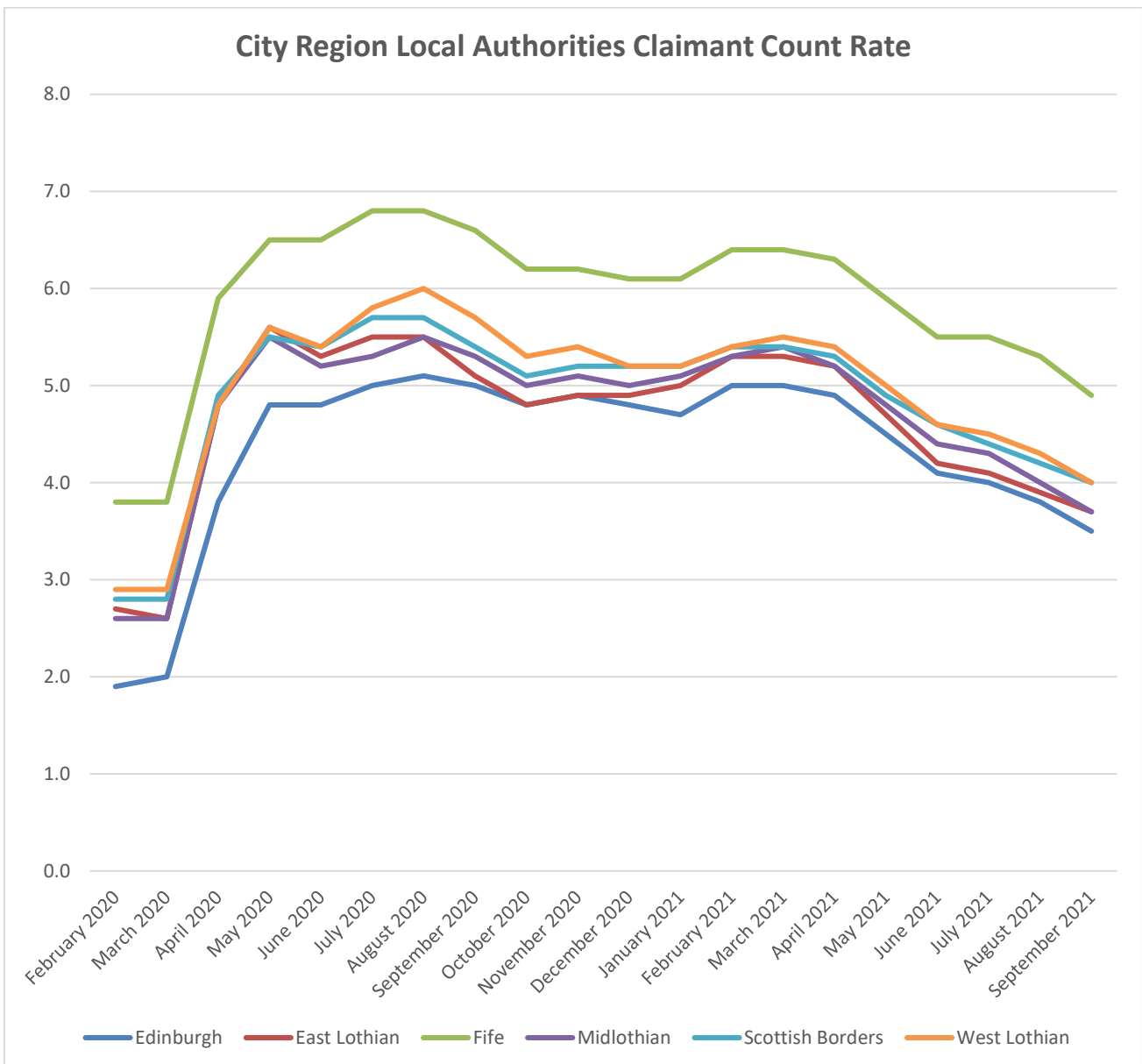


Edinburgh and South East Regional Claimant Count October 2021 Summary Update

Between February 2020 and October 2021:	Between September 2021 and October 2021:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ UK Claimant Count increased by 59% ↑ Scottish Claimant Count increased by 31% ↑ Edinburgh Claimant Count increased by 73% ↑ City Region Claimant Count increased by 40% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ UK Claimant Count decreased by 2% ↓ Scottish Claimant Count decreased 3% ↓ Edinburgh Claimant Count decreased by 3% ↓ City Region Claimant Count decreased by 4%



City Region Summary

1. In October 2021 the claimant count for the City Region was 34,175. Of these
 - a. 6,530 were 16-24 year olds
 - b. 21,485 were 25-49 year olds
 - c. 8,455 were 50 or older
2. The overall claimant count in the Region is now 40% higher than it was in February 2020.
3. In September 2021 there were 20,790 male claimants and 13,380 female claimants. This represents an increase of 40% for males and 41% for females.
4. The ward with the greatest claimant count is Forth in Edinburgh with 1,230 claimants in September 2021.
5. The ward with the lowest claimant count is North Berwick Coastal in East Lothian with 155 claimants in October 2021
6. In September 2021 there were 43,946 working individuals claiming Universal Credit in the Region.

Edinburgh Summary

1. In October 2021 the claimant count for Edinburgh was 13,080. Of these
 - a. 1,705 were 16-24 year olds
 - b. 7,700 were 25-49 year olds
 - c. 2,895 were 50 or older
2. The overall claimant count in Edinburgh is now 73% higher than it was in February 2020.
3. In September 2021 there were 8,180 male claimants and 4,900 female claimants. This represents an increase of 84% for both males and females since February 2020.
4. The Edinburgh ward with the greatest claimant count is Forth with 1,230 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 5.8%.
5. The Edinburgh ward with the lowest claimant count is Corstorphine/Murrayfield with 240 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 1.6%.
6. Skills Development Scotland Participation Measure indicates that there are 214 16 and 17 year olds not participating
7. In September 2021 there were 14,689 working individuals claiming Universal Credit in Edinburgh

East Lothian Summary

1. In October 2021 the claimant count for East Lothian was 2,340. Of these
 - a. 410 were 16-24 year olds
 - b. 1,375 were 25-49 year olds
 - c. 555 were 50 or older
2. The overall claimant count in East Lothian is now 33% higher than it was in February 2020.
3. In September 2021 there were 1,415 male claimants and 1,020 female claimants. This represents an increase of 41% for males and 34% for females since February 2020.
4. The East Lothian ward with the largest claimant count is Musselburgh with 615 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 4.9%.
5. The East Lothian ward with the lowest claimant count is North Berwick Coastal with 155 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 2.1%.
6. Skills Development Scotland Participation Measure indicates that there are 49 16 and 17 year olds not participating
7. In September 2021 there were 3,679 working individuals claiming Universal Credit in East Lothian.

Fife Summary

1. In October 2021 the claimant count for Fife was 10,705. Of these
 - a. 2,015 were 16-24 year olds
 - b. 6,170 were 25-49 year olds
 - c. 2,520 were 50 or older
2. The overall claimant count in Fife is now 22% higher than it was in February 2020.
3. In September 2021 there were 6,920 male claimants and 4,545 female claimants. This represents an increase of 26% for males and 38% for females since February 2020.
4. The Fife ward with the greatest claimant count is Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages with 1,045 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 9.5%.

5. The Fife ward with the lowest claimant count is St Andrews with 165 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 1.1%.
6. Skills Development Scotland Participation Measure indicates that there are 317 16 and 17 year olds not participating
7. In September 2021 there were 12,812 working individuals claiming Universal Credit in Fife.

Midlothian Summary

1. In October 2021 the claimant count for Midlothian was 1,955. Of these
 - a. 365 were 16-24 year olds
 - b. 1,170 were 25-49 year olds
 - c. 420 were 50 or older
2. The overall claimant count in Midlothian is now 33% higher than it was in February 2020.
3. In September 2021 there were 1,275 male claimants and 825 female claimants. This represents an increase of 47% for males and 36% for females since February 2020.
4. The Midlothian ward with the largest claimant count is Dalkeith with 390 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 4.4%.
5. The Midlothian ward with the lowest claimant count is Midlothian West with 265 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 2.8%
6. Skills Development Scotland Participation Measure indicates that there are 50 16 and 17 year olds not participating
7. In September 2021 there were 3,318 working individuals claiming Universal Credit in Midlothian.

Scottish Borders Summary

1. In October 2021 the claimant count for Scottish Borders was 2,565. Of these
 - a. 475 were 16-24 year olds
 - b. 1,375 were 25-49 year olds
 - c. 715 were 50 or older
2. The overall claimant count in Scottish Borders is now 38% higher than it was in February 2020.
3. In September 2021 there were 1,590 male claimants and 1,110 female claimants. This represents an increase of 42% for males and 50% for females since February 2020.
4. The Scottish Borders ward with the greatest claimant count is Galashiels and District with 515 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 5.2%.
5. The Scottish Borders ward with the lowest claimant count is Tweeddale West 170 180 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 2.7%.
6. Skills Development Scotland Participation Measure indicates that there are 82 16 and 17 year olds not participating
7. In September 2021 there were 3,328 working individuals claiming Universal Credit in Scottish Borders.

West Lothian Summary

1. In October 2021 the claimant count for West Lothian was 4,310. Of these
 - a. 850 were 16-24 year olds
 - b. 2,550 were 25-49 year olds
 - c. 905 were 50 or older
2. The overall claimant count in West Lothian is now 26% higher than it was in February 2020.
3. In September 2021 there were 2,760 male claimants and 1,925 female claimants. This represents an increase of 40% for males and 32% for females since February 2020.
4. The West Lothian ward with the largest claimant count is Whitburn and Blackburn with 725 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 5.3%.
5. The West Lothian Ward with the lowest claimant count is Linlithgow with 185 claimants in October 2021 and a claimant rate of 1.8%
6. Skills Development Scotland Participation Measure indicates that there are 145 16 and 17 year olds not participating
7. In September 2021 there were 6,115 working individuals claiming Universal Credit in West Lothian

Edinburgh and South East Regional Claimant Count October 2021 Full Update

Introduction

Institute of Employment Studies

On the 16th November Institute of Employment Studies (IES) published a briefing note¹ that looked at the latest national data from the Labour Force Survey. This covers the period July to September 2021 and their report is supplemented by analysis from the ONS Vacancy Survey, which collects employer data on open vacancies and includes data up to October 2021.

The briefing note shows a continued improving picture in the labour market, with unemployment falling towards pre-crisis levels and employment increasing. New labour market flows data shows nearly 2.2 million people started new jobs in the summer (July to September) – the highest level and rate (7%) in at least twenty years, driven by record flows into work as well as record levels of job-to-job moves.

Of concern is the fact that vacancies have continued to grow strongly across all industries, and they comment that labour supply simply cannot keep up with demand, which in turn is holding back growth and adding to inflation. A key cause of these problems is far lower labour market participation than on pre-crisis trends – with a participation ‘gap’ on their estimates of 950,000 people. They go on to say that around half a million of this ‘gap’ is explained by fewer older people in the labour market, particularly older women. New data on employment for disadvantaged groups also presents a worrying picture, with employment gaps either growing or remaining wide for disabled people, ethnic minorities, those aged over 50 and young people outside education. Combined with weaker than expected data on long-term unemployment, there are growing signs that the recovery is not being felt by those further from work.

On the 20th October IES published a report entitled *A Better Future: Transforming jobs and skills for young people post-pandemic*². Whilst this is based on research in England the paper does focus on disadvantaged young people and will likely have relevance in Scotland. They identified disadvantaged young people as 16 to 24 years old and defined as those already or at risk of being not in education, employment or training (NEET), including those with few or no qualifications, little work experience, with a health condition or disability, or care leaver. They found that

- areas of high deprivation had higher rates of out-of-work Universal Credit receipt among young people than the national average
- There has been a significant contraction in the size of the youth labour market, with unprecedented numbers of young people staying in or moving into full-time education. This

¹ https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/IES%20briefing%20-%20Labour%20Market%20Statistics%20November%202021.pdf?utm_source=IES+emailing+list&utm_campaign=de9cb1dc2e-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_05_14_03_45_COPY_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f11585705b-de9cb1dc2e-364968444

² https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/A%20Better%20Future%20-%20Transforming%20jobs%20and%20skills%20for%20young%20people%20post-pandemic_2.pdf

is contributing to employer difficulties in filling entry level jobs, especially where those roles are not being advertised flexibly (for example in ways that can fit around studies).

- The pandemic has intensified the trend towards increased polarisation in the youth labour market between high- and low-skill jobs, leading to fewer 'stepping stone' mid-skill jobs and more young people in insecure and part-time work.
- Long-term unemployment among young people has risen, with 170,000 young people unemployed for more than six months, and those with a health condition, a disability, or are young parents most likely to be among this group.
- The fall in employment rates has been four times greater for young Black people than for young white people, while the fall for young Asian people has been nearly three times greater.
- The survey carried out for the research found that a lack of work experience and connections were the key barriers preventing young people from entering good jobs, as well as a lack of training.

Fraser of Allender Reports

The FAI published a report that looked at the implications for the Scottish economy of the Budget³. They suggest that the forecast economic outlook for Scotland continues to track closely the outlook for the UK as a whole. UK economic activity is forecast to return to pre-pandemic levels in the first quarter of 2022, whilst the Scottish economy is forecast to return to pre-pandemic levels by the second quarter. Unemployment is now forecast by the OBR to peak this year at 5.2% in the UK, consistent with the Scottish Fiscal Commission's forecast of 5.4% for Scotland.

Business Insights and Conditions Survey

On the 12th November the latest (Wave 42 and publication number 30) Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) were released for Scotland⁴. The key findings from this report are as follows;

- In the period 18 October to 31 October 2021, the share of businesses 'currently trading' was estimated at 99.2%. The share of businesses reporting that they were fully trading was estimated at 94.9%, with 4.3% of businesses reporting that they were partially trading.
- Following the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme on 30th September 2021, it was estimated that 74.0% of furloughed workers returned to work on the same number of hours, with 10.5% of furloughed workers returning to work on reduced hours.
- In Wave 42, 37.6% of businesses reported experiencing a shortage of workers - rising to 56.6% of businesses in the Health & Social Work industry sector, and 52.7% of businesses in the Accommodation & Food Services industry sector.
- In Wave 42, 65.3% of businesses reported that the shortage of workers has resulted in employees working increased hours, and 41.0% of businesses reported that they have been unable to meet demands due to a shortage of workers.

Office for National Statistics

On the 12th October ONS released data that looked at the national UK labour market⁵. This reported that:

³ <https://fraserofallender.org/uk-autumn-budget-2021-implications-for-scottish-budget-2022-23/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/bics-weighted-scotland-estimates-data-to-wave-42/>

⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/october2021>

- The number of payroll employees showed another monthly increase, up 207,000 to a record 29.2 million in September 2021, returning to pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic (February 2020) levels.
- The number of job vacancies in July to September 2021 was a record high of 1,102,000, an increase of 318,000 from its pre-pandemic (January to March 2020) level; this was the second consecutive month that the three-month average has risen over one million. All industry sectors were above or equal to their January to March 2020 pre-pandemic levels in July to September 2021, with Accommodation and food service activities increasing the most, by nearly 50,000 (59%).

Overall Claimant Count

Turning now to look at the claimant count. On the 16th November NOMIS released claimant count data for October. Looking in detail at the claimant count, it can be seen that since February 2020 whilst every area of the UK experienced an increase in the number of claimants, the peak claimant count was recorded at different times depending on the geography, the gender and the age of the claimant.

Table 1 looks at the 12 regions and countries of the UK and indicates

- claimant count February 2020
- the month that the peak claimant count was recorded and what that was
- the percentage increase between February 2020 and this 'peak claimant count'
- the claimant count in September 2021 and October 2021
- the percentage fall between 'peak claimant count' and September 2021
- the percentage fall between September 2021 and October 2021

From Table 1 it can be seen that the North West and Northern Ireland hit their highest claimant count very early in the pandemic in May 2020. Compare this to the West Midlands where the peak claimant count didn't materialise until February 2021. The majority of regions and countries hit a peak in August 2020.

In London and the South East there had been a 159% and 152% increase in the claimant count respectively. Compare this to the North East where the claimant count 'only' increased by 64%. The table also indicates that the claimant count has fallen by between 20% and 35% since the peak. Scotland has seen the claimant count fall by 33% which is the second fastest fall across the UK. This trend continues with the most recent figures where Scotland recorded a 3% fall between September and October which is the highest recorded across the countries and regions of the UK.

Table 1: National Claimant Count Picture

Area	Feb 2020 Count	Claimant Count Peak	Sep 2021 Count	Oct 2021 Count	Percentage Change		
					Feb 2020 to Peak	Peak to Oct21	Sep21 to Oct 21
United Kingdom	1,255,770	2,688,110 (Aug20)	2,032,690	1,996,830	114%	-26%	-2%
East	89,890	213,715 (Aug20)	154,240	151,380	138%	-29%	-2%
East Midlands	80,915	170,220 (Aug20)	126,750	125,045	110%	-27%	-1%
London	184,765	478,165 (Sep20)	387,505	381,930	159%	-20%	-1%
North East	75,560	123,720 (Aug20)	93,705	91,470	64%	-26%	-2%
North West	167,055	326,490 (May20)	250,070	245,360	95%	-25%	-2%

Northern Ireland	29,910	63,860 (May20)	47,205	46,515	114%	-27%	-1%
Scotland	114,605	224,840 (Aug20)	155,505	150,220	96%	-33%	-3%
South East	119,620	300,975 (Aug20)	216,375	212,975	152%	-29%	-2%
South West	75,595	180,915 (Aug20)	119,645	117,955	139%	-35%	-1%
Wales	60,375	118,905 (Aug20)	84,325	82,930	97%	-30%	-2%
West Midlands	141,095	269,985 (Feb21)	218,340	215,265	91%	-20%	-1%
Yorkshire & Humber	116,390	219,515 (Nov20)	179,020	175,785	89%	-20%	-2%

Source: NOMIS 17/11/2021

Table 2 looks specifically at the situation in Scotland and focuses on Scottish Local Authorities. Once again it is clear that different areas peaked at different times ranging from a May 2020 peak for East Lothian and Argyll and Bute, through to a February 2021 peak for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Except for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire most Scottish Local Authorities recorded their highest claimant counts around summer 2020.

Table 2: Claimant Count - Scottish LAs

Area	Feb 2020	Peak Month and Count	September 2021	October 2021	Percentage Change		
					Feb 20 to peak	Peak to Oct 21	Sep21-Oct21
Aberdeen City	4,150	9,725 (Feb21)	7,100	6,845	134%	-30%	-4%
Aberdeenshire	2,975	6,655 (Feb21)	4,615	4,450	124%	-33%	-4%
Angus	2,040	3,985 (Aug20)	2,810	2,645	95%	-34%	-6%
Argyll and Bute	1,530	3,290 (May20)	1,925	1,875	115%	-43%	-3%
City of Edinburgh	7,105	18,840 (Aug20)	12,745	12,300	165%	-35%	-3%
Clackmannanshire	1,390	2,255 (Aug20)	1,525	1,525	62%	-32%	0%
Dumfries and Galloway	2,950	5,115 (May20)	3,445	3,345	73%	-35%	-3%
Dundee City	4,530	7,490 (Aug20)	5,640	5,350	65%	-29%	-5%
East Ayrshire	3,685	6,280 (Aug20)	4,450	4,325	70%	-31%	-3%
E. Dunbartonshire	1,230	2,985 (Aug20)	1,885	1,790	143%	-40%	-5%
East Lothian	1,765	3,680 (May 20)	2,405	2,340	108%	-36%	-3%
East Renfrewshire	950	2,415 (Jul20)	1,430	1,380	154%	-43%	-3%
Falkirk	3,300	6,335 (Jul20)	4,340	4,260	92%	-33%	-2%
Fife	8,765	15,840 (Aug20)	11,220	10,705	81%	-32%	-5%
Glasgow City	20,055	38,205 (Aug20)	28,640	27,970	91%	-27%	-2%
Highland	3,715	8,430 (Jul20)	4,650	4,360	127%	-48%	-6%
Inverclyde	2,255	3,275 (Jul20)	2,495	2,430	45%	-26%	-3%
Midlothian	1,470	3,145 (Aug20)	2,065	1,955	114%	-38%	-5%
Moray	1,550	3,030 (Aug20)	2,080	2,010	95%	-34%	-3%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	465	880 (Aug20)	495	490	89%	-44%	-1%
North Ayrshire	4,600	7,290 (Jul20)	4,915	4,850	58%	-33%	-1%
North Lanarkshire	8,230	15,870 (Aug20)	10,795	10,480	93%	-34%	-3%
Orkney Islands	195	420 (Aug20)	245	250	115%	-40%	2%
Perth and Kinross	1,865	4,595 (Aug20)	3,030	2,875	146%	-37%	-5%
Renfrewshire	4,025	7,780 (Aug20)	5,075	4,780	93%	-39%	-6%
Scottish Borders	1,860	3,835 (Jul20)	2,655	2,565	106%	-33%	-3%

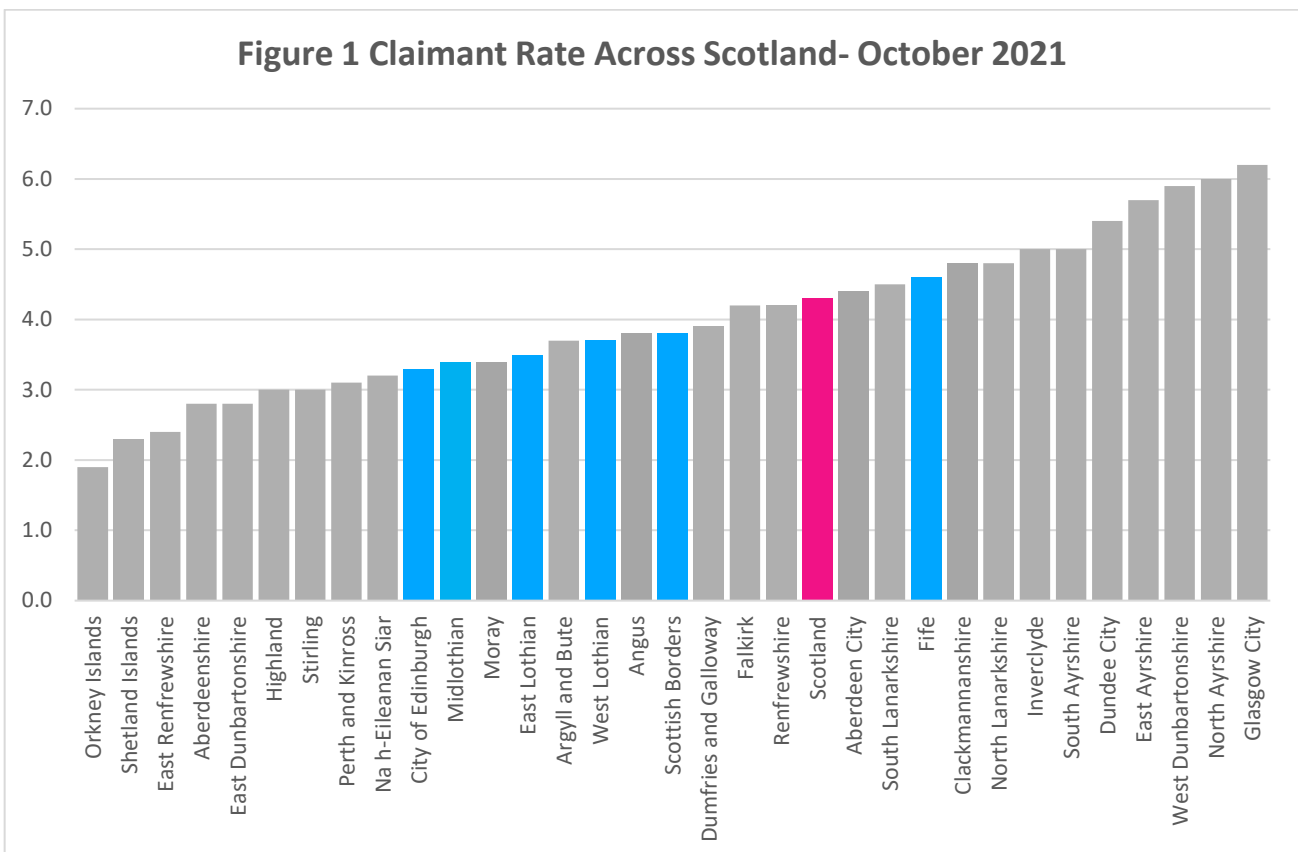
Shetland Islands	265	545 (Sep20)	315	320	106%	-41%	2%
South Ayrshire	2,790	4,960 (Aug20)	3,360	3,290	78%	-34%	-2%
South Lanarkshire	7,015	13,725 (Aug20)	9,355	9,055	96%	-34%	-3%
Stirling	1,540	3,125 (Jul20)	1,835	1,815	103%	-42%	-1%
W. Dunbartonshire	2,930	4,865 (Jul20)	3,400	3,285	66%	-32%	-3%
West Lothian	3,425	6,800 (Aug20)	4,555	4,310	99%	-37%	-5%
Scotland	114,605	224,840 (Aug20)	155,505	150,220	96%	-33%	-3%

Source: NOMIS 17/11/2021

The data highlights that whilst Scotland recorded a 96% increase in the claimant count, this varies from a 45% increase in Inverclyde through to a 165% increase in Edinburgh. Generally, those that recorded the higher increases have also recorded relatively large falls in the claimant count. For example, whilst Edinburgh recorded a 165% increase between February 2020 and August 2020, a fall of 35% has been recorded since then.

The most recent month to month change indicates that whilst Scotland as a whole saw the claimant count fall by 3% between September and October 7 Local Authorities recorded lower falls than the Scottish average, 12 recorded falls of 3% and 11 saw their claimant count fall faster than Scotland as a whole. Two Local Authorities (Shetland and Orkney) saw the claimant count *increase* between September and October. For the City Region 3 Local Authorities (Fife, West Lothian and Midlothian) recorded month to month falls of 5% and the others recorded falls of 3%, the same as the Scottish average.

Figure 1 below looks at the claimant rate by Local Authority across Scotland as a whole. From this it can be seen that, except for Fife, every Local Authority in the City Region has a rate that is lower than the Scottish average.



Source: NOMIS 17/11/2021

Gender Profile

Turning now to look at the gender profile of the claimants in the City Region. Tables 3 and 4 look at the number of claimants of each gender as of February 2020, and compares this with the peak claimant month for each gender and for each LA. It then looks at what has happened between September and October 2021.

Table 3: Change in Male Claimant Count Split Across the City Region

Date	City of Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian
February 2020	4,435	1,005	5,475	865	1,120	1,970
Peak Count	11,530	2,145	9,770	1,970	2,275	4,225
Peak Month	Aug-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	May-20	Jul-20	Aug-20
September 2021	7,990	1,390	6,815	1,260	1,565	2,685
October 2021	7,670	1,370	6,525	1,185	1,500	2,540
% Change Feb 20 to Peak	160%	113%	78%	128%	103%	114%
% Change Peak to Oct 21	-33%	-36%	-33%	-40%	-34%	-40%
% Change Sep 21 to Oct 21	-4%	-1%	-4%	-6%	-4%	-5%

Source: NOMIS 22/11/2021

From Table 3 we can see that the male claimant count increased most for males in Edinburgh - 160% increase between February 2020 and when it peaked in August 2020. In Fife the increase was 78% which was the lowest increase for males in the city region. In terms of how the claimant count for males has decreased since the 2020 peaks, Midlothian has not only recorded the largest fall overall, it has also logged the largest month to month fall from September to October 2021.

Table 4 looks at the situation for female claimants. Again, the claimant count in Edinburgh recorded the highest percentage increase for females and Fife recorded the lowest increase. As with males the female claimant count in Midlothian has fallen by the largest percentage since the 2020 peak, but it is West Lothian that has show the greatest month to month falls from September to October 2021.

Table 4: Change in Female Claimant Count Split Across the City Region

Date	City of Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian
February 2020	2,665	760	3,290	605	740	1,455
March 2020	7,315	1,510	6,070	1,245	1,585	2,785
April 2020	Aug-20	Aug-20	Aug-20	Mar-21	Aug-20	Aug-20
September 2021	4,755	1,015	4,405	810	1,085	1,875
October 2021	4,625	970	4,180	770	1,065	1,770
% Change Feb 20-Oct 21	174%	99%	84%	106%	114%	91%
% Change Peak to Oct 21	-37%	-36%	-31%	-38%	-33%	-36%
% Change Sep 21 to Oct 21	-3%	-4%	-5%	-5%	-2%	-6%

Source: NOMIS 22/11/2021

Age Profile

The age breakdown of claimants is often the analysis that gathers the most interest, as it can provide an insight into whether there may be a particular need for projects that focus on demands from different age groups. In this month's report there is slightly more emphasis on the 16 and 17 year old cohort and discussion around additional data to better understand what is happening in this group as data based on benefits will underrepresent this age group.

As with the data looked at already where there had been differences in when the claimant count peaked, either by geography or by gender, Table 5 highlights that this is also the case in terms of age bands. The number of 16-24 year olds claiming peaked in July 2020 and this was the case across the region with the exception of West Lothian. For 25-49 year olds the peak in the claimant count was slightly more mixed with East Lothian, Midlothian and Scottish Borders seeing the claimant count peak in May 2020 and the other authorities seeing it peak in August 2020. The situation for those aged 50 or over is slightly different again. For this age group 3 of the 6 local authorities didn't reach a peak until February 2021.

Table 5: Change in Claimants by Age Across the City Region (All)

16-24 Year Olds		Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	City Region
Feb 2020		1,065	315	1,740	325	415	735	4,595
Peak Count		3,290	795	3,555	695	885	1,570	10,770
Peak Month		July 20	July 20	July 20	July 20	July 20	Aug 20	July 20
Sep 2021		1,830	440	2,160	385	520	950	6,285
Oct 2021		1,705	410	2,015	365	475	850	5,820
% Change	Feb 20 to Peak	203%	152%	104%	114%	113%	114%	134%
	Peak to Oct 21	-47%	-48%	-43%	-47%	-46%	-46%	-45%
	Sep 21 to Oct 21	-7%	-7%	-7%	-5%	-9%	-11%	-7%
25-49 Year Olds		Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	City Region
February 2020		4,310	1,020	4,990	865	975	1,965	14,125
Peak Count		11,715	2,100	8,775	1,865	1,960	3,940	30,195
Peak Month		Aug 20	May 20	Aug 20	May 20	May 20	Aug 20	Aug 20
September 2021		7,925	1,390	6,430	1,250	1,395	2,645	21,035
October 2021		7,700	1,375	6,170	1,170	1,375	2,550	20,340
% Change	Feb 20 to Peak	172%	106%	76%	116%	101%	101%	114%
	Peak to Oct 21	-34%	-35%	-30%	-37%	-30%	-35%	-33%
	Sep 21 to Oct 21	-3%	-1%	-4%	-6%	-1%	-4%	-3%
50 years and over		Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	City Region
February 2020		1,730	430	2,030	280	470	725	5,665
Peak Count		4,115	885	3,565	675	1,020	1,495	11,540
Peak Month		Feb 21	Feb 21	Aug 20	Feb 21	May 20	Aug 20	Feb 21
September 2021		2,990	575	2,635	435	735	965	8,335
October 2021		2,895	555	2,520	420	715	905	8,010
% Change	Feb 20 to Peak	138%	106%	76%	141%	117%	106%	104%
	Peak to Oct 21	-30%	-37%	-29%	-38%	-30%	-39%	-30%
	Sep 21 to Oct 21	-3%	-3%	-4%	-3%	-3%	-6%	-4%

Source: NOMIS 17/11/2021

Looking at the increase and decrease statistics, for nearly all Local Authorities the claimant count for 16-24 year olds increased the most. The two exceptions were Midlothian and Scottish Borders. In Midlothian, whilst 16-24 year old claimants increased by 114% between February 2020 and July 2020, claimants aged 50 or over increased by 141% between February 2020 and February 2021. In Scottish Borders 16-24 year old claimants increased by 113% between February 2020 and July 2020 compared to a 117% increase in the claimant count for those aged 50 or over.

In terms of falls, the claimant count across the region has fallen by 45% for 16-24 year olds since the peak, for 25-49 year olds it has fallen by 33% and for those over the age of 50 it has fallen by 30%. Again, there are differences depending on the Local Authority that is examined. For example, the number of 16-24 year old claimants in East Lothian has fallen by 48% compared to a 37% fall in the number of claimants aged over 50 in Edinburgh.

One thing to bear in mind is that this is based the *claimant* count, and not everyone who is out of work is claiming. Some people could have left a job and are expecting to find a job relatively quickly and therefore don't anticipate being out of work long enough to make it necessary to claim support. For others they might not be claiming as they are actively excluded from the support.

One group where this exclusion applies is for 16 and 17 year olds and in general means-tested out of work benefits are not available to single people aged under 18 who don't have children. However, they may be able to get Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit for a short time if they are forced to live away from their parents or will find it very hard to live without benefits. As a result, one would anticipate that there are a small number of clients aged 16 and 17 who will feature in the claimant count figures from NOMIS. Table 5 below looks at the claimant count figures for 16 and 17 year olds across the city region.

Table 6 Claimant Count for 16-17 and 18-21 year olds (October 2021)

	All categories: Age 16+	Aged 16-17	Aged 18-21
City of Edinburgh	12,300	35	815
East Lothian	2,340	5	240
Fife	10,705	60	1,170
Midlothian	1,955	15	195
Scottish Borders	2,565	25	290
West Lothian	4,310	35	485
City Region	34,175	175	3,200

Source: NOMIS 19/11/2021

Although some 16 and 17 year olds will feature in the claimant count, the majority won't so where else can we find figures on 16 and 17 year olds who are not working? One option is school leaver data from the Local Authority and /or Skills Development Scotland. Basically, figures on how many people are leaving school without a positive destination.

The table below is directly from the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) website. SDS provide data on the Annual Participation Measure and publish the data on online. There are details on the site regarding the methodology they use and the manner in which they gain information on young people and what they are doing. The number participating is based on those recorded as:

- In Employment, Education or Training & Other Development.

Whilst Not Participating is based on those recorded as:

- Unemployed Seeking and Unemployed not Seeking.

Unconfirmed reflects those that they have been unable to determine what they are doing and unsurprisingly increases in line with the age- In Edinburgh for example only 0.1% of young people were marked as unconfirmed at age 16, at age 19 this had increased to 8.9%.

From this, it is clear that a small number of 16 year olds are inactive or not participating – in total across the region this came to just over 100 so the claimant count data would appear not to be missing many 16 year olds.

Those who are aged 17 are likely to provide the majority of the 16-17 year olds that are missing from the claimant count. Overall, across the region, there are 753 17 year olds who are not participating. Compare the SDS Participation figures with those from the claimant count and we can see that whilst the claimant count indicates 175 16 and 17 year old claimants, the SDS Participation Measure is suggesting around 850 across the region. Table 7 below breaks this down by Local Authority and Age.

Table 7: Annual Participation Measure 2021

		Age			
		16	17	18	19
Edinburgh	Number in Cohort	3,367	3,463	3,298	3,340
	Not Participating or Unconfirmed	20	194	346	444
East Lothian	Number in Cohort	1,072	1,090	949	1,049
	Not Participating or Unconfirmed	8	41	82	118
Fife	Number in Cohort	3,874	3,750	3,653	3,718
	Not Participating or Unconfirmed	39	278	471	558
Midlothian	Number in Cohort	956	925	912	897
	Not Participating or Unconfirmed	8	42	93	89
Scottish Borders	Number in Cohort	1,209	1,180	1,113	1,175
	Not Participating or Unconfirmed	12	70	94	118
West Lothian	Number in Cohort	2,124	2,062	1,974	2,076
	Not Participating or Unconfirmed	17	128	213	359

Source: <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/publications-statistics/statistics/annual-participation-measure/>

Another option to consider is the Labour Force Survey. However this brings its own complications.

- Firstly, it is a survey so will have a margin of error on the data reported. This margin of error reduces when you look at overall figures – worklessness in the UK for example - but increases when you need to look at specific groups (age, ethnicity, sector of work, etc.) or more localised geographies such as a Local Authorities.
- Secondly, whilst the data is published on a particular date, the survey has taken place over the last 12 months so that some of the sample may be almost a year out of date. In a normal situation, where month to month changes tend to be more gradual, this may not be an issue. However changes recorded over the last 18 months have been anything but gradual.
- Thirdly for the more localised data there isn't the ability to break down by age group.
- Finally, the data publication tends to lag behind other published data sets.

Bearing in mind these caveats, is it still worth examining the Labour Force Survey? As it is one of the few to give any indication of out of work 16 and 17 year olds the answer would have to be yes, but the limitations should always be born in mind and, one would suggest, the data should be used to try and put the claimant count data in some context rather than as a stand alone figure.

Table 8 below is from the Labour Force Survey and represents the position in Scotland, the most localised geography for age, as at June 2021, which is the most recent data available. The columns entitled 'conf' are the confidence intervals which accompany any sample survey such as the LFS and

this means that the statisticians are 95% confident that the figure in the real population will be within the parameters set by the confidence intervals.

Table 8 Economic Activity from the Labour Force Survey (July 2020-June 2021 data set)

Economic Activity	Age 16 and over		Age 16 to 19		Age 20 to 24	
	number	conf	number	conf	number	conf
All persons	4,475,800	60,900	219,600	16,300	331,900	24,100
Economically Active	2,693,200	47,200	79,100	9,800	247,200	20,800
Employed	2,566,200	46,100	65,900	8,900	219,900	19,600
Unemployed	127,000	10,300	13,300	4,000	27,300	6,900
Economically inactive	1,782,600	38,400	140,400	13,000	84,700	12,200

Source: NOMIS 19/11/2021

The table suggests that in Scotland as a whole there are 79,100 Economically Active 16-19 year olds. Of these 65,900 are employed and 13,300 are unemployed but looking for work. In addition, there are 140,400 who are economically inactive⁶.

The major limitation for trying to find a better data set for 16 and 17 year olds is the Labour Force Surveys treatment of students as economically inactive. As a result it would be very difficult to arrive at a figure who are, in the practical sense, economically inactive and needing support.

How does this compare with the data from the claimant count in June 2021? According to the data published on NOMIS in June 2021 there were 179,055 claimants in Scotland regardless of age and 34,060 who were aged 16-24 years of age. Comparing this to the Labour Force Survey we can see that for all ages the Labour Force Survey indicated that in Scotland the unemployed figure was 127,000 – undercounting by 52,000. Even if the confidence interval is applied the figure was still 40,000 below what was actually recorded. One reason for this is likely to be the fact that the data published in June 2021 is based on a survey carried out for 12 months prior to the publication date.

For the following reasons one would argue that the Labour Force Survey is not useful as a source to supplement the claimant count;

- Limited data available at a Local Authority level
- Time lag in publication- June 2021 is currently the most recent.
- Confidence intervals are wide at a Scottish level and become even wider the more we drill down.
- The manner in which students are included as economically inactive. This is particularly problematic as the age group where additional data is needed, tends to contain high number of students.
- The annual survey approach which generally means data from up to 12 months prior to the publication date is reported on.

⁶ ONS have a specific definition of economically inactive- as being people aged 16 and over without a job who have not sought work in the last four weeks and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks. According to ONS the main economically inactive groups are “...students, people looking after family and home, long-term sick and disabled, temporarily sick and disabled, retired people and discouraged workers.” This last group, discouraged workers, is seen by ONS as a person who is eligible for employment and can work, but who is currently unemployed and has not attempted to find employment in the last four weeks.
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/aguidetolabourmarketstatistics>

One final option to give an indication of the number of people aged 16-17 year old requiring services, is to look at who is using the services currently. From Caselink the MIS system used in Edinburgh and East Lothian⁷ it is possible to see that overall, there are currently, 356 active engagements with 16 or 17 year olds. Of these 60.1% are stage 1, 10.4% are at stage 2, 15.5% are at stage 3. This will include some who SDS see as participating through the Modern Apprenticeship programme or on training courses run by the funded providers.

Overall, it would appear that the SDS data provides a more accurate picture of 16 and 17 year olds who require support than the claimant count. Going forward this will be added to the report.

Ward Profile

In Table 9 it can be seen that, generally, in East Lothian, the claimant count peaked in the summer of 2020. The one area where this was not the case was Preston, Seton and Gosford. The wards with lower claimant rates pre-pandemic had the lowest claimant rates in the county in October 2021. North Berwick coastal recorded the largest percentage increase in the claimant count (+253%) but has also recorded a 48% fall between August 2020 and October 2021.

Table 9 East Lothian Claimant Count by Ward

2017 electoral wards	Feb-20	Peak		Sep-21	Oct-21	Claimant Rate		% Increase	% Decrease
		Count	Month			Feb-20	Oct-21		
Dunbar & East Linton	200	460	May-20	275	270	2.3	3	130	-41
Haddington and Lammermuir	260	555	May-20	355	350	2.3	3.1	113	-37
Musselburgh	455	930	Aug-20	660	615	3.6	4.9	104	-34
North Berwick Coastal	85	300	Aug-20	165	155	1.2	2.1	253	-48
Preston, Seton and Gosford	310	630	Feb-21	415	415	2.8	3.7	103	-34
Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry	450	865	May-20	570	535	3.2	3.8	92	-38

Source: NOMIS 19/11/2021

The Midlothian position is presented in Table 10. As with East Lothian, wards with a high claimant rate in February 2020 are still the wards with a high claimant rate in October 2021.

Table 10 Midlothian Claimant Count by Ward

2017 electoral wards	Feb-20	Peak		Sep-21	Oct-21	Claimant Rate		% Increase	% Decrease
		Count	Month			Feb-20	Oct-21		
Bonnyrigg	180	475	Mar-21	310	290	1.6	2.5	164	-39
Dalkeith	295	645	May-20	420	390	3.4	4.4	119	-40
Midlothian East	255	575	May-20	395	365	2.6	3.7	125	-37
Midlothian South	300	565	May-20	390	355	3.4	3.9	88	-37

⁷ Also used elsewhere in the City Region either as part of Intensive Family Support project or because the project delivering in Edinburgh and East Lothian is also delivering elsewhere.

Midlothian West	210	490	Aug-20	285	265	2.2	2.8	133	-46
Penicuik	225	475	Aug-20	305	290	2.7	3.5	111	-39

Source: NOMIS 19/11/2021

In West Lothian the claimant count peaked in August 2020 with the exception of one ward - Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh- where it peaked a couple of months earlier in May 2020. One thing to note in West Lothian is that, with 2 exceptions, the claimant increase is *relatively* similar across the authority ranging from an 87% increase through to 120%. There are two 'outliers' which saw a rise of 148% and 134% and these are Linlithgow and Livingston North. As with other areas the wards where the claimant count was higher to start with tend to be those that recorded a lower percentage increase and have so far recorded a lower decrease.

Table 11 West Lothian Claimant Count by Ward

2017 electoral wards	Feb-20	Peak		Sep-21	Oct-21	Claimant Rate		% Increase	% Decrease
		Count	Month			Feb-20	Oct-21		
Armadale & Blackridge	310	610	Aug-20	400	380	3.2	3.9	97	-38
Bathgate	470	945	Aug-20	625	590	3	3.8	101	-38
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	365	760	May-20	490	460	3	3.7	108	-39
East Livingston and East Calder	380	835	Aug-20	545	480	2.7	3.3	120	-43
Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley	405	765	Aug-20	540	515	4	5.1	89	-33
Linlithgow	135	335	Aug-20	200	185	1.3	1.8	148	-45
Livingston North	325	760	Aug-20	500	435	2.1	2.8	134	-43
Livingston South	450	900	Aug-20	600	540	2.9	3.4	100	-40
Whitburn & Blackburn	585	1,095	Aug-20	780	725	4.3	5.3	87	-34

Source: NOMIS 12/10/2021

Table 12 looks at the position in Fife. Firstly, it is clear that July and August last year was the period when the claimant count was at its highest in the Kingdom with the exception of St Andrews where it didn't peak until January 2021. Buckhaven, Methill and Wemyss villages is the ward that had the highest claimant rate pre pandemic and has the highest claimant rate in October. As with other areas where there was a high claimant rate to start with, the increase was relatively low and the decrease since the claimant count peaked is relatively low. More positive is that for this ward the number of claimants has fallen by 275 since July 2020.

Table 12 Fife Claimant Count by Ward

2017 electoral wards	Feb-20	Peak		Sep-21	Oct-21	Claimant Rate		% Increase	% Decrease
		Count	Month			Feb-20	Oct-21		
Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages	900	1,320	Jul-20	1,080	1,045	8.2	9.5	47	-21%
Burntisland, Kinghorn and W. Kirkcaldy	380	650	Jul-20	465	445	4.2	5.0	71	-32%
Cowdenbeath	610	1,110	Jul-20	815	770	4.5	5.6	82	-31%
Cupar	210	445	Aug-20	275	265	2.5	3.1	112	-40%
Dunfermline Central	395	745	Aug-20	535	510	3.4	4.4	89	-32%

Dunfermline North	415	690	Jul-20	465	420	3.9	3.9	66	-39%
Dunfermline South	450	885	Jul-20	640	595	3	3.9	97	-33%
East Neuk and Landward	185	440	Aug-20	260	250	2.6	3.6	138	-43%
Glenrothes Central & Thornton	370	665	Jul-20	495	455	3.9	4.8	80	-32%
Glenrothes North, Leslie and Markinch	355	655	Aug-20	435	375	3.1	3.3	85	-43%
Glenrothes West & Kinglassie	350	700	Aug-20	485	415	3.5	4.3	100	-41%
Howe of Fife and Tay Coast	175	410	Aug-20	270	260	2.2	3.3	134	-37%
Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay	230	540	Aug-20	320	295	2.2	2.8	135	-45%
Kirkcaldy Central	580	1,000	Aug-20	825	800	6.6	9.2	72	-20%
Kirkcaldy East	640	1,055	Aug-20	835	800	6.9	8.6	65	-24%
Kirkcaldy North	390	685	Jul-20	490	455	4	4.7	76	-34%
Leven, Kennoway and Largo	495	830	Jul-20	585	565	4.2	4.8	68	-32%
Lochgelly, Cardenden & Benarty	685	1,150	Jul-20	890	805	5.9	6.9	68	-30%
Rosyth	305	610	Aug-20	415	350	3	3.4	100	-43%
St Andrews	105	255	Jan-21	175	165	0.7	1.1	143	-35%
Tay Bridgehead	190	410	Aug-20	235	220	1.9	2.3	116	-46%
West Fife and Coastal Villages	355	680	Jul-20	470	440	3.7	4.5	92	-35%

Source: NOMIS 19/11/2021

Again Fife, through the St Andrews ward, indicates that the areas which had lower claimant count to start with, recorded the highest percentage increase. Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay has seen the claimant count fall by 45% since August 2020 and the actual claimant count is now, October 2021, 'only' 65 individuals higher than it was pre-pandemic.

Table 13 looks at the situation in Edinburgh. Forth ward is the area where the claimant rate is currently highest at 5.8% and there are currently 1,230 people claiming. On a positive note, this is a fall of 29% since the claimant count peaked in this ward in March 2021. Edinburgh is slightly at odds with the other areas in so far as the wards reached peak claimant count over an 11 month period. For example, 1 ward reached its highest claimant count in May 2020, for 10 of the wards it was August 2020, 1 peaked in November 2020 and for 5 wards the peak wasn't reached until 2021 – 3 in February and 2 in March.

Six of seventeen wards in the city recorded claimant count rises of over 200% - In the other 5 LAs only North Berwick Coastal recorded a claimant count increase over 200%. Whilst still higher than it was pre-pandemic 4 of these wards now have a claimant rate of below 2%. To put this in context across the whole City Region there is only 2 other wards with a claimant rate below 2%. Based on the Edinburgh data it would appear therefore that the areas that experienced the worst economic shock when the pandemic began, have recovered fastest and are approaching more 'normal' levels. As seen elsewhere it is the areas where claimant counts were higher to start with that are looking more sluggish at recovering.

Table 13 Edinburgh Claimant Count by Ward

2017 electoral wards	Feb-20	Peak		Sep-21	Oct-21	Claimant Rate		% Increase	% Decrease
		Count	Month			Feb 20	Oct 21		
Almond	495	1,160	Aug-20	785	740	2.2	3.2	134	-36
City Centre	490	1270	Feb-21	920	890	1.8	3.3	159	-30

Colinton/Fairmilehead	175	515	Aug-20	340	315	1.1	2.1	194	-39
Corstorphine/Murrayfield	120	390	May-20	265	240	0.8	1.6	225	-38
Craigentenny/Duddingston	550	1490	Aug-20	1,000	910	2.7	4.4	171	-39
Drum Brae/Gyle	225	695	Nov-20	460	465	1.5	3.0	209	-33
Forth	720	1735	Mar-21	1,280	1,230	3.4	5.8	141	-29
Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	205	635	Mar-21	440	415	1.2	2.4	210	-35
Inverleith	220	775	Aug-20	435	415	1	1.8	252	-46
Leith	630	1405	Aug-20	955	895	3.5	4.9	123	-36
Leith Walk	550	1605	Aug-20	1,070	1,020	2	3.6	192	-36
Liberton/Gilmerton	540	1,485	Feb-21	1,060	1,005	2.4	4.5	175	-32
Morningside	150	590	Aug-20	360	295	0.6	1.3	293	-50
Pentland Hills	625	1,380	Feb-21	1,020	940	3	4.5	121	-32
Portobello/Craigmillar	625	1555	Aug-20	1,070	1,030	3.2	5.0	149	-34
Sighthill/Gorgie	550	1500	Aug-20	1,080	995	2.2	3.9	173	-34
Southside/Newington	230	800	Aug-20	545	500	0.8	1.7	248	-38

Source: **NOMIS 19/11/2021**

Table 14 looks at Scottish Borders. Again, areas that recorded higher increases appear to be ones where the higher claimant count falls have also been recorded.

Table 14 Scottish Borders Claimant Count by Ward

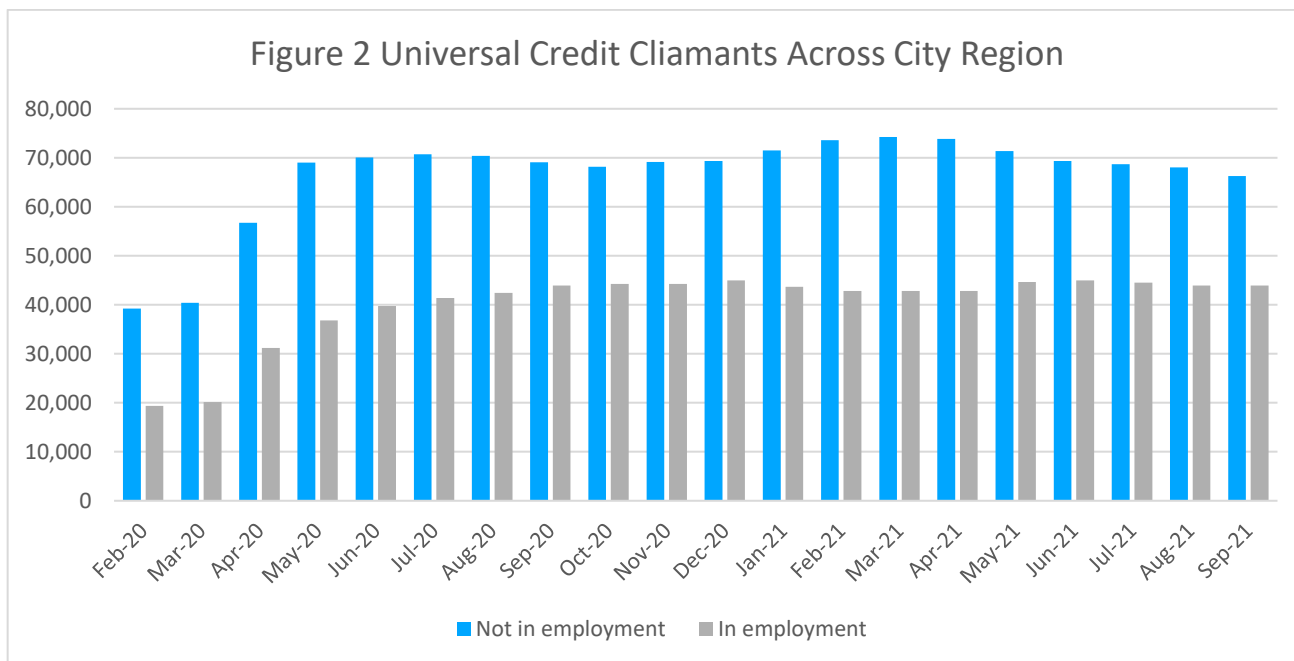
2017 electoral wards	Feb-20	Peak		Sep-21	Oct-21	Claimant Rate		% Increase	% Decrease
		Count	Month			Feb-20	Oct-21		
East Berwickshire	160	345	May-20	205	195	2.7	3.3	116	-43
Galashiels and District	385	685	Jul-20	540	515	3.9	5.2	78	-25
Hawick and Denholm	235	420	Mar-21	310	310	4.3	5.7	79	-26
Hawick and Hermitage	180	340	Aug-20	235	225	3.6	4.5	89	-34
Jedburgh and District	130	315	Mar-21	235	210	2.5	4.1	135	-33
Kelso and District	140	300	Jul-20	205	200	2.4	3.5	114	-33
Leaderdale and Melrose	115	320	Aug-20	190	175	1.8	2.7	178	-45
Mid Berwickshire	140	300	Aug-20	180	175	2.3	2.9	114	-42
Selkirkshire	165	315	Jul-20	215	210	2.9	3.7	91	-33
Tweeddale East	105	280	Jul-20	195	180	1.6	2.8	167	-36
Tweeddale West	105	275	Jul-20	185	170	1.7	2.7	162	-38

Source: **NOMIS 19/11/2021**

Universal Credit

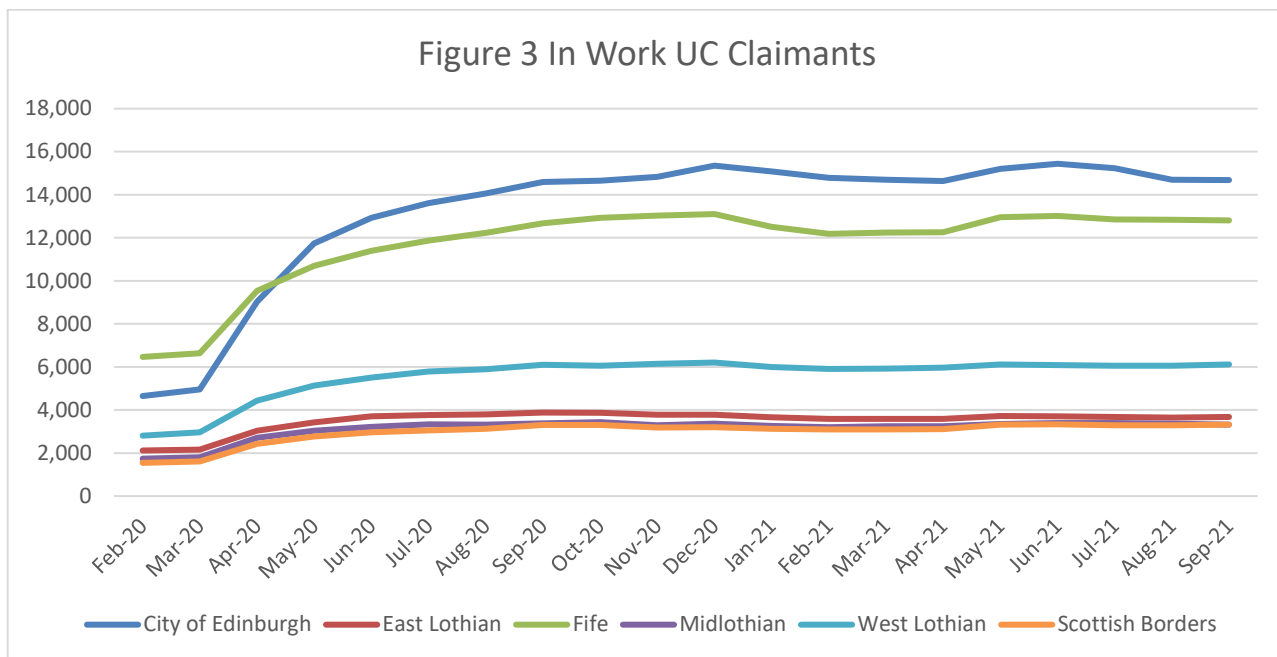
Universal Credit makes up part of the claimant count looked at already in this report, however it also includes data on those who are in work but need support as their wages alone don't provide enough income. It is a benefit which was designed to replace a range of other benefits including support for those on low income (income support) and benefit for those out of work (Job Seekers Allowance).

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. Whilst October data for UC claimants is available, it isn't split into in and out of work categories, and as a result the September 2021 data is the most up to date that allows such a split.



Source: StatXplore 22/11/2021

One thing that is evident from this chart, is that the number of people requiring support who are in work increased through the summer and autumn of 2020 and more worryingly has remained at this high level. In September 2021 there were nearly 44,000 people who were in employment across the City Region but needed support from UC. This is a 127% increase since February 2020.



Source: StatXplore 22/11/2021

Figure 3 above simply looks at those claiming UC who are in work. Whilst the more populous LAs will have higher claimant numbers, the key finding from this is that in each LA the number hasn't really gone down. It increased quickly at the start of the pandemic and then has generally risen month to month. For example, across the City Region there are now 6% more in work UC claimants than there were in July 2020 after the initial surge. This ranges from 9% difference in Scottish Borders to 6% in West Lothian. In Midlothian the number is almost the same as it was in July 2020 whilst East Lothian is the only LA where there has been a decrease in the in work universal credit claimants and a fall of 2% between July 2020 and September 2021 has been recorded.

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