

Alternative Claimant Count as an Indicator of Economic Performance

Introduction

One powerful and easy way of looking at fluctuations within economies at local authority level is to consider the trends around the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits and flows on and off the register. This information is available from the Department for Work and Pensions.

This analysis is provided as part of the RSN Economic Profiling service. The RSN also offers a wide range of analysis and information for rural areas.

- How does it work?

The analysis includes benchmarked information for our member authorities. There are two spreadsheets attached to this analysis:

- Claimant Flows August 2021
- Claimants as % of the working population June 2021

You can click your authority on the drop down box on the spreadsheet to see the trend for your authority. You can also compare how it performs against categories of authority by using the box below, for example the district average, or Mainly Rural authorities.

Alternative Claimant Count Flow Commentary

The graph in the attached analysis shows the claimant flow up to the period August 2021.

Where the flow of claimants is 1, there is no net change in the total number of claimants. Figures greater than one mean that there are more people signing on to claim for an unemployment related benefit than there are leaving the register. A figure less than 1 shows that more people are leaving the register than joining it. You can use these figures to help gauge the relative dynamism of the labour market in each local authority.

Table showing the 10 worst performing Local Authority areas:

Authority	Categorisation	Flow
Rutland	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	1.19
Gosport	Urban with City and Town	1.14
Craven	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	1.09
Burnley	Urban with City and Town	1.09
Chesterfield	Urban with City and Town	1.08
Brentwood	Urban with Significant Rural (rural including hub towns 26-49%)	1.04
Broxtowe	Urban with Minor Conurbation	1.04
Blackburn with Darwen	Urban with City and Town	1.02
Newark and Sherwood	Largely Rural (rural including hub towns 50-79%)	1.02
Rochdale	Urban with Major Conurbation	1.01

The list comprises 3 Predominantly Rural authorities, 1 Urban with Significant Rural, and 6 Predominantly Urban authorities. Only Burnley remains in the list from the previous quarter (May 2021). All authorities in the list saw a net on flow of claimants, in contrast to the previous quarter where only one saw a net on flow, with all others having a greater off flow of claimants.

Table showing the 10 best performing Local Authority areas:

Authority	Categorisation	Flow
City of London	Urban with Major Conurbation	0.50
Isles of Scilly	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	0.56
West Devon	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	0.64
Eden	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	0.65
Westminster	Urban with Major Conurbation	0.67
Ashford	Urban with Significant Rural (rural including hub towns 26-49%)	0.67
Harborough	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	0.68
Runnymede	Urban with Major Conurbation	0.68
Blackpool	Urban with City and Town	0.69
Scarborough	Urban with Significant Rural (rural including hub towns 26-49%)	0.71

4 of the best performing authorities when looking at claimant flow ratio are classed as being Predominantly Rural, 4 are classed as Predominantly Urban and 2 are classed as Urban with Significant Rural. No authorities have remained in the group of 10 best performing authorities since the previous analysis.

Alternative Claimant Count Commentary

We have also analysed Alternative Claimant Count to give RSN members a simple overview of how their authority can be benchmarked with other authorities. They can also see trends which can help provide a fuller picture of economic performance and the direction of travel.

Table showing local authorities with the 10 highest levels of claimants (June 2021) :

Local Authority	Categorisation	LEP	Alternative claimant count as proportion of working population%
Birmingham	Urban with Major Conurbation	Greater Birmingham and Solihull	14.6%
Brent	Urban with Major Conurbation	London	14.2%
Barking and Dagenham	Urban with Major Conurbation	London	13.8%
Blackpool	Urban with City and Town	Lancashire	13.7%
Newham	Urban with Major Conurbation	London	13.2%
Middlesbrough	Urban with City and Town	Tees Valley	13.0%
Wolverhampton	Urban with Major Conurbation	Black Country LEP	12.6%
Oldham	Urban with Major Conurbation	Greater Manchester LEP	12.0%
Haringey	Urban with Major Conurbation	London	12.0%
Thanet	Urban with City and Town	South East LEP	11.7%

There has been very little movement in the list of authorities with highest proportion of claimants. Oldham has entered the list, taking the place of Enfield, and some movement between places in the list. Claimants as a percentage of working population for authorities with the highest levels have for each position on the list decreased since the March 2021 analysis.

Table showing local authorities with the 10 lowest levels of claimants (June 2021) :

Local Authority	Categorisation	LEP	Alternative claimant count as proportion of working population%
Craven	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	Leeds City Region LEP	3.0%
Ribble Valley	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	Lancashire LEP	3.0%
Hambleton	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	York and North Yorkshire LEP	3.0%
Harborough	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	Leicester & Leicestershire LEP	3.1%
Richmondshire	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	York and North Yorkshire LEP	3.1%
East Cambridgeshire	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough LEP	3.1%
South Lakeland	Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)	Cumbria LEP	3.2%
Rushcliffe	Largely Rural (rural including hub towns 50-79%)	Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LEP	3.2%
Guildford	Urban with City and Town	Enterprise M3 LEP	3.3%
Wokingham	Urban with City and Town	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP	3.3%

8 authorities in the top ten are classed as Predominantly Rural, and 2 are classed as Predominantly Urban. Craven and South Lakeland have returned to the list having dropped out in the previous quarters analysis. City of London and South Northamptonshire have dropped from the list since the previous

quarters analysis (March 2021) with now only Guildford and Ribble Valley consistently maintaining their position since the March 2020 analysis.