

# MONTHLY LABOUR MARKET UPDATE

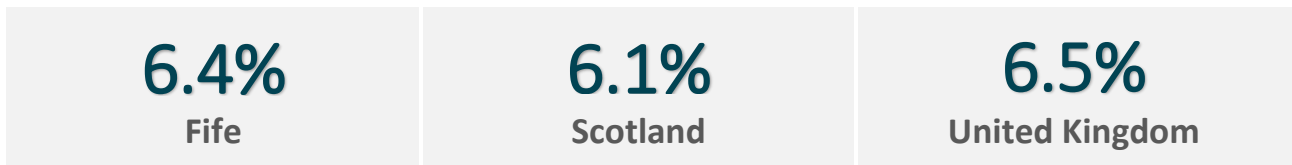
## February 2021

This is a monthly update of the performance of the Fife labour market produced by Fife Council

Please note the Office for National Statistics (ONS) still classifies the Claimant Count figures as experimental statistics. Care should therefore be taken when analysing and interpreting them.

### CLAIMANT RATE (February 2021)

*% of working age (16-64) residents claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit*

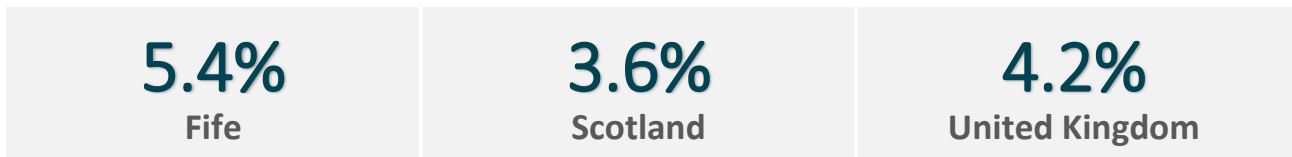


Source: ONS Claimant Count

Fife's claimant rate increased by 0.3 percentage points between January 2021 and February 2021 and was 2.6 percentage points higher than the rate for the same month the previous year (3.8%). Prior to the introduction of coronavirus lockdown measures, Fife's claimant rate had been fairly static (Figure 3.1).

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (Oct 2019 - Sep 2020)

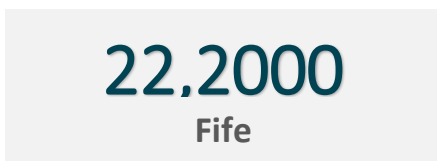
*% aged over 16 who are out of work*



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

The latest figures for Fife's **unemployment rate** are for the period Oct 2019 to Sep 2020. During this period, Fife's unemployment rate increased by 0.8 percentage points compared with the previous period (Jul 2019 to Jun 2020) and increased by 1.0 for the same period the previous year (Oct 2018 – Sep 2019).

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES FURLOUGHED (as of 28 February 2021)





Source: HMRC

22,200 employees in Fife were furloughed through the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme as of 28 February. In addition, 8,300 people have claimed for support from the third grant for Self-Employment Income Support Scheme up to 31 January 2021, 63% of those eligible to claim.






## PROFILE OF FIFE CLAIMANTS

### 2.1 Breakdown of Fife's Total Claimants

February 2021	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change
People searching for work on Universal Credit	5.7%	13,245	+646 
Jobseeker's Allowance claimants	0.7%	1,591	-24 

Source: Department for Work & Pensions; ONS Jobseeker's Allowance

### 2.2 Breakdown by Age & Gender

February 2021	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change
16-24 year olds claiming benefits	7.6%	3,040	+160 
25-49 year olds claiming benefits	7.4%	8,270	+355 
50+ year olds claiming benefits	4.4%	3,520	+110 
Male claimants	8.1%	9,135	+410 
Female claimants	4.8%	5,695	+210 

Source: ONS Claimant Count

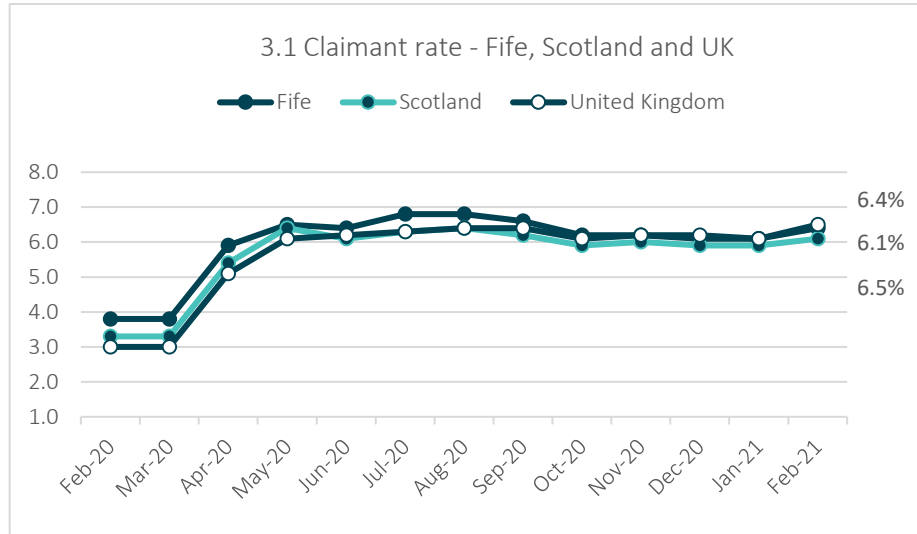
### 2.3 Area Committee Summary (February 2021)

*In this area summary, a monthly change is given for both the claimant count and rate. For the claimant rate, the change represents the difference in percentage points between this month's claimant rate and last month's rate. NB all data are rounded to the nearest 5 and may not precisely add to the sum of the number of people claiming JSA, published on Nomis, and the number of people claiming Universal Credit required to seek work, published by DWP, due to independent rounding.*

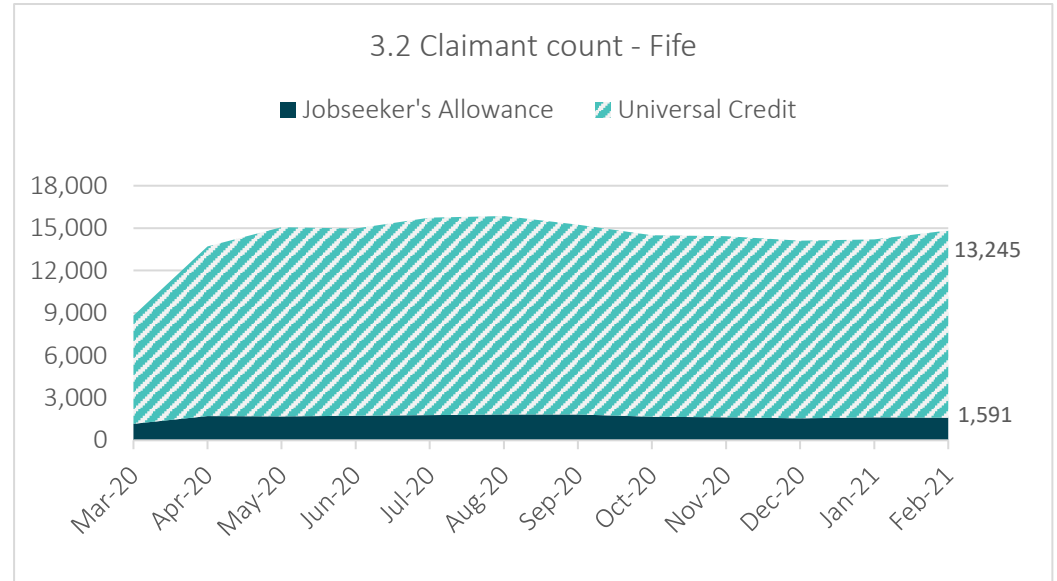
February 2021	Claimant Rate	Monthly change	Claimant Count	Monthly change	Female	Male
Cowdenbeath	8.4%	+0.3 	2,190	+95 	835	1,355
Dunfermline	5.8%	+0.4 	2,130	+140 	830	1,300
Glenrothes	6.0%	+0.1 	1,845	+40 	745	1,100
Kirkcaldy	8.8%	+0.4 	3,230	+150 	1,235	1,995
Levenmouth	8.7%	+0.1 	1,970	+15 	675	1,295
North East Fife	3.5%	+0.1 	1,635	+80 	610	1,025
South & West Fife	5.5%	+0.3 	1,710	+90 	705	1,005

Source: ONS Claimant Count

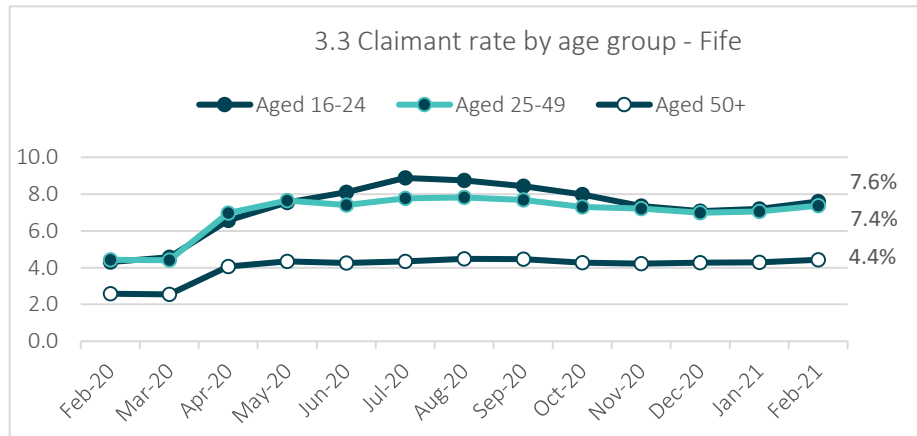
## BREAKDOWN & COMPARISONS OF KEY INDICATORS



Source: ONS Claimant Count



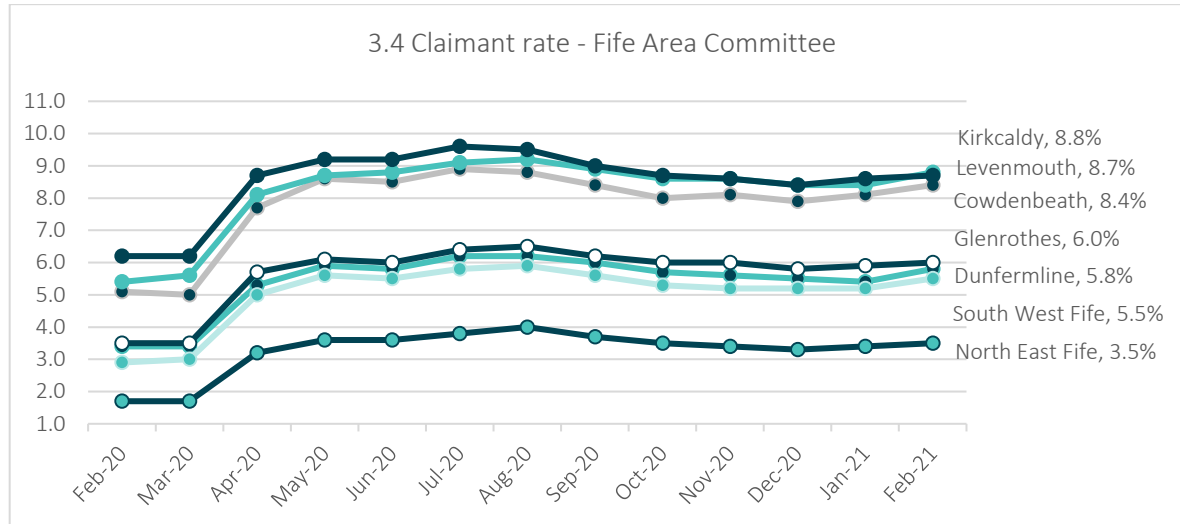
Source: ONS Jobseeker's Allowance; Department for Work and Pensions



The number of people **claiming Universal Credit** increased by 646 or 4.9% compared with the previous month and there were 5,588 or 74.6% more claimants than in February 2020. The **number of JSA claimants** decreased by 24 people or 1.5%

The **16-24 year-old age group** saw the **proportionally highest monthly increase** in claimants – with 5.6% more people claiming than in January 2021. This age group still has the **highest claimant rate** which increased by 0.4% points since January 2021. The **male claimant rate (8.1%)** remains significantly higher than the female rate (4.8%) (Table 2.2).

Source: ONS Claimant Count



Source: ONS Claimant Count

### 3.5 Claimant Rate by Ward (February 2021)

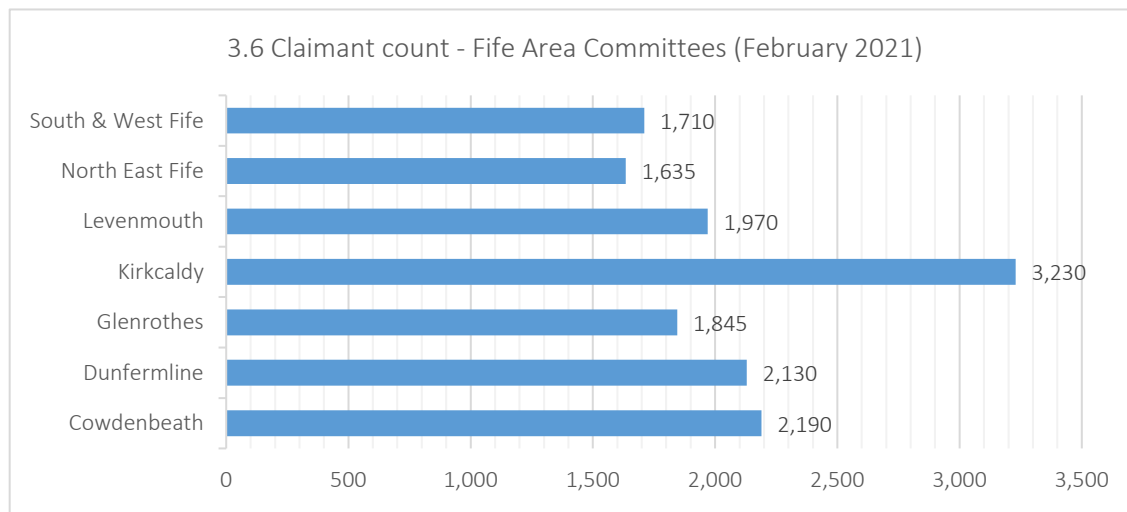
HIGHEST	
Kirkcaldy Central	11.3%
Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages	10.9%
Kirkcaldy East	10.9%
LOWEST	
Cupar	4.7%
Tay Bridgehead	3.3%
St Andrews	1.7%

Source: ONS Claimant Count

All parts of Fife saw increases in claimant rates and numbers compared with the previous month.

**Dunfermline** and **Kirkcaldy** saw the largest increases in claimant rates (0.4% points).

The **highest monthly increase** in the number of claimants was seen in **Kirkcaldy** (+150 people).



Source: ONS Claimant Count

### 3.7 Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region



Claimant Rate by Local Authority

	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Monthly change		Annual change	
City of Edinburgh	4.8%	5.1%	+0.3	↑	+3.1	↑
East Lothian	5.0%	5.3%	+0.3	↑	+2.6	↑
Fife	6.1%	6.4%	+0.3	↑	+2.6	↑
Midlothian	5.1%	5.4%	+0.3	↑	+2.8	↑
Scottish Borders	5.2%	5.4%	+0.2	↑	+2.7	↑
West Lothian	5.3%	5.5%	+0.2	↑	+2.6	↑

Source: ONS Claimant Count

As in previous months, **Fife's claimant rate (6.1%) was higher than both City Region averages** – Edinburgh & South East Scotland (5.5%) and Tay Cities (5.2%) **and the second highest in both regions** after Dundee (6.8%).

As part of the [Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal](#), the Scottish and UK Governments will invest £25 million in Employability and Skills. In April, a job matching service – [the COVID-19 Job Support website](#) – was launched for the city region.

The [Tay Cities Deal](#) The newly-signed Tay Cities Region Deal is expected to leverage around £700m of investment and secure over 6,000 new job opportunities.

### 3.8 Tay Cities Region



Claimant Rate by Local Authority

	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Monthly change		Annual change	
Angus	5.4	5.5	+0.1	↑	+2.6	↑
Dundee	6.8	7.1	+0.3	↑	+2.5	↑
North East Fife	3.4	3.5	+0.1	↑	+1.8	↑
Perth & Kinross	4.4	4.6	+0.2	↑	+2.6	↑

The Tay Cities Region captures North East Fife only, and the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region covers an area in the South and West of Fife (illustrated in maps 3.7 and 3.8).

NB Care should be taken when comparing these geographies

## UNIVERSAL CREDIT

The claimant count is based on [experimental](#) figures calculated by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). It is measured by the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus experimental data on the number of people on Universal Credit who are required to search for work.

Universal Credit replaces six existing legacy benefits and tax credits (including Jobseeker's Allowance and Income-related Employment and Support Allowance) and was fully introduced in Fife on 6 January 2017 after initially going live in the region in April 2016. During this period, before it was fully rolled out, Universal Credit in Fife was limited to claims which were relatively simple, whereas more complex claimants were likely to remain or be added to Jobseeker's Allowance. The introduction of Universal Credit has resulted in fluctuations in the claimant count and inconsistencies in the coverage of the claimant count across the UK due to different speeds of the roll out.

Areas across the UK that are operating full service have seen a marked increase in their claimant count. Universal Credit requires more people to look for work than was the case for legacy benefits; new claimants who are waiting on or appealing Work Capability Assessments are also required to look for work.

Due to inconsistencies, the claimant count has been re-classified by the ONS as experimental statistics. This status is likely to continue until the roll out of Universal Credit is completed - expected in 2022. Please note that care should therefore be taken when analysing and interpreting the figures.

Universal Credit statistics supplied by the Department for Work and Pensions are provisional on their date of release and may be subject to revision.

More information on Universal Credit can be found [here](#).

For further information about the contents of this publication, or to request any bespoke economic information, please contact:

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