

Claimant Count Unemployment Monthly Update – January 2026 Data

Please Note: Recent changes to Universal Credit (UC) including a further transition of some claimants on legacy benefits and an increase in the Administrative Earnings Threshold has resulted in many more UC claimants being moved into the 'Intensive Work Search' category and thus being counted in the claimant count figures. More detail can be found [here](#).

Total Claimant Count

In January 2026, unadjusted claimant count numbers in the city increased by 705 to 76,190. The unadjusted claimant rate (% of the economically active population) increased slightly to 13.6%, with the claimant proportion (% of the whole working age population) also increasing slightly to 9.9%. Claimant numbers also increased in the WMCA (Met area) and the UK last month.

Youth Claimant Count

In Birmingham, the unadjusted youth (18-24) claimant count decreased by 95 in January to 15,495. The unadjusted youth unemployment rate decreased to 18.3%, with the youth claimant proportion also decreasing to 10.7%. Unadjusted youth unemployment decreased in the WMCA (14.7%) but increased slightly for the UK as a whole (8.9%) in January.

Core Cities

Table 1 below shows the unadjusted claimant count unemployment data for January 2026 for the core cities. Birmingham has the highest claimant unemployment rate (13.6%) amongst the core cities and is well above the UK average (4.9%). All of the twelve core cities saw claimant numbers increase last month.

Table 1: Core City Claimant Count January 2026

Arial	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Rate %
Birmingham	76,190	13.6	705	0.1
Manchester	24,280	8.4	495	0.2
Nottingham	13,625	7.9	275	0.2
Liverpool	18,870	7.7	475	0.2
Glasgow	21,030	7.0	390	0.1
Leeds	24,815	6.6	770	0.2
Newcastle	8,645	6.1	255	0.2
Belfast	9,070	5.7	215	0.1
Sheffield	16,230	5.5	405	0.2
Cardiff	9,725	4.9	210	0.1
Bristol	12,595	4.6	225	0.1
Edinburgh	9,485	3.1	360	0.2
UK	1,666,985	4.9	41,295	0.2
London	344,460	6.7	4,555	0.1

West Midlands Region

Table 2 displays the latest claimant count data for the region. Birmingham along with Wolverhampton and Sandwell, have the highest unemployment rates locally, with Coventry, Dudley and Solihull having lower rates, closer to or below the UK average. All of the seven Met areas saw an increase in unemployment in January, as did the West Midlands region.

Table 2: West Midlands Claimant Count January 2026

Area	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Rate %
Birmingham	76,190	13.6	705	0.1
Wolverhampton	11,620	9.6	150	0.2
Sandwell	14,575	9.4	70	0.1
Walsall	10,235	7.5	165	0.1
Coventry	13,175	6.3	190	0.0
Dudley	9,380	6.1	215	0.1
Solihull	4,665	4.5	75	0.1
UK	1,666,985	4.9	41,295	0.2
WMCA Met Area	139,840	9.7	1,570	0.1
West Midlands	197,620	6.7	3,620	0.1

Birmingham Constituencies

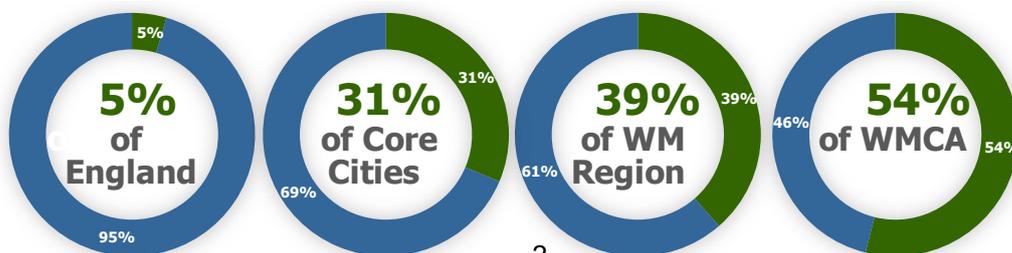
Table 3 below shows the unadjusted claimant count unemployment data for January 2026 for the 10 parliamentary constituencies in the city. Perry Barr constituency has the highest claimant count unemployment rate at 28.4% and Sutton Coldfield the lowest at 2.4%. Nine of the ten constituencies saw an increase in claimant numbers last month. The largest increase in claimant count numbers in January occurred in Hall Green & Moseley (+245).

Table 3: Birmingham Constituency Claimant Count January 2026

Area	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Rate %
Edgbaston	6,590	12.0	60	0.1
Erdington	8,260	12.2	5	0.0
Hall Green and Moseley	8,640	15.1	245	0.4
Hodge Hill and Solihull North	7,690	14.6	60	0.1
Ladywood	14,615	24.9	-5	0.0
Northfield	5,040	7.3	15	0.0
Perry Barr	11,935	28.4	230	0.5
Selly Oak	4,620	6.9	80	0.1
Sutton Coldfield	1,540	2.4	5	0.0
Yardley	7,985	17.5	15	0.0
Birmingham	76,190	13.6	705	0.1

Birmingham Claimant Concentration

The infographic below highlights the concentration of claimants in the city by showing what percentage of claimants in wider areas are accounted for by Birmingham claimants. 31% of all claimants in the UK core city are in Birmingham and the city accounts for over half (54%) of claimants in the WMCA area.



Birmingham Wards

Tables containing ward claimant count unemployment data and ward youth unemployment data are shown on the following pages.

Birchfield (19.8%) and Handsworth (19.3%) wards have the highest claimant proportions. The Sutton wards (Sutton Reddicap aside) have the lowest claimant proportions, all 3.0% or under. 42 of the 69 wards in the city saw unemployment increase last month.

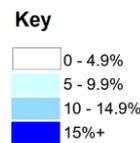
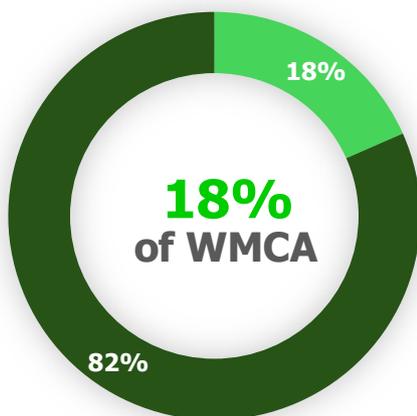
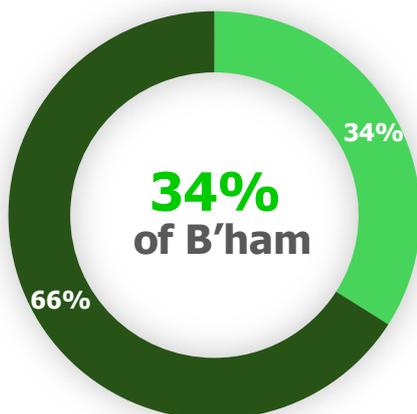
In terms of ward youth unemployment Birchfield (20.6%) and Gravelly Hill (19.9%) have the highest youth claimant proportions.

18 of the city's wards saw youth claimant numbers increase last month.

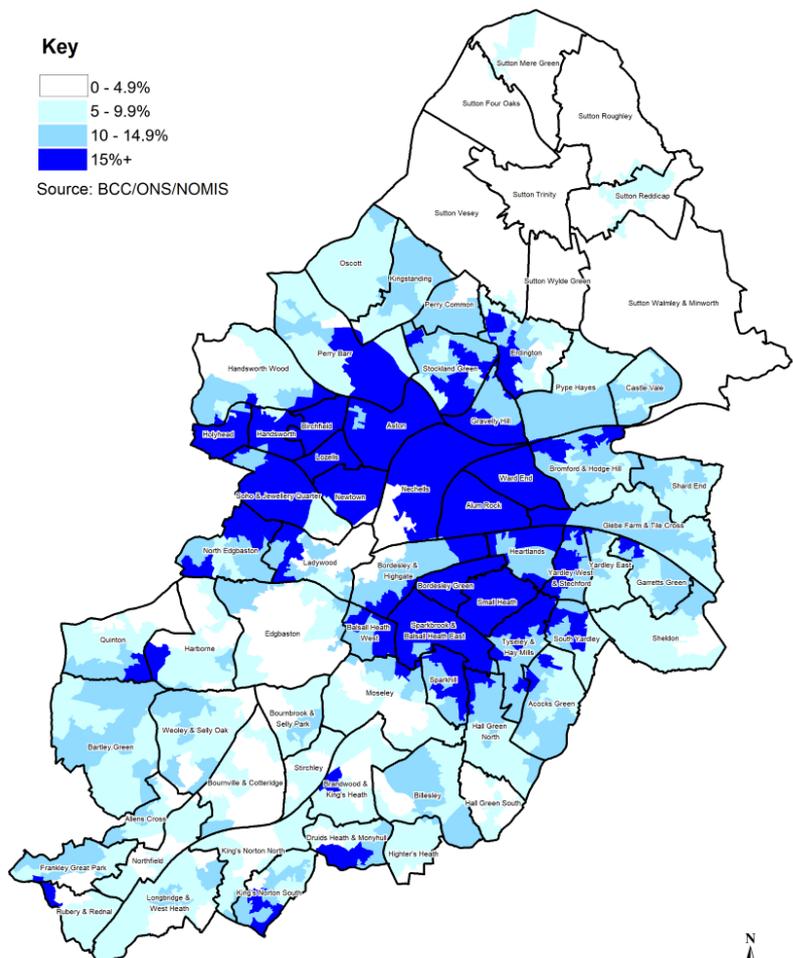
The map below highlights that the highest levels of claimant unemployment are concentrated in the inner city. East Birmingham accounts for 34% of all claimant unemployment in the city and 18% of unemployment in the WMCA.

Map 1 Birmingham Claimant Count Unemployment Proportions

East Birmingham %



Source: BCC/ONS/NOMIS



Date: 14/10/2024
Scale 1:110,000

Table 4 - Ward Claimant Unemployment January 2026

Ward	Claimant Count	Claimant Proportion %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Proportion %
Acocks Green	1,690	10.4	40	0.2
Allens Cross	535	7.7	10	0.2
Alum Rock	2,830	14.8	85	0.4
Aston	2,870	17.6	-45	-0.3
Balsall Heath West	1,115	12.5	0	0.0
Bartley Green	1,285	9.2	15	0.2
Billesley	1,025	7.7	30	0.2
Birchfield	1,695	19.8	10	0.1
Bordesley & Highgate	1,565	11.9	35	0.3
Bordesley Green	1,490	16.7	5	0.0
Bournbrook & Selly Park	985	5.0	-20	-0.1
Bournville & Cotteridge	570	4.8	50	0.4
Brandwood & King's Heath	815	6.8	-5	0.0
Bromford & Hodge Hill	1,405	9.7	-5	-0.1
Castle Vale	530	8.3	-5	0.0
Druids Heath & Monyhull	630	8.7	5	0.1
Edgbaston	735	5.5	10	0.0
Erdington	1,380	9.7	35	0.3
Frankley Great Park	675	8.6	-10	-0.1
Garretts Green	760	10.3	45	0.6
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	1,685	10.6	5	0.0
Gravelly Hill	1,115	15.0	20	0.2
Hall Green North	1,435	8.9	60	0.4
Hall Green South	320	4.8	15	0.3
Handsworth	1,655	19.3	-10	-0.1
Handsworth Wood	1,200	8.7	-10	-0.1
Harborne	985	6.9	5	0.1
Heartlands	1,070	12.0	-25	-0.2
Highter's Heath	400	5.7	5	0.0
Holyhead	1,250	16.1	10	0.1
King's Norton North	390	5.5	-5	-0.1
King's Norton South	625	8.7	15	0.2
Kingstanding	1,390	10.1	10	0.1
Ladywood	1,970	8.2	-50	-0.2
Longbridge & West Heath	950	7.0	40	0.3
Lozells	1,515	18.1	240	2.9
Moseley	1,100	7.7	15	0.1
Nechells	1,280	9.3	-25	-0.2
Newtown	1,615	11.9	-65	-0.5
North Edgbaston	2,655	15.8	35	0.2

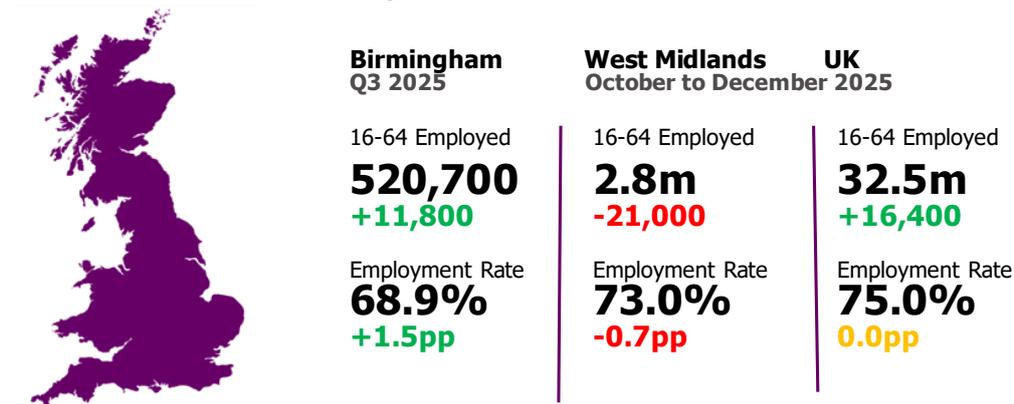
Northfield	405	6.2	10	0.1
Oscott	865	6.6	35	0.2
Perry Barr	1,365	10.3	15	0.1
Perry Common	660	8.8	-5	-0.1
Pype Hayes	620	8.6	30	0.4
Quinton	925	6.9	-5	0.0
Rubery & Rednal	480	7.4	-25	-0.4
Shard End	635	8.3	10	0.1
Sheldon	840	6.5	-30	-0.2
Small Heath	2,070	14.4	30	0.2
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	2,755	13.1	15	0.1
South Yardley	705	9.7	15	0.2
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	3,060	16.4	120	0.6
Sparkhill	2,215	15.0	40	0.3
Stirchley	455	6.5	0	0.0
Stockland Green	2,080	12.6	-100	-0.6
Sutton Four Oaks	85	1.7	-5	0.0
Sutton Mere Green	125	2.2	-5	-0.1
Sutton Reddicap	285	4.7	-5	-0.1
Sutton Roughley	170	2.4	15	0.2
Sutton Trinity	145	2.5	10	0.2
Sutton Vesey	340	2.9	5	0.0
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	245	2.6	0	0.0
Sutton Wylde Green	150	3.0	0	0.0
Tyseley & Hay Mills	1,060	13.7	-65	-0.8
Ward End	1,415	15.3	30	0.4
Weoley & Selly Oak	1,230	8.2	-10	-0.1
Yardley East	570	8.1	10	0.2
Yardley West & Stechford	1,050	11.5	15	0.1
Birmingham	76,190	9.9	705	0.1

Table 5 - Ward Youth 18-24 Claimant Unemployment January 2026

Ward	Claimant Count	Claimant Proportion %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Proportion %
Acocks Green	360	14.4	0	0.0
Allens Cross	120	13.2	10	1.1
Alum Rock	590	14.3	-10	-0.2
Aston	515	16.4	-15	-0.5
Balsall Heath West	195	10.0	-10	-0.5
Bartley Green	260	13.0	0	0.0
Billesley	260	14.5	5	0.3
Birchfield	320	19.9	0	0.0
Bordesley & Highgate	290	9.6	-5	-0.2
Bordesley Green	310	16.1	-20	-1.0
Bournbrook & Selly Park	230	1.8	-5	0.0
Bournville & Cotteridge	115	5.9	10	0.5
Brandwood & King's Heath	165	12.1	-10	-0.7
Bromford & Hodge Hill	350	12.9	5	0.2
Castle Vale	140	14.5	5	0.5
Druids Heath & Monyhull	160	15.6	5	0.5
Edgbaston	105	2.1	5	0.1
Erdington	265	14.6	10	0.6
Frankley Great Park	175	15.8	0	0.0
Garretts Green	180	14.3	5	0.4
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	380	15.0	0	0.0
Gravelly Hill	250	20.6	20	1.7
Hall Green North	285	10.9	0	0.0
Hall Green South	80	8.4	5	0.5
Handsworth	315	18.0	0	0.0
Handsworth Wood	215	9.5	-5	-0.2
Harborne	175	8.5	-5	-0.2
Heartlands	235	12.7	-10	-0.5
Highter's Heath	100	12.8	0	0.0
Holyhead	230	16.3	-5	-0.4
King's Norton North	100	9.9	0	0.0
King's Norton South	140	15.0	5	0.5
Kingstanding	355	16.4	0	0.0
Ladywood	320	5.9	-5	-0.1
Longbridge & West Heath	180	10.6	0	0.0
Lozells	260	14.6	45	2.5
Moseley	185	10.6	0	0.0
Nechells	260	4.4	-15	-0.3
Newtown	270	4.7	-10	-0.2
North Edgbaston	525	17.8	0	0.0

Northfield	95	12.9	0	0.0
Oscott	175	10.9	10	0.6
Perry Barr	270	14.5	-5	-0.3
Perry Common	165	16.1	-5	-0.5
Pype Hayes	125	14.3	0	0.0
Quinton	215	12.7	10	0.6
Rubery & Rednal	115	14.1	-5	-0.6
Shard End	150	15.3	0	0.0
Sheldon	180	10.1	-10	-0.6
Small Heath	365	11.6	-10	-0.3
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	420	10.6	-10	-0.3
South Yardley	140	14.6	5	0.5
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	650	16.7	30	0.8
Sparkhill	460	15.3	-5	-0.2
Stirchley	85	11.2	-5	-0.7
Stockland Green	435	16.6	-40	-1.5
Sutton Four Oaks	25	4.2	0	0.0
Sutton Mere Green	25	3.8	-5	-0.8
Sutton Reddicap	65	8.7	-10	-1.3
Sutton Roughley	35	4.7	0	0.0
Sutton Trinity	30	4.8	0	0.0
Sutton Vesey	60	4.6	0	0.0
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	40	3.9	0	0.0
Sutton Wylde Green	45	7.8	0	0.0
Tyseley & Hay Mills	215	16.8	-15	-1.2
Ward End	295	14.4	-10	-0.5
Weoley & Selly Oak	310	12.3	-5	-0.2
Yardley East	110	10.5	0	0.0
Yardley West & Stechford	250	15.3	5	0.3
Birmingham	15,495	10.7	-95	-0.1

Latest Resident Employment



The latest Annual Population Survey resident employment data for Birmingham (Q3 2025) shows working age employment levels increasing by 11,800 in the last quarter to stand at 520,700. The employment rate increased, rising from 67.4% in Q4 to 68.9% in Q3 2025.

Economic inactivity (those not in work or seeking work) in the city stood at 191,600 in Q3, 25.3% of the 16-64 population.

The latest Labour Force Survey figures for the West Midlands region for the three month period October to December 2025 shows that the number of working age people employed has decreased by 21,000 compared with the previous quarter (July to September). The employment rate regionally decreased by 0.7% point compared to the previous quarter to stand at 73.0%.

Nationally the employment rate was unchanged at 75.0%. The employment rate nationally is still below pre-pandemic levels.

Vacancies

The latest data on online job adverts from the ONS/Textkernel shows that in November 2025 there were 16,871 new online job adverts posted in Birmingham. This was up by 1,261 (+8.1%) on the previous month.

The occupations that had the highest number of new online adverts in Birmingham in November 2025 were IT professionals (1,376), sales & marketing professionals (1,275).

Skill Levels

On the supply side comparatively high unemployment and low employment rates in the city are linked to the skills gap that exists locally with residents having lower skills and qualification levels than the national average.

The chart below highlights this showing how Birmingham (11.6%) has a greater proportion of working age residents with no qualifications compared to the UK (6.8%) and the core city average (8.6%).

The city (64.6%) also has a correspondingly lower proportion of residents with RQF3+ qualifications than the UK (67.8%) and core city average (68.9%).

Chart 1: RQF Qualification Levels 2024

