

# Claimant Count Unemployment Monthly Update – February 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 February 2026, unadjusted claimant count numbers in the city increased by 2,295 to 77,310. The unadjusted claimant rate (% of the economically active population) increased to 13.8%, with the claimant proportion (% of the whole working age population) also increasing to 10.0%. 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 increased by 380 in February to 15,690. The unadjusted youth unemployment rate increased to 18.5%, with the youth claimant proportion also increasing to 10.8%. Unadjusted youth unemployment increased in the WMCA (14.9%) and in the UK as a whole (9.1%) in February.

## Core Cities

Table 1 below shows the unadjusted claimant count unemployment data for February 2026 for the core cities. Birmingham has the highest claimant unemployment rate (13.8%) amongst the core cities and is well above the UK average (5.0%). All of the twelve core cities saw claimant numbers increase last month.

**Table 1: Core City Claimant Count February 2026**

Arial	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Rate %
Birmingham	77,310	13.8	2,295	0.4
Manchester	25,060	8.7	1,305	0.5
Nottingham	14,005	8.1	580	0.3
Liverpool	19,300	7.8	795	0.3
Glasgow	21,765	7.3	1,045	0.4
Leeds	25,650	6.8	1,325	0.4
Newcastle	8,765	6.2	300	0.3
Belfast	9,150	5.8	320	0.2
Sheffield	16,655	5.6	705	0.2
Cardiff	10,110	5.1	610	0.3
Bristol	13,065	4.8	665	0.3
Edinburgh	9,900	3.2	545	0.2
UK	1,717,150	5.0	81,290	0.2
London	352,320	6.9	14,980	0.3

## 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 February, as did the West Midlands region.

**Table 2: West Midlands Claimant Count February 2026**

Area	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Rate %
Birmingham	77,310	13.8	2,295	0.4
Wolverhampton	12,130	10.0	725	0.6
Sandwell	15,140	9.7	840	0.5
Walsall	10,550	7.7	530	0.4
Coventry	13,785	6.6	805	0.3
Dudley	9,750	6.4	530	0.4
Solihull	4,775	4.6	190	0.2
WMCA Met Area	143,440	10.0	5,915	0.4
West Midlands	203,440	6.9	9,220	0.3
UK	1,717,150	5.0	81,290	0.2

## Birmingham Constituencies

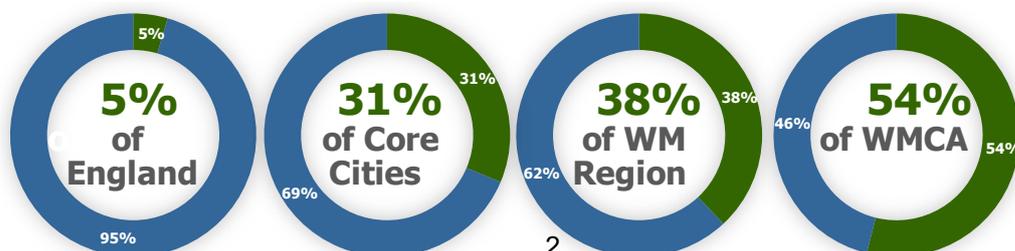
Table 3 below shows the unadjusted claimant count unemployment data for February 2026 for the 10 parliamentary constituencies in the city. Perry Barr constituency has the highest claimant count unemployment rate at 28.9% and Sutton Coldfield the lowest at 2.5%. All of the ten constituencies saw an increase in claimant numbers last month. The largest increase in claimant count numbers in February occurred in Ladywood (+465).

**Table 3: Birmingham Constituency Claimant Count February 2026**

Area	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Rate %
Edgbaston	6,675	12.1	160	0.3
Erdington	8,385	12.4	230	0.3
Hall Green and Moseley	8,800	15.3	280	0.5
Hodge Hill and Solihull North	7,790	14.8	275	0.5
Ladywood	14,825	25.3	465	0.8
Northfield	5,105	7.4	140	0.2
Perry Barr	12,125	28.9	350	0.8
Selly Oak	4,705	7.0	155	0.2
Sutton Coldfield	1,565	2.5	45	0.1
Yardley	8,075	17.7	225	0.5
Birmingham	77,310	13.8	2,295	0.4

## 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.





**Table 4 - Ward Claimant Unemployment February 2026**

Ward	Claimant Count	Claimant Proportion %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Proportion %
Acocks Green	1,695	10.5	45	0.3
Allens Cross	545	7.8	20	0.3
Alum Rock	2,840	14.9	55	0.3
Aston	2,895	17.8	65	0.4
Balsall Heath West	1,140	12.8	40	0.5
Bartley Green	1,270	9.0	-5	-0.1
Billesley	1,025	7.7	25	0.1
Birchfield	1,730	20.2	65	0.7
Bordesley & Highgate	1,575	11.9	15	0.1
Bordesley Green	1,530	17.2	65	0.8
Bournbrook & Selly Park	1,005	5.1	45	0.2
Bournville & Cotteridge	580	4.9	15	0.2
Brandwood & King's Heath	810	6.7	5	0.0
Bromford & Hodge Hill	1,410	9.8	50	0.4
Castle Vale	535	8.3	20	0.3
Druids Heath & Monyhull	660	9.1	30	0.4
Edgbaston	725	5.5	10	0.1
Erdington	1,415	9.9	45	0.3
Frankley Great Park	695	8.8	30	0.3
Garretts Green	750	10.2	0	0.0
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	1,725	10.9	70	0.5
Gravelly Hill	1,120	15.1	25	0.3
Hall Green North	1,480	9.2	75	0.5
Hall Green South	325	4.8	20	0.2
Handsworth	1,665	19.5	40	0.5
Handsworth Wood	1,210	8.8	35	0.3
Harborne	1,015	7.1	25	0.2
Heartlands	1,080	12.1	50	0.6
Highter's Heath	410	5.9	15	0.2
Holyhead	1,265	16.3	30	0.3
King's Norton North	410	5.8	25	0.3
King's Norton South	615	8.6	0	0.0
Kingstanding	1,415	10.3	50	0.4
Ladywood	2,000	8.3	60	0.2
Longbridge & West Heath	975	7.2	35	0.3
Lozells	1,540	18.3	45	0.5
Moseley	1,160	8.2	60	0.5
Nechells	1,295	9.4	45	0.3
Newtown	1,615	12.0	50	0.4
North Edgbaston	2,700	16.1	75	0.5

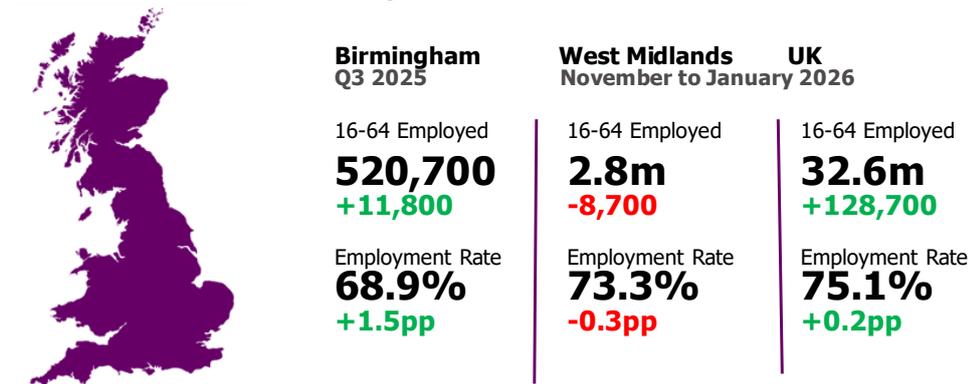
Northfield	405	6.3	10	0.2
Oscott	910	7.0	45	0.4
Perry Barr	1,405	10.6	40	0.3
Perry Common	670	8.9	15	0.2
Pype Hayes	620	8.6	10	0.1
Quinton	965	7.2	55	0.4
Rubery & Rednal	470	7.2	0	0.0
Shard End	660	8.7	40	0.6
Sheldon	860	6.7	25	0.2
Small Heath	2,105	14.7	80	0.6
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	2,825	13.4	130	0.6
South Yardley	715	9.9	20	0.3
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	3,095	16.6	65	0.3
Sparkhill	2,245	15.2	70	0.5
Stirchley	450	6.5	5	0.1
Stockland Green	2,115	12.8	55	0.3
Sutton Four Oaks	85	1.7	0	0.1
Sutton Mere Green	140	2.5	20	0.3
Sutton Reddicap	280	4.7	0	0.0
Sutton Roughley	175	2.5	5	0.1
Sutton Trinity	155	2.6	10	0.1
Sutton Vesey	325	2.8	-10	-0.1
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	270	2.9	35	0.4
Sutton Wylde Green	140	2.7	-5	-0.2
Tyseley & Hay Mills	1,095	14.1	40	0.5
Ward End	1,425	15.3	30	0.3
Weoley & Selly Oak	1,245	8.3	25	0.2
Yardley East	565	8.0	5	0.1
Yardley West & Stechford	1,040	11.4	10	0.1
<b>Birmingham</b>	<b>77,310</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>2,295</b>	<b>0.3</b>

**Table 5 - Ward Youth 18-24 Claimant Unemployment February 2026**

Ward	Claimant Count	Claimant Proportion %	Monthly Change in Claimants	Monthly Change in Proportion %
Acocks Green	360	14.4	5	0.2
Allens Cross	125	13.8	5	0.6
Alum Rock	610	14.8	25	0.6
Aston	520	16.5	15	0.5
Balsall Heath West	205	10.5	15	0.8
Bartley Green	260	13.0	5	0.3
Billesley	255	14.2	0	0.0
Birchfield	320	19.9	10	0.6
Bordesley & Highgate	285	9.5	0	0.0
Bordesley Green	305	15.9	0	0.0
Bournbrook & Selly Park	235	1.8	5	0.0
Bournville & Cotteridge	115	5.9	0	0.0
Brandwood & King's Heath	165	12.1	5	0.4
Bromford & Hodge Hill	350	12.9	10	0.4
Castle Vale	150	15.6	15	1.6
Druids Heath & Monyhull	160	15.6	5	0.5
Edgbaston	105	2.1	0	0.0
Erdington	275	15.1	10	0.6
Frankley Great Park	180	16.3	0	0.0
Garretts Green	180	14.3	0	0.0
Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	405	16.0	30	1.2
Gravelly Hill	245	20.2	0	0.0
Hall Green North	285	10.9	5	0.2
Hall Green South	80	8.4	5	0.5
Handsworth	315	18.0	10	0.6
Handsworth Wood	210	9.2	0	0.0
Harborne	175	8.5	5	0.2
Heartlands	240	13.0	10	0.5
Highter's Heath	105	13.5	5	0.6
Holyhead	230	16.3	-5	-0.4
King's Norton North	100	9.9	5	0.5
King's Norton South	125	13.4	-10	-1.1
Kingstanding	335	15.5	-10	-0.5
Ladywood	320	5.9	10	0.2
Longbridge & West Heath	180	10.6	0	0.0
Lozells	260	14.6	0	0.0
Moseley	195	11.2	5	0.3
Nechells	270	4.6	15	0.3
Newtown	270	4.7	15	0.3
North Edgbaston	540	18.4	20	0.7

Northfield	95	12.9	0	0.0
Oscott	190	11.9	10	0.6
Perry Barr	260	14.0	-10	-0.5
Perry Common	155	15.2	-5	-0.5
Pype Hayes	130	14.9	5	0.6
Quinton	220	13.0	10	0.6
Rubery & Rednal	110	13.5	0	0.0
Shard End	145	14.8	0	0.0
Sheldon	185	10.4	10	0.6
Small Heath	380	12.1	20	0.6
Soho & Jewellery Quarter	440	11.1	15	0.4
South Yardley	145	15.1	5	0.5
Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East	655	16.8	10	0.3
Sparkhill	465	15.4	15	0.5
Stirchley	85	11.2	0	0.0
Stockland Green	445	17.0	20	0.8
Sutton Four Oaks	20	3.4	0	0.0
Sutton Mere Green	30	4.6	5	0.8
Sutton Reddicap	65	8.7	0	0.0
Sutton Roughley	40	5.4	0	0.0
Sutton Trinity	35	5.6	0	0.0
Sutton Vesey	60	4.6	0	0.0
Sutton Walmley & Minworth	50	4.8	10	1.0
Sutton Wylde Green	40	6.9	-5	-0.9
Tyseley & Hay Mills	230	18.0	5	0.4
Ward End	295	14.4	5	0.2
Weoley & Selly Oak	305	12.1	5	0.2
Yardley East	120	11.5	10	1.0
Yardley West & Stechford	250	15.3	5	0.3
<b>Birmingham</b>	<b>15,690</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>0.3</b>

## 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 November to January 2026 shows that the number of working age people employed has decreased by 8,700 compared with the previous quarter (August to October). The employment rate regionally decreased by 0.3% points compared to the previous quarter to stand at 73.3%.

Nationally, the employment increased to 75.1%. The employment rate nationally is still below pre-pandemic levels.

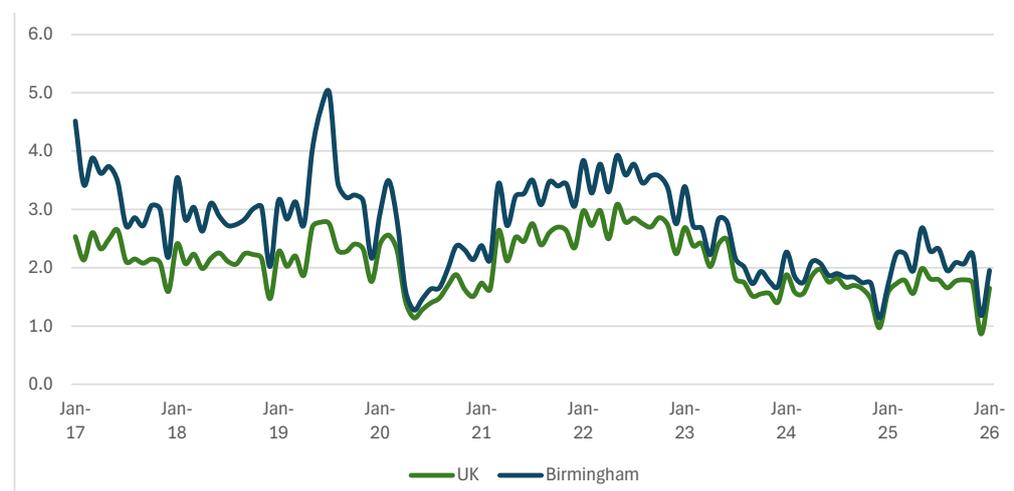
## Vacancies

The latest data on online job adverts from the ONS/Textkernel shows that in January 2026 there were 14,750 new online job adverts posted in Birmingham. This was up by 5,836 (+65%) on the previous month (which had seen a sharp contraction).

The occupations that had the highest number of new online adverts in Birmingham in January were sales & marketing professionals (1,055) and IT professionals (764).

The chart below shows the trend for online job adverts per 100 working age residents for Birmingham and the UK in recent years. Birmingham has a slightly higher rate than the UK but has followed a similar trend.

**Chart : New Job Adverts per 100 Working Age Residents Jan 2017 to Jan 2026**



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 2: RQF Qualification Levels 2024**

