148%	-1.0%
East Lothian	1,765	2.7	3,220	4.9	3,295	5.0	87%	2.3%
Fife	8,765	3.8	14,080	6.1	14,255	6.1	63%	1.2%
Midlothian	1,470	2.6	2,905	5.1	2,940	5.1	100%	1.2%
Scottish Borders	1,860	2.7	3,485	5.1	3,505	5.2	88%	0.6%
West Lothian	3,425	2.9	6,140	5.2	6,190	5.3	81%	0.8%
Column Total	24,385	2.7	47,615	5.3	47,780	5.3	96%	0.3%

Source: NOMIS 26/1/2021

In December 2020, there are 47,615 claimants across the city region and this increased by 0.3% between December and January. The claimant rate across the region now varies from 4.8 in Edinburgh to 6.1 in Fife.

Turning now to look at the gender profile of the claimants. What we can see in Table 4 is that overall, across the region, the proportion of female claimants is much the same in January 2021 as it was in February 2020. Unsurprisingly, the claimant rate for females has increased over the last 12 months, as it has for males. The largest increase has been recorded for male claimants in Edinburgh and Midlothian where the rate has increased by 3.5 and 3.3 percentage points respectively. In terms of the claimant rate for females Edinburgh has seen an increase of 2.3 points since February 2020, the largest increase for females in the region. Scottish Borders has seen the second largest increase and the rate of 2.1 recorded in February 2020 has doubled to a 4.2 claimant rate for females in January 2021.

Table 4: Change in Gender Split Across the City Region

	February 2020		December 2020		January 2021	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
City of Edinburgh	7,105	1.9	17,780	4.9	17,600	4.8
male	4,435	2.5	10,855	6.0	10,775	6.0
female	2,665	1.4	6,925	3.7	6,825	3.7
East Lothian	1,765	2.7	3,220	4.9	3,295	5.0
male	1,005	3.2	1,865	5.9	1,895	6.0
female	760	2.2	1,355	4.0	1,400	4.1
Fife	8,765	3.8	14,080	6.1	14,255	6.1
male	5,475	4.8	8,600	7.6	8,750	7.7
female	3,290	2.8	5,480	4.6	5,505	4.6
Midlothian	1,470	2.6	2,905	5.1	2,940	5.1
male	865	3.1	1,725	6.3	1,760	6.4
female	605	2.0	1,180	4.0	1,175	4.0
Scottish Borders	1,860	2.7	3,485	5.1	3,505	5.2
male	1,120	3.4	2,025	6.1	2,055	6.2
female	740	2.1	1,465	4.2	1,450	4.2

West Lothian	3,425	2.9	6,140	5.2	6,190	5.3
male	1,970	3.4	3,675	6.4	3,715	6.4
female	1,455	2.5	2,470	4.2	2,475	4.2
Column Total	24,385	2.7	47,615	5.3	47,780	5.3
male	14,875	3.3	28,740	6.5	28,955	6.5
female	9,510	2.1	18,875	4.1	18,825	4.1

Source: NOMIS 23/2/2021

There has been significant discussion of how the economic consequences of the pandemic have impacted heavily on young people. The sectors most affected, retail, hospitality, recreation, leisure etc. tend to have higher proportion of young people employed¹. Looking at the claimant Count data reproduced in Table 5, we can see that across the region there has been an increase of 101% in claimants aged 18-24 compared to the overall claimant count which has increased by 96%.

However, the situation is different in different parts of South East Scotland. For example, there has been a 171% increase in 18-24 year olds claiming in Edinburgh compared to an increase of 148% in claimant numbers regardless of age. East Lothian is similar with an 108% increase in the number of 18-24 year old claimants when the increase overall was 87%. For all the other Local Authorities in the region the difference is far less marked, for example the increase in 18-24 year old claimants in Fife and West Lothian was only 4% higher than for all claimants and in Scottish Borders there was no difference.

Claimant rates are not produced on NOMIS for age categories. One alternative is to look at if the proportion of claimants has changed, essentially do 18-24 year olds now make up a higher proportion of claimants? This can be seen in the right-hand column in Table 6 and unsurprisingly we can see that in Edinburgh and East Lothian 18-24 year olds now make up 16 and 19 percent of claimants respectively, and in both cases, this is an increase of 2 percentage points compared to February 2020.

Table 5: Age and Gender Profile of Claimants (18-24 year olds)

		February 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Change Feb 2020-Jan 2021	% of Claimants in Feb 2020	% of Claimants in Jan 2021
City of Edinburgh	All Ages	7,105	17,780	17,600	148%		
	All 18-24	1,015	2,795	2,755	171%	14%	16%
	Male 18-24	610	1,695	1,665	173%		
	Female 18-24	405	1,105	1,090	169%		
East Lothian	All	1,765	3,220	3,295	87%		
	All 18-24	305	605	635	108%	17%	19%
	Male 18-24	180	370	385	114%		
	Female 18-24	125	235	250	100%		
Fife	All Ages	8,765	14,080	14,255	63%		
	All 18-24	1,680	2,735	2,810	67%	19%	20%
	Male 18-24	1,090	1,715	1,760	61%		
	Female 18-24	590	1,015	1,050	78%		
Midlothian	All Ages	1,470	2,905	2,940	100%		
	All 18-24	310	645	630	103%	21%	21%
	Male 18-24	200	415	405	103%		
	Female 18-24	115	230	225	96%		

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-labour-market-people-places-regions-statistics-annual-population-survey-2019/>

Scottish Borders	All Ages	1,860	3,485	3,505	88%		
	All 18-24	405	755	760	88%	22%	22%
	Male 18-24	240	435	440	83%		
	Female 18-24	165	315	320	94%		
West Lothian	All Ages	3,425	6,140	6,190	81%		
	All 18-24	685	1,265	1,270	85%	20%	21%
	Male 18-24	415	775	795	92%		
	Female 18-24	270	490	480	78%		
Column Total	All Ages	24,385	47,615	47,780	96%		
	All 18-24	4,400	8,795	8,865	101%	18%	19%
	Male 18-24	2,735	5,405	5,450	99%		
	Female 18-24	1,670	3,390	3,415	104%		

Source: NOMIS 24/2/2021

What is missing from the 18-24 year olds claiming, understandably, are those aged 16 and 17. Claiming benefits for this age group is more restricted and therefore the claimant count figures will not necessarily reflect all 16 and 17 year olds who are out of work. The table below looks at the number of 16 and 17 year old claimants in each of the 6 local authorities across the city region and we can see the numbers are small. To try and take account of the limitation in the claimant count the Annual Participation Measure from Skills Development Scotland is also reflected.

Table 6: Change in the Number of 16-17 Year Old Claimants

	2020 Annual Participation Measure from SDS			February 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Change Feb 2020-Jan 2021
	% Non-Participation	16-17 year olds	All Non-partic				
Edinburgh	2.9	128	382	50	55	55	10%
East Lothian	2.2	*	90	15	15	20	33%
Fife	3.4	152	498	60	100	90	50%
Midlothian	3.4	43	125	10	25	25	150%
Scottish Borders	1.9	26	89	10	20	20	100%
West Lothian	3.4	82	274	45	60	55	22%
Column Total				190	275	265	39%

Source: NOMIS 24/2/2021 and <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/publications-statistics/statistics/annual-participation-measure/?page=1&statisticCategoryId=7&order=date-desc>

The asterisk for East Lothian is a result of a small sample size. The SDS data is based on a study that runs till the 31st March each year, so the 2020 data reflects the position at the very start of the pandemic. If we compare the February claimant count with the non-participation figures from SDS we can see that the claimant count could be underrepresenting the true picture for this age group by anywhere between 2.5 times for Edinburgh, Borders and West Lothian to 4 times higher in Midlothian, if we were to base it on the number of young people not participating.

Table 7 below looks at the other two broad age categories – 25-49 and 50+. It is clear from this table that whilst Edinburgh and East Lothian has recorded high percentage increases for 18-24 year olds, Edinburgh has also recorded over 100% increases for the two other age categories, reflecting the fact that claimants in Edinburgh overall have increased. Also, worth highlighting is that Midlothian has seen a 127% increase in the number of claimants over 50 years of age.

Table 7: Age Profile of Claimants 25 and over

	Age	February 2020	December 2020	January 2021	Change Feb 2020-Jan 2021
Edinburgh	25-49	4,310	10,995	10,895	153%
	50+	1,730	3,935	3,895	125%
East Lothian	25-49	1,020	1,785	1,800	76%
	50+	430	815	840	95%
Fife	25-49	4,990	7,845	7,950	59%
	50+	2,030	3,405	3,405	68%
Midlothian	25-49	865	1,620	1,650	91%
	50+	280	610	635	127%
Scottish Borders	25-49	975	1,755	1,780	83%
	50+	470	960	945	101%
West Lothian	25-49	1,965	3,435	3,480	77%
	50+	725	1,385	1,385	91%
Column Total	25-49	14,125	27,430	27,555	95%
	50+	5,665	11,115	11,100	96%

Source: NOMIS 24/2/2021

The Situation Within Localities

Where the claimant count data is more useful than other sources is in its ability to drill down to small areas, such as wards. Table 8 below looks at the 15 wards within the City Region that have the highest claimant rate as of January 2021.

Table 8: Ten Wards with the Highest Claimant Count in the City Region (January 2021)

2017 electoral wards	February 2020		December 2020		January 2021	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages (Fife)	900	8.2	1,185	10.7	1,210	11.0
Kirkcaldy East (Fife)	640	6.9	985	10.6	1,000	10.8
Kirkcaldy Central (Fife)	580	6.6	930	10.5	915	10.5
Lochgelly, Cardenden and Benarty (Fife)	685	5.9	1,050	9.0	1,070	9.1
Forth (Edinburgh)	720	3.4	1,655	7.9	1,635	7.7
Hawick and Denholm (Scottish Borders)	235	4.3	405	7.4	405	7.4
Leith (Edinburgh)	630	3.5	1,360	7.6	1,345	7.3
Cowdenbeath (Fife)	610	4.5	970	7.1	1,000	7.2
Portobello/Craigmillar (Edinburgh)	625	3.2	1,485	7.5	1,480	7.2
Whitburn and Blackburn (West Lothian)	585	4.3	935	6.9	945	6.9
Musselburgh (East Lothian)	455	3.6	840	6.7	860	6.8
Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley (West Lothian)	405	4.0	685	6.7	690	6.8
Craigtinny/Duddingston (Edinburgh)	550	2.7	1,430	6.9	1,385	6.7
Burntisland, Kinghorn and Western Kirkcaldy (Fife)	380	4.2	585	6.5	580	6.5
Glenrothes West and Kinglassie (Fife)	350	3.5	615	6.2	630	6.5

Source: NOMIS 24/2/2021

We can see that of the 15, 7 are within Fife, 4 in Edinburgh, 2 in West Lothian, 1 in Scottish Borders and 1 in East Lothian. Overall, in these 15 wards there were just over 15,000 people claiming in January.

One last data set to look at in terms of the claimant count concerns on and off flows. Table 9 below looks at the off flows from Universal Credit between February and November 2020. This is

presented by claim type, in or out of work, and LA area. We can see that even in a time of labour market contraction across the region, there has been between 6,000 and 9,000 people every month coming off the benefit, so the labour market is still recruiting, just not in the numbers necessary to counter those losing their jobs.

Table 9: Monthly Off Flows

		Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20
City of Edinburgh	Not in employment	691	707	450	769	2,106	1,595	1,070	1,836	1,892
	In employment	367	516	468	1,465	1,599	1,086	861	1,352	1,381
	Total	1,057	1,224	920	2,239	3,705	2,681	1,928	3,194	3,274
East Lothian	Not in employment	186	189	98	188	479	288	276	421	371
	In employment	113	164	121	318	287	231	154	285	272
	Total	301	355	223	504	769	516	432	709	641
Fife	Not in employment	818	912	497	652	1,376	1,078	1,057	1,520	1,496
	In employment	390	569	522	1,184	1,006	804	697	1,056	1,073
	Total	1,212	1,482	1,026	1,836	2,383	1,879	1,759	2,576	2,568
Midlothian	Not in employment	152	179	99	146	417	313	216	354	382
	In employment	84	129	112	289	243	247	166	225	238
	Total	232	314	218	438	663	566	377	579	623
West Lothian	Not in employment	346	380	202	326	767	495	440	719	822
	In employment	178	275	247	471	497	364	335	546	507
	Total	523	660	452	798	1,266	857	778	1,265	1,330
Scottish Borders	Not in employment	168	151	96	172	414	298	276	442	378
	In employment	95	128	122	297	271	187	168	250	268
	Total	261	276	218	471	681	481	448	692	651
Total	Not in employment	2,363	2,521	1,447	2,255	5,565	4,066	3,338	5,291	5,348
	In employment	1,224	1,780	1,598	4,023	3,900	2,912	2,384	3,722	3,746
	Total	3,587	4,308	3,046	6,280	9,469	6,976	5,721	9,007	9,100

Source: StatXplore 25/2/2021

Table 10 looks at the other side of the equation – the onflows. What we can see from this is that April 2020 saw the largest single monthly onflow with just short of 21,000 new claimants across the region and of these 14,406 were not in employment. Compare this to off flows and we can see that across the region in April there were nearly 7 times the number of on flows compared to off flows. July and August saw higher off flows than on across the region and it was similar in October.

What these seem to suggest is that after the initial shock in the spring of 2020 there has been a sort of balance, and on a positive note, when restrictions have been eased, such as in the summer of 2020 there were indications that recruitment picked up, reflected in a shift towards a greater number of off flows.

Table 10: Monthly On Flows

		Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20
City of Edinburgh	Not in employment	837	971	4,943	4,931	2,542	2,269	1,438	1,680	1,945
	In employment	419	457	2,497	1,308	986	920	777	837	895
	Total	1,257	1,426	7,436	6,234	3,523	3,194	2,218	2,518	2,838
East Lothian	Not in employment	192	213	1,222	847	415	428	261	299	310
	In employment	132	124	508	215	173	185	140	144	176
	Total	323	340	1,727	1,064	590	610	401	449	480
Fife	Not in employment	1,036	1,091	4,143	2,871	1,783	1,795	1,017	1,210	1,226
	In employment	496	527	1,870	792	642	724	543	624	600
	Total	1,533	1,624	6,009	3,662	2,420	2,519	1,565	1,829	1,825
Midlothian	Not in employment	164	212	1,106	736	360	389	257	255	310
	In employment	100	107	433	202	197	173	140	160	158
	Total	269	320	1,538	944	558	562	398	413	467
Scottish Borders	Not in employment	222	235	1,169	791	429	501	268	262	321
	In employment	97	111	478	205	167	153	120	158	160
	Total	320	342	1,649	998	598	651	393	414	482
West Lothian	Not in employment	440	449	1,825	1,534	757	837	597	612	595
	In employment	213	235	795	417	306	351	312	254	263
	Total	654	690	2,615	1,949	1,064	1,187	907	862	853
Total	Not in employment	2,894	3,177	14,406	11,710	6,278	6,221	3,845	4,311	4,710
	In employment	1,464	1,565	6,570	3,139	2,477	2,500	2,037	2,171	2,250
	Total	4,353	4,741	20,977	14,853	8,753	8,715	5,884	6,485	6,953

Source: StatXplore 25/2/2021

Universal Credit

Universal Credit makes up part of the claimant count that we have looked at already in this report, however it also includes data on those who are in work but need support as their wages alone don't provide enough income. Figure 2 below looks at the increase across the region in the number of in-work and out of work universal credit claimants since February 2020. What we can see from this is that the out of work claimants peaked quickly and has been around 70,000 since May. The in-work UC claimants has seen a far more gradual rise one that continues. For example, since June (after the initial shock) the number of not in employment claimants across the city region has fallen by 1% whilst the number of in work claimants has increased by 13% over the same period.

What could this mean going forward? On the positive side it could mean that there are a number of people still linked to employment. If this is the case, then the hope would be that they will quickly replace these lost positions as the economy opens and the labour market picks up. The more negative picture is the reduced income may have pushed these households not only into claiming benefit but also into poverty and debt. This could take a lot longer for households to remedy, and, when restrictions on debt recovery are removed, we could witness increases in everything from private tenants losing homes through to bailiff's seizing goods.

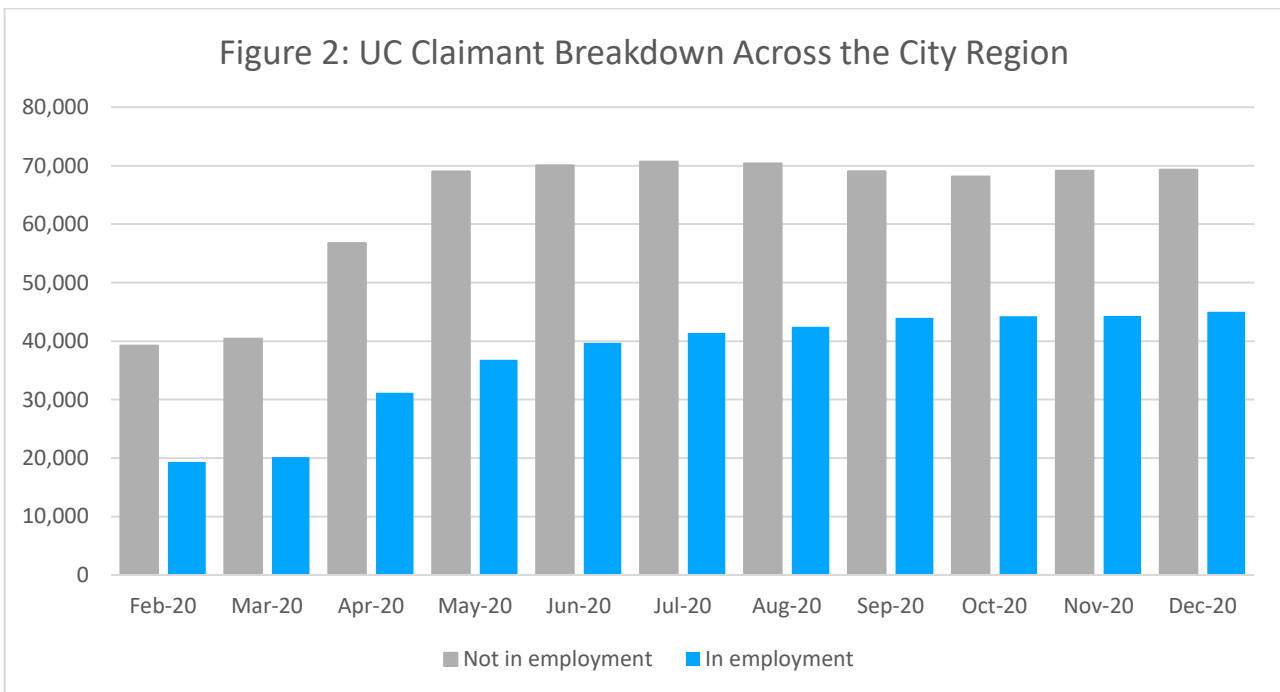


Table 11 below looks at the Universal Credit statistics for each of the 6 LAs from February and compares this to December, which is the most recent data where a split by in and out of work claimants is possible.

Table 11: Universal Credit Claimants

		Feb-20	Dec-20	% Change
City of Edinburgh	Not in employment	9,041	21,578	139%
	In employment	4,650	15,348	230%
	Total	13,688	36,927	170%
East Lothian	Not in employment	3,725	5,726	54%
	In employment	2,120	3,777	78%
	Total	5,842	9,504	63%
Scottish Borders	Not in employment	2,874	5,042	75%
	In employment	1,546	3,203	107%

	Total	4,424	8,246	86%
West Lothian	Not in employment	5,608	9,486	69%
	In employment	2,809	6,206	121%
	Total	8,419	15,696	86%
Midlothian	Not in employment	3,173	5,123	61%
	In employment	1,741	3,372	94%
	Total	4,921	8,493	73%
Fife	Not in employment	14,794	22,362	51%
	In employment	6,467	13,103	103%
	Total	21,262	35,463	67%

Source: StatXplore 25/02/2021

It is clear from Table 11 that the in work receiving support group, has grown faster than those that are out of work. This ranges from a 230% increase in Edinburgh to 78% increase in East Lothian.

Employment Support Allowance

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) offers financial support and personalised support to those who are unable to work as a result of a health condition or disability. The data in the table below is from the StatXplore site and is published on a quarterly basis with the August 2020 data being the most recent available.

Table 12: ESA Claimants

		Feb-20	May-20	Aug-20	% Change
City of Edinburgh	Assessment phase	323	408	439	36%
	Work Related Activity group	3,016	2,784	2,694	-11%
	Support group	13,474	13,443	13,404	-1%
	Unknown	414	432	404	-2%
	Total	17,227	17,062	16,952	-2%
East Lothian	Assessment phase	72	84	101	40%
	Work Related Activity group	352	325	313	-11%
	Support group	2,130	2,140	2,155	1%
	Unknown	72	85	74	3%
	Total	2,633	2,638	2,641	0%
Fife	Assessment phase	345	447	516	50%
	Work Related Activity group	2,697	2,593	2,496	-7%
	Support group	9,928	9,852	9,860	-1%
	Unknown	321	358	344	7%
	Total	13,283	13,247	13,221	0%
Midlothian	Assessment phase	53	87	100	89%
	Work Related Activity group	399	377	368	-8%
	Support group	2,274	2,257	2,256	-1%
	Unknown	62	62	55	-11%
	Total	2,793	2,784	2,778	-1%
Scottish Borders	Assessment phase	105	140	148	41%
	Work Related Activity group	667	639	610	-9%
	Support group	2,748	2,713	2,720	-1%
	Unknown	105	104	96	-9%
	Total	3,625	3,592	3,575	-1%

West Lothian	Assessment phase	196	231	281	43%
	Work Related Activity group	1,106	1,031	984	-11%
	Support group	5,984	5,962	5,976	0%
	Unknown	201	201	200	0%
	Total	7,486	7,427	7,438	-1%
Total	Assessment phase	1,095	1,389	1,585	45%
	Work Related Activity group	8,232	7,752	7,464	-9%
	Support group	36,538	36,376	36,373	0%
	Unknown	1,173	1,239	1,172	0%
	Total	47,042	46,752	46,598	-1%

Source: StatXplore 25/2/2021

As can be seen in the table above the ESA claimant count is divided into 4 groups. The first, the assessment phase reflects when a new claimant applies for ESA. This assessment phase usually lasts for 13 weeks. This initial phase appears to have increased between February and August and this could be linked to reductions in face to face meetings. During this phase the claimant will have their ability to work assessed to determine their entitlement, this is called the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). The possible outcomes of the WCA are that claimants can be assessed as:

- a) Suitable for the ESA Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) where claimants are able to undertake and participate in work-related activity to help them move towards the labour market,
- b) Suitable for the ESA Support Group (where claimants are not required to undertake any interviews or work related activity), or
- c) Fit for work and therefore not entitled to ESA, although there is a right of appeal.

The WRAG is the group that may well be supported by the providers across the City Region and we can see that there was a fall in this number between May and August.

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