

FIFE LABOUR MARKET UPDATE

AUGUST 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.

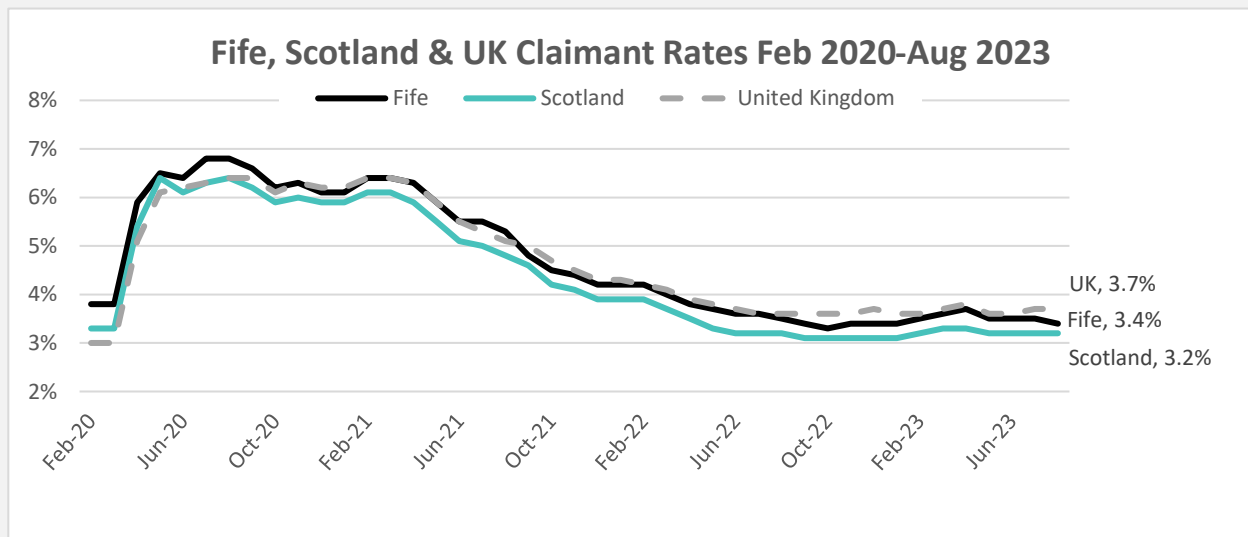
1.1 CLAIMANT RATE

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

August 2023	Claimant Rate	Monthly Change		Annual Change		Change Feb 2020-Aug 2023	
Fife	3.4%	-0.1	↓	-0.1	↓	-0.4	↓
Scotland	3.2%	0.0	→	0.0	→	-0.1	↓
United Kingdom	3.7%	0.0	→	+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 August, Fife's claimant rate fell by 0.1 percentage point as the estimated number of people claiming out-of-work benefits dropped from 8,060 to 7,935. Over the same period, the Scottish and UK claimant rates remained unchanged. Fife's August claimant rate was 0.1 percentage points lower than a year ago in August 2022 (3.5%), and 0.4 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

August 2023	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change		Claimant Count - annual change	
People searching for work on Universal Credit	3.2%	7,430	-105	↓	-98	↓
Jobseeker's Allowance claimants	0.2%	503	-21	↓	-72	↓

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.

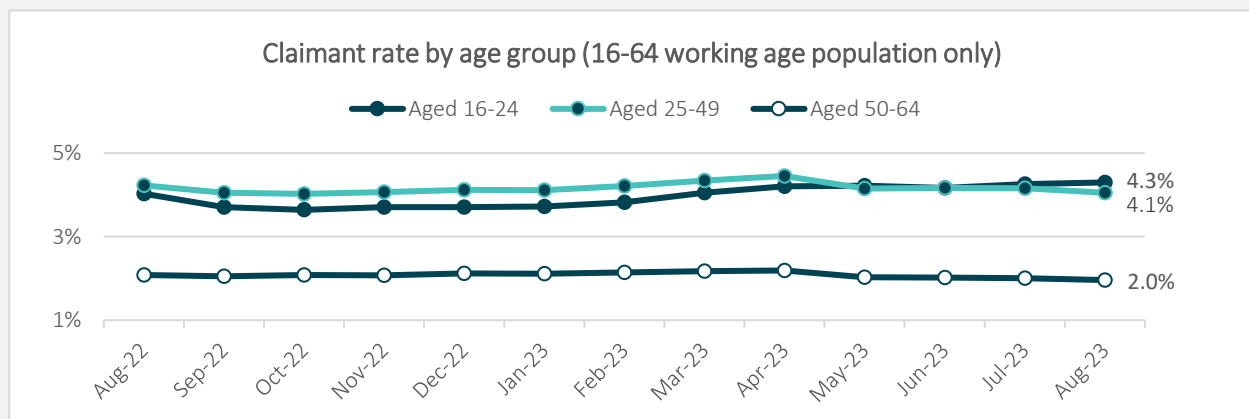
Over 100 fewer people claimed Universal Credit while searching for work in Fife compared with the previous month and 98 fewer than a year ago in August 2022. There were 21 fewer JSA claimants in August 2023 compared with the previous month, and 72 fewer than in August 2022.

2.2 Breakdown by Age

August 2023	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change		Claimant Count - annual change	
16-24 year olds claiming benefits	4.3%	1,670	+15	↑	+105	↑
25-49 year olds claiming benefits	4.1%	4,535	-120	↓	-195	↓
50-64 year olds claiming benefits	2.0%	1,585	-35	↓	-95	↓
65+ year olds claiming benefits	0.2%	135	+5	↑	0	→

Source: ONS Claimant Count

For the second month the 16-24 year old age group saw a rise in claimant numbers and was the age group with the highest claimant rate. This was also the only age group where the number of claimants was higher than a year ago in August 2022.



Source: ONS Claimant Count

2.3 Breakdown by Gender

August 2023	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change		Claimant Count - annual change	
Female claimants	2.7%	3,200	-90	↓	+40	↑
Male claimants	4.2%	4,735	-35	↓	-210	↓

Source: ONS Claimant Count

After increasing in June and July, the number of women claiming out-of-work benefits fell in August, though was still higher than the number of claimants a year ago.

The male claimant rate (4.2%) still remains significantly higher than the female rate (2.7%).

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.

August 2023	Claimant Rate	Monthly change		Annual change		Claimant Count	Monthly change		Annual change	
Cowdenbeath	4.3%	0.0	▬	-0.2	↓	1,110	+5	↑	-55	↓
Dunfermline	2.8%	-0.1	↓	-0.3	↓	1,030	-35	↓	-105	↓
Glenrothes	3.4%	-0.1	↓	+0.2	↑	1,020	-45	↓	+35	↑
Kirkcaldy	5.3%	-0.2	↓	+0.1	↑	1,955	-50	↓	+40	↑
Levenmouth	5.2%	0.0	▬	-0.1	↓	1,180	-5	↓	-20	↓
North East Fife	1.7%	0.0	▬	0.0	▬	775	0	▬	+15	↑
South & West Fife	2.6%	0.0	▬	-0.2	↓	805	-5	↓	-80	↓

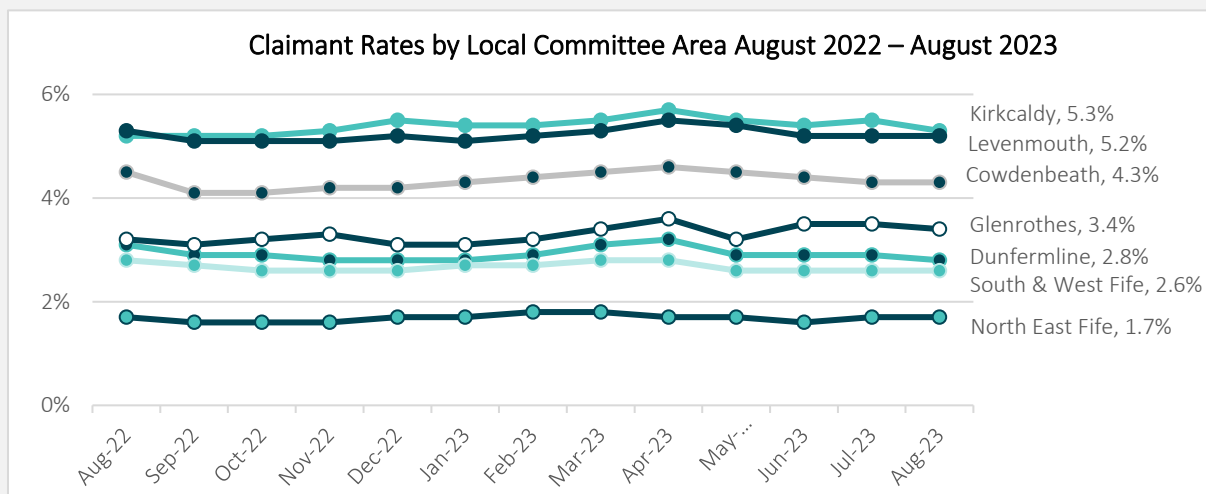
Source: ONS Claimant Count

The City of Dunfermline and the Glenrothes and Kirkcaldy Areas all saw both the number and rate of people claiming out-of-work benefits fall compared with the previous month; Cowdenbeath was the only committee area where claimant numbers were higher than in July.

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

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

August 2023	Female Claimant Count	Female Claimant Rate	Male Claimant Count	Male Claimant Rate
Cowdenbeath	420	3.1%	690	5.6%
Dunfermline	430	2.3%	600	3.3%
Glenrothes	420	2.7%	600	4.0%
Kirkcaldy	785	4.2%	1,170	6.5%
Levenmouth	435	3.7%	745	6.8%
North East Fife	315	1.3%	460	2.0%
South & West Fife	370	2.4%	435	2.8%

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 84% higher than the female rate, and the lowest in **South & West Fife** where the male rate was only 17% higher.

2.6 Breakdown by Electoral Ward (August 2023)

WARDS WITH THE HIGHEST CLAIMANT RATES		WARDS WITH THE LOWEST CLAIMANT RATES	
Kirkcaldy Central	7.6%	Howe of Fife & Tay Coast	2.3%
Buckhaven, Methil & Wemyss Villages	6.9%	Inverkeithing & Dalgety Bay	2.3%
Kirkcaldy East	6.5%	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						
	July 2023	Aug 2023	Monthly change		Annual change	
City of Edinburgh	2.4%	2.4%	0.0	▬	0.0	▬
East Lothian	2.3%	2.3%	0.0	▬	0.0	▬
Fife	3.5%	3.4%	-0.1	↓	-0.1	↓
Midlothian	2.4%	2.3%	-0.1	↓	-0.1	↓
Scottish Borders	3.0%	3.0%	0.0	▬	0.0	▬
West Lothian	2.7%	2.7%	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.

3.2 Tay Cities Region



Claimant Rate by Local Authority and Fife Council Local Committee Area						
	July 2023	Aug 2023	Monthly change		Annual change	
Angus	3.1%	3.0%	-0.1	↓	+0.2	↑
Dundee	4.5%	4.5%	0.0	▬	+0.2	↑
North East Fife	1.7%	1.7%	0.0	▬	0.0	▬
Perth & Kinross	2.4%	2.4%	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.

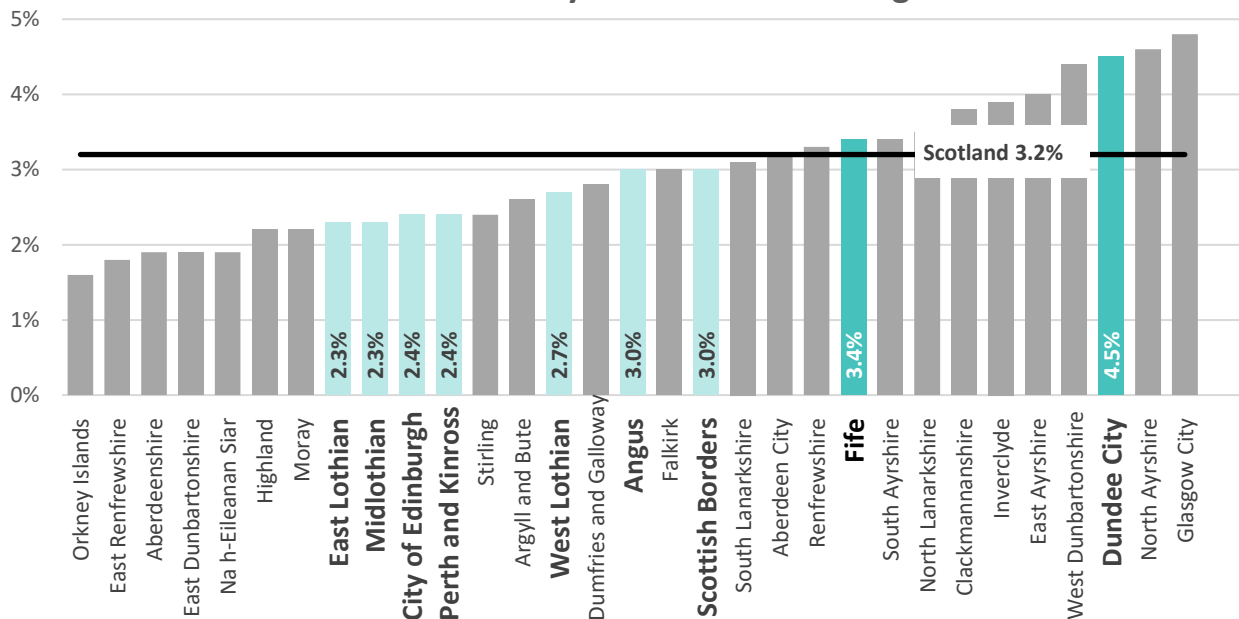
In August, claimant rates remained the same in all parts of both City Regions apart from in **Angus, Fife and Midlothian** where they fell. **Angus and Dundee** were the only areas where claimant rates were higher than a year ago in August 2022.

As in previous months, **Fife's** claimant rate (3.4%) was the second highest after **Dundee** (4.5%).

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 - August 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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