










FIFE LABOUR MARKET UPDATE

JULY 2023

This monthly update reports on the number of people in Fife claiming out-of-work benefits ([the claimant count and claimant rate](#)). It also provides data on the area's latest unemployment rate (people without a job but who are seeking work) and economic inactivity rate (people who are neither working nor seeking work). All data shown are provisional and subject to revision.

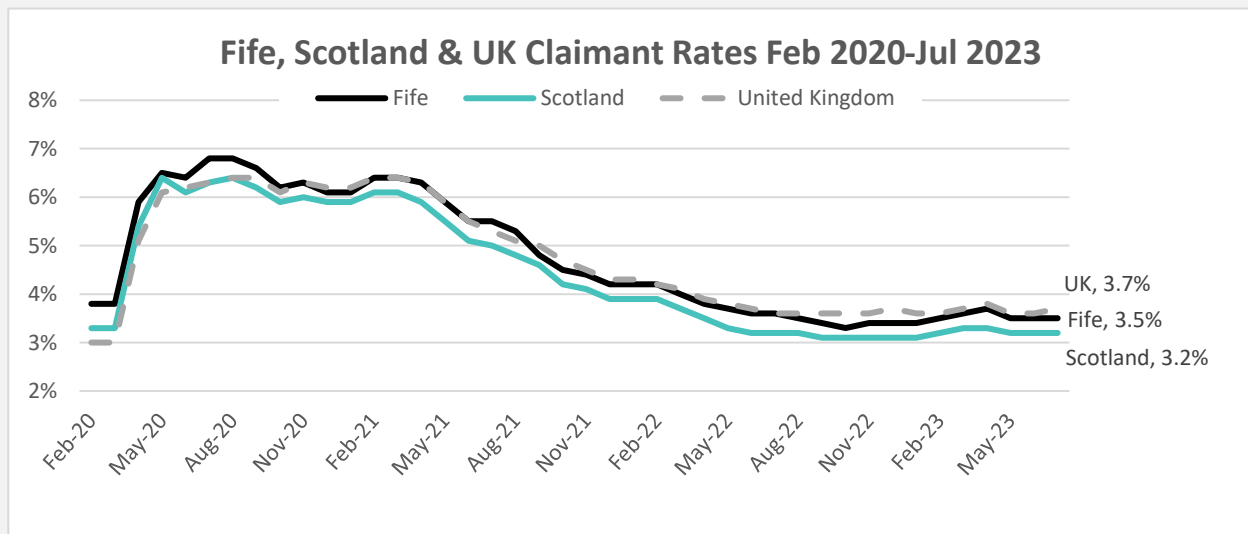
1.1 CLAIMANT RATE

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

| July 2023 | Claimant Rate | Monthly Change | Annual Change | Change Feb 2020-July 2023 |
|----------------|---------------|--|--|--|
| Fife | 3.5% | 0.0  | -0.1  | -0.3  |
| Scotland | 3.2% | 0.0  | 0.0  | -0.1  |
| United Kingdom | 3.7% | +0.1  | +0.1  | +0.7  |

Source: ONS Claimant Count. The changes shown represent the difference in percentage points between this month's claimant rate and the rate for the previous periods.

In July, Fife's claimant rate was the same as the previous month although the number of people claiming out-of-work benefits increased from 8,040 to 8,135. Over the same period, while the Scottish claimant rate also remained unchanged, the UK rate rose by 0.1 percentage points. Fife's July claimant rate was 0.1 percentage points lower than a year ago in July 2022 (3.6%), and 0.3 percentage points lower than its pre-pandemic February 2020 rate (3.8%).



Source: ONS Claimant Count

1.2 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

% of economically active residents aged over 16 who are without a job but are actively seeking or waiting to start a job

| | Unemployment Rate Apr 22- Mar 23 | Annual Change (2021/22-2022/23) | | Change 2019/20- 2022/23 | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| Fife | 3.9% | +0.2 | ↑ | -0.2 | ↓ |
| Scotland | 3.5% | +0.1 | ↑ | +0.2 | ↑ |
| United Kingdom | 3.6% | -0.5 | ↓ | -0.3 | ↓ |

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (the Fife unemployment rate is a model-based estimate). The changes shown represent the difference in percentage points between the latest rate and the rates for previous periods.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, an estimated 7,000 people were unemployed in Fife, 300 more than the previous period (Jan-Dec 2022). **Fife's unemployment rate (3.9%) was lower than before the pandemic but higher than a year ago.**

Fife's **employment rate (74.1%) fell** compared with the previous period (74.7% Jan-Dec 2022), but was higher than it was prior to the pandemic (73.7% in Jan-Dec 2019).

1.3 ECONOMIC INACTIVITY

% of working age (16-64) residents who are neither working nor seeking or available to work

| | Economic Inactivity Rate Apr 22 – Mar 23 | Annual Change (2021/22 – 2022/23) | | Change 2019/20 – 2022/23 | |
|----------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Fife | 22.9% | -3.5 | ↓ | -1.9 | ↓ |
| Scotland | 22.6% | -0.9 | ↓ | -0.4 | ↓ |
| United Kingdom | 21.7% | +0.1 | ↑ | +0.6 | ↑ |

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey. The changes shown represent the difference in percentage points between the latest inactivity rate and the rates for previous periods.

Fife's economic inactivity rate is still lower than the record high rate (26.9%) recorded in the 12 months to June 2022. **Fife's latest inactivity rate is now lower than before the Covid-19 pandemic**, while the UK rate remain higher. **Long term ill-health** was the reason given for not being in employment or seeking work by 30.7% of those who were economically inactive in the region (an estimated 15,800 people). **An estimated 9,900 people – 19.2% of those who are economically inactive - want a job.** This is more than a year ago when 7,800 or 13.2% of economically inactive people wanted a job.

2.0 PROFILE OF FIFE'S OUT-OF-WORK BENEFIT CLAIMANTS

2.1 Breakdown by Type of Claimant

The number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit who are required to seek work

| July 2023 | Claimant Rate | Claimant Count | Claimant Count - monthly change | | Claimant Count - annual change | |
|---|---------------|----------------|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| People searching for work on Universal Credit | 3.3% | 7,609 | +103 | ↑ | -54 | ↓ |
| Jobseeker's Allowance claimants | 0.2% | 524 | -9 | ↓ | -85 | ↓ |

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

Note: claimant count data may not precisely add to the sum of the number of people claiming JSA and the number of people claiming Universal Credit required to seek work due to independent rounding.

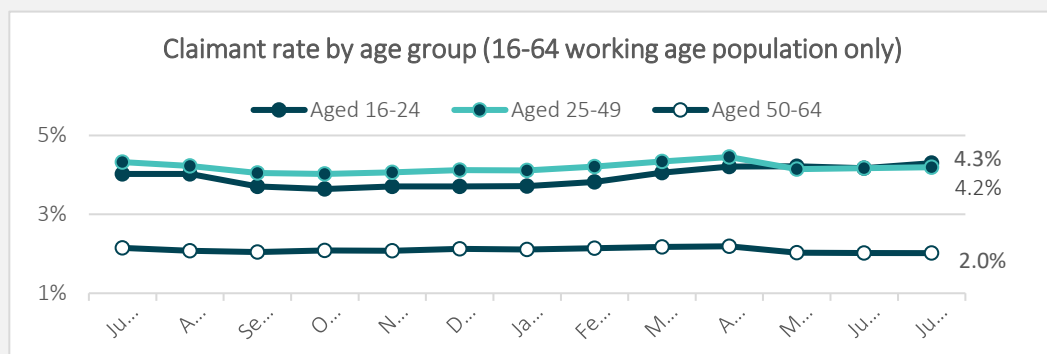
Over 100 more people claimed Universal Credit while searching for work in Fife compared with the previous month but 54 fewer than a year ago in July 2022. There were 9 fewer JSA claimants in July 2023 compared with the previous month, and 85 fewer than in July 2022.

2.2 Breakdown by Age

| July 2023 | Claimant Rate | Claimant Count | Claimant Count - monthly change | | Claimant Count - annual change | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| 16-24 year olds claiming benefits | 4.3% | 1,670 | +50 | ↑ | +105 | ↑ |
| 25-49 year olds claiming benefits | 4.2% | 4,700 | +35 | ↑ | -140 | ↓ |
| 50-64 year olds claiming benefits | 2.0% | 1,630 | -5 | ↓ | -105 | ↓ |
| 65+ year olds claiming benefits | 0.2% | 135 | +5 | ↑ | +10 | ↑ |

Source: ONS Claimant Count

In July, 50-64 year olds were the only age group where the number of claimants fell. The 16-24 year old age group which saw a rise in both its claimant number and rate now had the highest claimant rate. This was also the only working-age age group where the number of claimants was higher than a year ago.



Source: ONS Claimant Count

2.3 Breakdown by Gender

| July 2023 | Claimant Rate | Claimant Count | Claimant Count - monthly change | | Claimant Count - annual change | |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Female claimants | 2.8% | 3,320 | +160 | ↑ | +135 | ↑ |
| Male claimants | 4.2% | 4,815 | -65 | ↓ | -275 | ↓ |

Source: ONS Claimant Count

For the second month running, July saw an increase in the number of women claiming out-of-work benefits but a fall in the number of male claimants.

The male claimant rate (4.2%) however still remains significantly higher than the female rate (2.8%) although in July the size of the gap reduced by 0.2 percentage points.

2.4 Breakdown by Fife's Local Committee Areas

In this areal breakdown, the monthly and annual change is given for the claimant count and rate for each of Fife Council's seven [Local Area Committees](#). For the claimant rate, the change represents the difference in percentage points between the previous and current claimant rate.

| July 2023 | Claimant Rate | Monthly change | | Annual change | | Claimant Count | Monthly change | | Annual change | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|---|---------------|---|----------------|----------------|---|---------------|---|
| Cowdenbeath | 4.3% | -0.1 | ↓ | -0.5 | ↓ | 1,125 | -20 | ↓ | -110 | ↓ |
| Dunfermline | 2.9% | 0.0 | → | -0.2 | ↓ | 1,060 | -10 | ↓ | -90 | ↓ |
| Glenrothes | 3.5% | 0.0 | → | +0.3 | ↑ | 1,055 | +5 | ↑ | +65 | ↑ |
| Kirkcaldy | 5.5% | +0.1 | ↑ | +0.1 | ↑ | 2,030 | +60 | ↑ | +65 | ↑ |
| Levenmouth | 5.3% | +0.1 | ↑ | -0.1 | ↓ | 1,205 | +35 | ↑ | -25 | ↓ |
| North East Fife | 1.7% | +0.1 | ↑ | 0.0 | → | 795 | +40 | ↑ | +20 | ↑ |
| South & West Fife | 2.6% | 0.0 | → | -0.2 | ↓ | 810 | -15 | ↓ | -65 | ↓ |

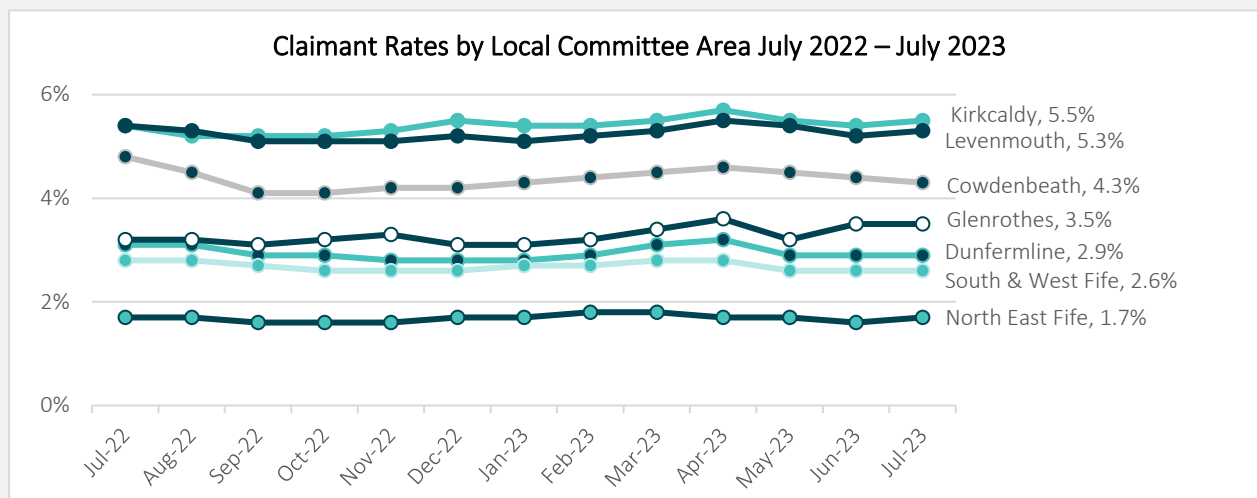
Source: ONS Claimant Count

Cowdenbeath was the only committee area where both the number and rate of people claiming out-of-work benefits fell; **Kirkcaldy**, **Levenmouth** and **NE Fife** all saw the number and rate of claimants increase.

In the **Glenrothes** and **Kirkcaldy** Areas and **NE Fife**, claimant numbers were higher than a year ago; all other areas had lower claimant numbers than in July 2022.

The **Kirkcaldy Area** had the highest number and rate of people claiming out-of-work benefits and **NE Fife** had the lowest.

2.4 Breakdown by Fife's Local Committee Areas (continued)



Source: ONS Claimant Count

2.5 Breakdown by Gender and Local Committee Area

| July 2023 | Female Claimant Count | Female Claimant Rate | Male Claimant Count | Male Claimant Rate |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Cowdenbeath | 440 | 3.3% | 685 | 5.5% |
| Dunfermline | 435 | 2.3% | 625 | 3.4% |
| Glenrothes | 435 | 2.8% | 620 | 4.2% |
| Kirkcaldy | 835 | 4.5% | 1,195 | 6.7% |
| Levenmouth | 460 | 3.9% | 745 | 6.8% |
| North East Fife | 330 | 1.4% | 465 | 2.1% |
| South & West Fife | 365 | 2.3% | 445 | 2.9% |

Source: ONS Claimant Count

In all areas of Fife, the number and rate of men claiming out-of-work benefits was higher than the number and rate of women.

The greatest differences were in **Levenmouth** where the male claimant rate was 74.4% higher than the female rate, and the lowest in **South & West Fife** where the male rate was only 26.1% higher.

2.6 Breakdown by Electoral Ward (July 2023)

| WARDS WITH THE HIGHEST CLAIMANT RATES | | WARDS WITH THE LOWEST CLAIMANT RATES | |
|---------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|------|
| Kirkcaldy Central | 7.7% | Howe of Fife & Tay Coast | 2.4% |
| Buckhaven, Methil & Wemyss Villages | 7.1% | Inverkeithing & Dalgety Bay | 2.4% |
| Kirkcaldy East | 6.9% | Tay Bridgehead | 1.8% |
| Lochgelly, Cardenden & Benarty | 5.0% | St Andrews | 0.7% |

Source: ONS Claimant Count

Kirkcaldy Central, **Buckhaven, Methil & Wemyss Villages** and **Kirkcaldy East** remain the electoral wards with the highest claimant rates in Fife.

3.0 CLAIMANT RATES IN FIFE'S CITY REGIONS

Fife is part of two City Region Deals – the [Edinburgh & SE Scotland City Region Deal](#) and the [Tay Cities Region Deal](#). This section shows the % of working age residents claiming out-of-work benefits of each of the local authorities that make up the two City Regions.

3.1 Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region



| Claimant Rate by Local Authority | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|---|---------------|---|
| | June 2023 | July 2023 | Monthly change | | Annual change | |
| City of Edinburgh | 2.3% | 2.4% | +0.1 | ↑ | 0.0 | — |
| East Lothian | 2.3% | 2.3% | 0.0 | — | +0.1 | ↑ |
| Fife | 3.5% | 3.5% | 0.0 | — | -0.1 | ↓ |
| Midlothian | 2.3% | 2.3% | 0.0 | — | 0.0 | — |
| Scottish Borders | 3.0% | 3.0% | 0.0 | — | +0.1 | ↑ |
| West Lothian | 2.7% | 2.7% | 0.0 | — | 0.0 | — |

Source: ONS Claimant Count. The changes shown represent the differences in percentage points between this month's claimant rates and the rates for previous periods.

3.2 Tay Cities Region



| Claimant Rate by Local Authority and Fife Council Local Committee Area | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|----------------|---|---------------|---|
| | June 2023 | July 2023 | Monthly change | | Annual change | |
| Angus | 3.0% | 3.1% | +0.1 | ↑ | +0.2 | ↑ |
| Dundee | 4.4% | 4.6% | +0.2 | ↑ | +0.3 | ↑ |
| North East Fife | 1.6% | 1.7% | +0.1 | ↑ | 0.0 | — |
| Perth & Kinross | 2.4% | 2.4% | 0.0 | — | +0.1 | ↑ |

Source: ONS Claimant Count. The changes shown represent the differences in percentage points between this month's claimant rates and the rates for previous periods.

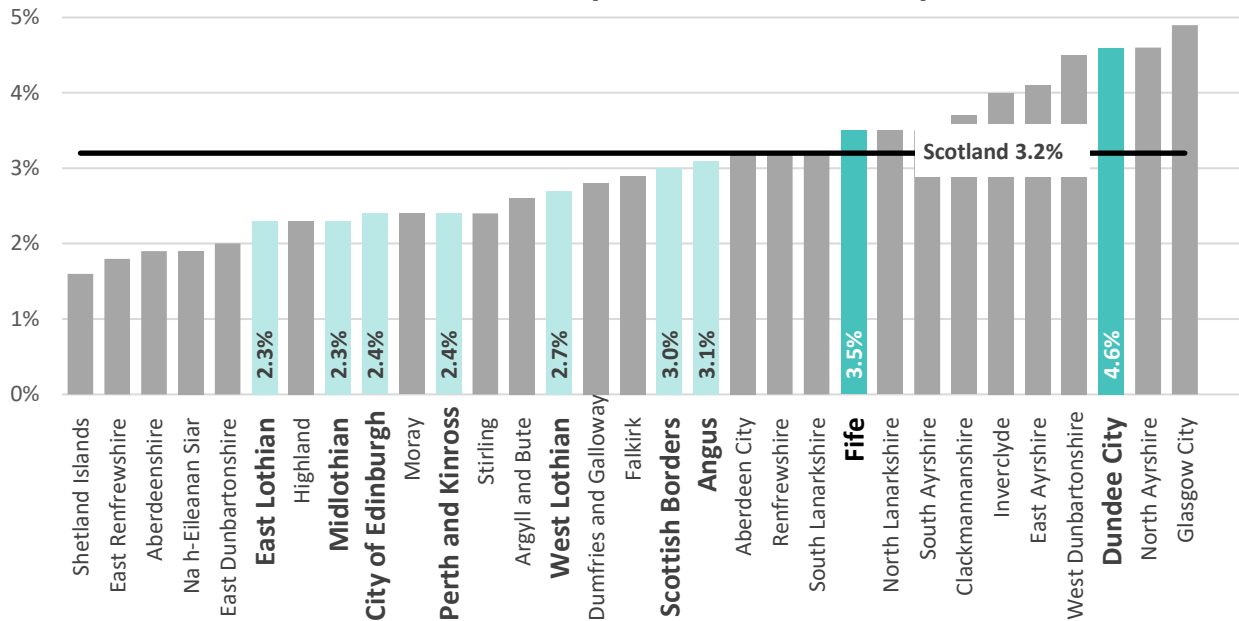
In July, claimant rates remained the same in all parts of both City Regions apart from in **Edinburgh, Angus, Dundee and NE Fife** where they increased. Fife was the only area where, claimant rates were lower than a year ago in July 2022.

As in previous months, **Fife's** claimant rate (3.5%) was the second highest after Dundee (4.6%).

As shown in the graph below, **Fife and Dundee** are the only City Region Local Authorities whose claimant rates were above the Scottish rate.

Note: 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 as indicated on the maps. Care should be taken when using these geographies.

Scottish Local Authority Claimant Rates - July 2023



Source: ONS Claimant Count

CLAIMANT COUNT STATISTICS

The claimant counts and claimant rates given in this update are based on experimental data collected by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The claimant count represents the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus the number of people on Universal Credit who are required to search for work and are available for work.

Universal Credit replaces six 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.

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.

The claimant count dataset is still classified by the ONS as experimental statistics. Please note that care should therefore be taken when analysing and interpreting the figures.

Claimant Count, Jobseekers Allowance and Universal Credit statistics are provisional on their date of release and are subject to revision.

For more information and to access all the labour market statistics from official sources for the UK visit www.nomisweb.co.uk.

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

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