

MONTHLY LABOUR MARKET UPDATE

March 2019

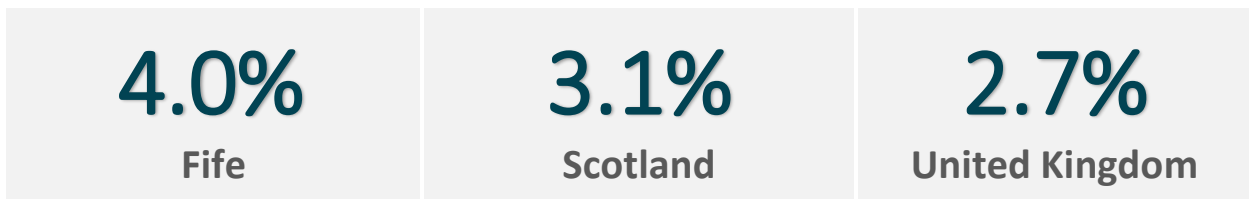
This is a monthly update on the performance of the Fife labour market produced by Fife Council on behalf of the Fife Economy Partnership.

Please note the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has re-classified the Claimant Count figures as experimental statistics. Care should therefore be taken when analysing and interpreting these figures. More information on this can be found at the end of this briefing.

Universal Credit statistics are provisional and are revised on a monthly basis.

CLAIMANT RATE (March 2019)

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

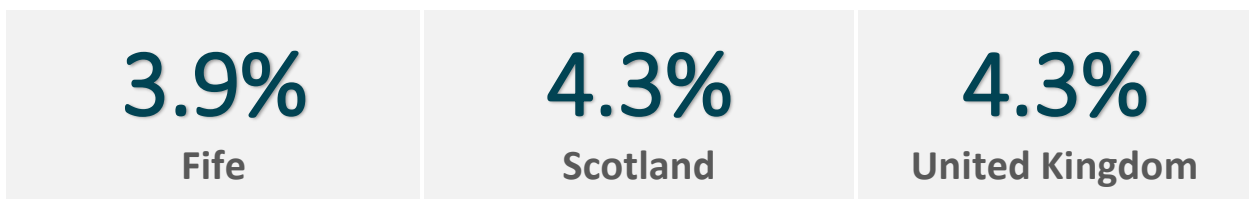


Source: ONS Claimant Count

Fife's claimant rate has been steadily increasing since the introduction of Universal Credit (Figure 3.1). Between February 2019 and March 2019, Fife's claimant rate rose by 0.2% (Table 2.1).

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (JAN 2018 - DEC 2018)

% of working age (16-64) residents who are out of work



Source: ONS Claimant Count

Fife's unemployment rate increased by 0.4 percentage points since the last period (Oct 2017-Sept 2018). For the same period, Fife's **employment rate** decreased to 75.2%. This was higher than both the Scottish and UK employment rates of 74.1% and 75%, respectively.

PROFILE OF FIFE CLAIMANTS

2.1 Breakdown of Fife's total Claimants

MARCH 2019	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change
People searching for work on Universal Credit	3.3%	7,763	388
Jobseeker's Allowance claimants	0.6%	1,454	-49

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

2.2 Breakdown by Age & Gender

MARCH 2019	Claimant Rate	Claimant Count	Claimant Count - monthly change
16-24 year olds claiming benefits	4.7%	1,960	140
25-49 year olds claiming benefits	4.4%	5,045	160
50+ year olds claiming benefits	2.8%	2,200	35
Male claimants	5.1%	5,790	225
Female claimants	2.9%	3,415	105

Source: ONS Claimant Count

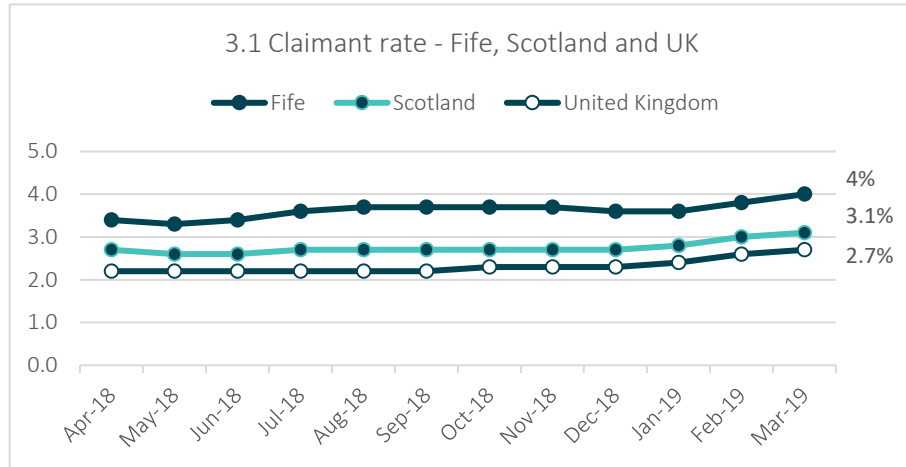
2.3 Area Committee Summary (March 2019)

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.

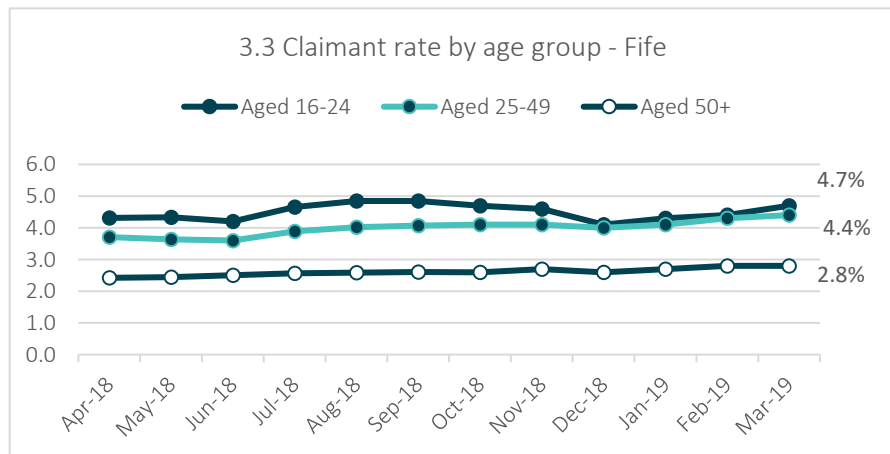
MARCH 2019	Claimant Rate	Monthly change	Claimant Count	Monthly change	Female	Male
Cowdenbeath	5.4%	0.0	1,390	5	495	900
City of Dunfermline	3.4%	0.1	1,245	50	450	800
Glenrothes	3.7%	0.2	1,150	55	465	685
Kirkcaldy	5.7%	0.3	2,090	110	790	1,300
Levenmouth	6.8%	0.2	1,545	50	545	1,000
North East Fife	1.8%	0.1	830	25	310	520
South & West Fife	2.9%	0.2	895	40	345	550

Source: ONS Claimant Count

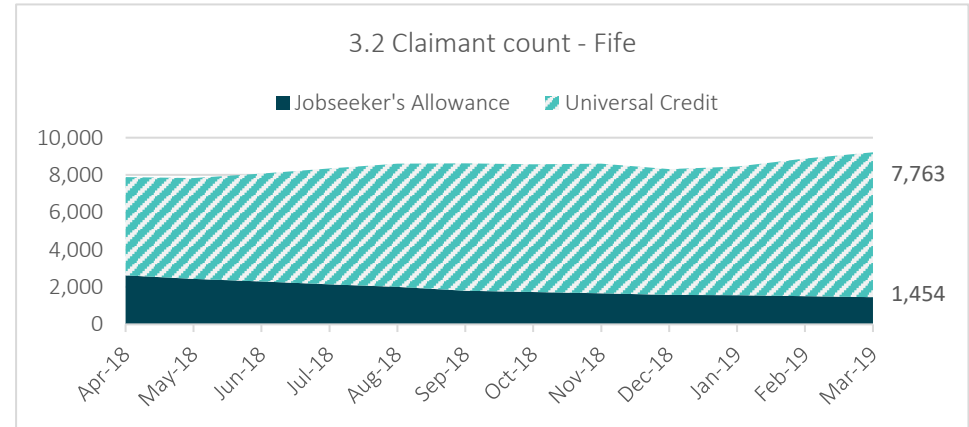
BREAKDOWN & COMPARISONS OF KEY INDICATORS



Source: ONS Claimant Count



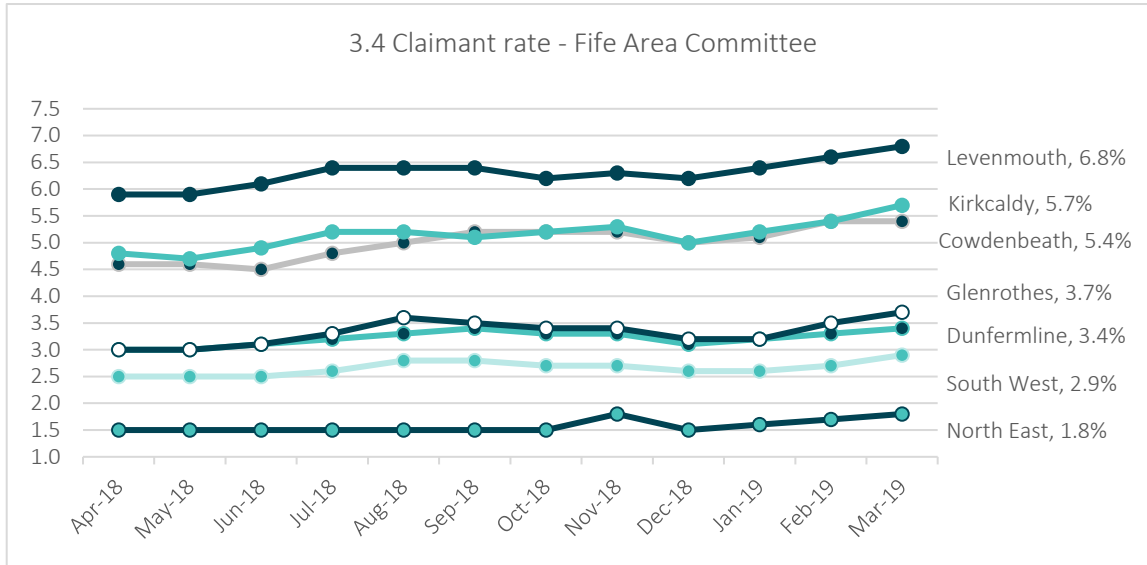
Source: ONS Claimant Count



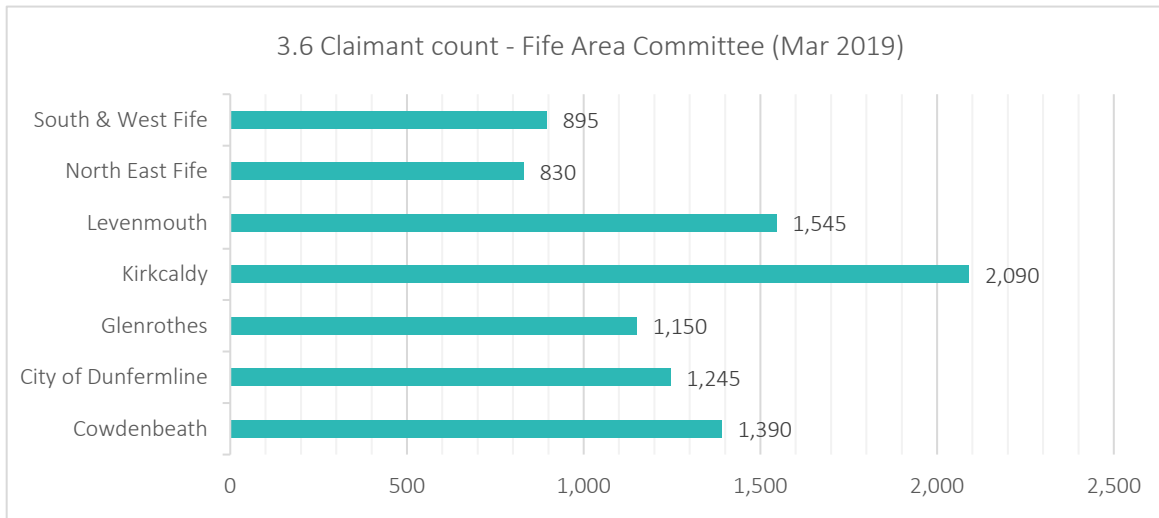
Source: ONS Jobseeker's Allowance; Department for Work and Pensions

Figure 3.2 illustrates the increase in the number of claimants on Universal Credit since the roll out of full service in December 2017. As the number of people required to search for work on Universal Credit increases, the number of JSA claimants decrease as existing claimants are moved over or new claimants are added to the new benefits system.

Unemployment or a lack of participation amongst the 16-24 years age group is considered a key challenge highlighted in [Fife's Economic Strategy 2017-2027](#). With the introduction of Universal Credit, the claimant rate of this age group has decreased over recent months but continues to be higher than other age groups. The [Developing the Young Workforce](#) initiative aims to reduce youth unemployment by 40% by 2021 by bringing together schools, colleges and employers to provide young people with work-based learning.



Source: ONS Claimant Count



Source: ONS Claimant Count

3.5 Claimant Rate by Ward (Mar 2019)

HIGHEST	
Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages	9.0%
Kirkcaldy East	7.6%
Kirkcaldy Central	7.4%
LOWEST	
Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay	2.2%
Tay Bridgehead	1.9%
St Andrews	0.6%

Source: ONS Claimant Count

There are significant variations across Fife's areas, with higher levels of claimants in Kirkcaldy, Levenmouth and Cowdenbeath.

Areas within 'Mid-Fife' have higher levels of both claimant count and claimant rate.

The highest claimant rate – in Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages (9%) – is more than double the Fife average, and is significantly higher than other areas in Fife.

St Andrews and the Tay Bridgehead, alongside areas with a higher job density, i.e. Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay and Cupar, have lower claimant rates in comparison.

The [Plan for Fife 2017-2027](#) and [Fife's Economic Strategy 2017-2027](#) both aim to address these regional disparities.

3.7 Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region



Claimant Rate by Local Authority

	Feb 2019	Mar 2019	Claimant Rate - monthly change
East Lothian	3.0%	2.9%	-0.1 ↓
City of Edinburgh	1.4%	1.6%	0.2 ↑
Midlothian	2.6%	2.6%	0.0 →
Scottish Borders	2.5%	2.6%	0.1 ↑
West Lothian	2.8%	2.9%	0.1 ↑

Source: ONS Claimant Count

As part of a key programme in the [Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal](#), the Scottish and UK Governments will invest £25 million in Employability and Skills.

The Opportunities Fife Partnership sets out in its [2018-2022 strategy](#) the need for making it easier for unemployed people, particularly from Mid-Fife, to access further education, training and jobs not only in Fife, but throughout the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region. The [Tay Cities Deal](#) sets out the need for a transformational skills programme to address a number of issues relating to inclusivity across the Tay Cities Region.

3.8 Tay Cities Region



Claimant Rate by Local Authority

	Feb 2019	Mar 2019	Monthly change on rate
Angus	3.1%	3.2%	0.1 ↑
Dundee	4.7%	4.8%	0.1 ↑
North East Fife	1.7%	1.8%	0.1 ↑
Perth & Kinross	1.8%	1.9%	0.1 ↑

Source: ONS Claimant Count

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 (illustrated in maps under 3.7 and 3.8).

Fife’s claimant rate (4%) is above both City Region averages – Edinburgh & South East Scotland (2.8%) and Tay Cities (2.9%). Both are lower than the Scottish average (3.1%), however, rates vary across the regions’ authorities.

This variance may be a result of the different stages in the roll out of the new benefit system.

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 December 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](#).

STATISTICS & ECONOMIC INFORMATION


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