

Statistical bulletin

# Regional labour market statistics in the UK: Apr 2017

Regional, local authority and parliamentary constituency breakdowns of changes in UK employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and other employment-related statistics.



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# 1 . Main points

- For the 3 months ending February 2017, the highest employment rate in the UK was in the South West (78.8%) and the lowest was in Northern Ireland (68.8%).
- For the 3 months ending February 2017, the highest unemployment rate in the UK was in the North East (6.4%) and the lowest was in the South East (3.4%).
- For the 3 months ending February 2017, the highest economic inactivity rate in the UK was in Northern Ireland (27.3%) and the lowest was in the South West (18.2%).
- Between September 2016 and December 2016, the largest increase in workforce jobs in the UK was in the East of England, at 33,000, whilst the largest decrease was in the South East at 11,000.
- In December 2016, the region with the highest proportion of workforce jobs in the service sector was London at 92.2%, which had decreased by 0.3 percentage points since September 2016, whilst the East Midlands had the highest proportion of jobs in the production sector at 13.7%.
- The highest average actual weekly hours worked, for the 12 months ending December 2016, was in London at 33.7 hours and lowest in Yorkshire and The Humber at 31.3 hours; for full-time workers, it was highest in London at 38.4 hours and for part-time workers it was highest in Northern Ireland at 17.0 hours.

## 2 . Summary of latest regional labour market statistics

Table 1 shows the latest estimates for employment, unemployment and economic inactivity for December 2016 to February 2017 and a comparison with the previous quarter (September to November 2016). Comparing non-overlapping periods (December 2016 to February 2017 with September to November 2016) provides a more robust short-term comparison.

**Table 1: Summary of latest headline estimates for regions of the UK, seasonally adjusted, December 2016 to February 2017**

UK regions

	Employment rate <sup>1</sup> (%) aged 16 to 64	Change on Sep to Nov 2016	Unemployment rate <sup>2</sup> (%) aged 16 and over	Change on Sep to Nov 2016	Inactivity rate <sup>3</sup> (%) aged 16 to 64	Change on Sep to Nov 2016
United Kingdom	74.6	0.1	4.7	-0.1	21.6	0.0
Great Britain	74.8	0.2	4.7	-0.1	21.4	-0.1
England	75.0	0.2	4.7	-0.1	21.2	-0.1
North East	70.5	0.1	6.4	-0.3	24.4	0.2
North West	73.5	0.5	4.5	-0.8	22.9	0.1
Yorkshire and The Humber	73.8	0.2	5.1	0.2	22.2	-0.4
East Midlands	75.2	-0.6	4.1	-0.4	21.5	0.9
West Midlands	71.7	-0.7	5.7	0.0	23.9	0.8
East	77.0	0.4	4.3	-0.3	19.4	-0.2
London	73.4	-0.3	5.9	0.3	21.9	0.1
South East	78.6	0.4	3.4	0.0	18.6	-0.4
South West	78.8	1.5	3.5	-0.2	18.2	-1.4
Wales	73.0	0.5	4.9	0.5	23.2	-0.9
Scotland	73.4	-0.1	4.5	-0.5	23.0	0.5
Northern Ireland	68.8	-0.5	5.2	-0.4	27.3	0.8

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Calculation of headline employment rate: Number of employed people aged from 16 to 64 divided by the population aged from 16 to 64. Population is the sum of employed plus unemployed plus inactive.

2. Calculation of headline unemployment rate: Number of unemployed people aged 16 and over divided by the sum of employed people aged 16 and over plus unemployed people aged 16 and over.

3. Calculation of headline economic inactivity rate: Number of economically inactive people aged from 16 to 64 divided by the population aged from 16 to 64. Population is the sum of employed plus unemployed plus inactive.

### 3 . Things you need to know about this release

This bulletin shows the latest main labour market statistics for the regions and countries of the UK, along with statistics for local authorities, travel-to-work areas and parliamentary constituencies.

Data for Northern Ireland, although included in this bulletin, are available separately, in full, in the [Northern Ireland Labour Market Report](#) on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) website.

## Updated this month

Labour Force Survey estimates for the period December 2016 to February 2017  
Annual Population Survey estimates for the period January to December 2016

## Also in this release

Workforce jobs estimates for December 2016  
Public and private sector employment for December 2016

## Labour market statistics

Labour market statistics measure many different aspects of work and jobs and provide an insight into the economy. They are also very much about people, including their participation in the labour force, the types of work they do, the earnings and benefits they receive and their working patterns.

We have developed a framework for labour market statistics to describe the concepts within the labour market and their relationship to each other. The framework is based on labour supply and demand.

Labour supply consists of people who are employed, as well as those people defined as unemployed or economically inactive, who are considered to be potential labour supply. Our framework distinguishes between these three categories of worker, and also between the different working arrangements of those in employment such as employees, the self-employed and those on government schemes.

Labour demand is represented by employers, who have a need for work to be done, and who offer compensation for this work to the employees who undertake it. Employers group this work to form jobs.

This approach has wide international acceptance, including by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Users of labour market statistics include central and local government, economists, financial analysts, journalists, businesses, trade unions, employer associations, students, teachers, industrial tribunals, academic researchers and lobby groups.

They use them for the analysis, evaluation, monitoring and planning of the labour market and economy. Labour market statistics are also used for social analysis and help inform a wide range of government policies towards population groups of particular concern (women, young people, older people and jobless households).

## About labour market statuses

Everybody aged 16 or over is either employed, unemployed or economically inactive. The employment estimates include all people in work including those working part-time. People not working are classed as unemployed if they have been looking for work within the last 4 weeks and are able to start work within the next 2 weeks. A common misconception is that the unemployment statistics are a count of people on benefits; this is not the case as they include unemployed people not claiming benefits.

Jobless people who have not been looking for work within the last 4 weeks or who are unable to start work within the next 2 weeks are classed as economically inactive. Examples of economically inactive people include people not looking for work because they are students, looking after the family or home, because of illness or disability, or because they have retired.

## What is the relationship between the Annual Population Survey (APS) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS)?

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a household survey using international definitions of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity and compiles a wide range of related topics such as occupation, training, hours of work and personal characteristics of household members aged 16 years and over. Estimates are produced every month for a rolling 3-monthly period; for example, February to April data in a release will be followed by data for March to May in the next release.

The Annual Population Survey (APS), which began in 2004, is compiled from interviews for the LFS, along with additional regional samples. The APS comprises the main variables from the LFS, with a much larger sample size. Consequently the APS supports more detailed breakdowns than can be reliably produced from the LFS. Estimates are produced every quarter for a rolling annual period; for example, January to December data will be followed by data for April to March when they are next updated.

This bulletin includes labour market estimates at a regional level from the LFS on total employment, unemployment and economic inactivity. More detailed regional estimates for employment by age, full-time and part-time working, economic activity and economic inactivity by age, and reasons for economic inactivity are provided using the APS. Any estimates for geographic areas below regional level are provided using the APS. In tables where APS estimates are provided for detailed geographic areas, regional and national estimates are also provided from APS for comparability.

### Making comparisons with earlier data

The most robust estimates of short-term movements in estimates derived from the LFS are obtained by comparing the estimates for December 2016 to February 2017 with the estimates for September to November 2016, which were first published on 18 January 2017. This provides a more robust estimate than comparing with the estimates for November 2016 to January 2017. This is because the December and January data are included within both estimates, so observed differences are only between November 2016 and February 2017. The LFS is representative of the UK population over a 3-month period, not for single month periods.

### Seasonal adjustment

All estimates discussed in this statistical bulletin are seasonally adjusted except where otherwise stated. Like many economic indicators, the labour market is affected by factors that tend to occur at around the same time every year; for example, school leavers entering the labour market in July and whether Easter falls in March or April. In order to compare movements other than annual changes in labour market statistics, the data are seasonally adjusted to remove the effects of seasonal factors and the arrangement of the calendar.

### Where to find explanatory information

We have produced a number of items to help aid understanding and highlight common misunderstandings of labour market statistics, all of which are available on our website:

- [interpreting labour market statistics](#)
- [a detailed guide to labour market statistics](#)
- [a glossary of labour market terms](#)

## 4 . Employment

## Things you need to know about employment

Employment measures the number of people in work; it differs from the number of jobs because some people have more than one job.

Employment consists of employees, self-employed people, unpaid family workers and people on government-supported training and employment programmes. Unpaid family workers are people who work in a family business who do not receive a formal wage or salary but benefit from the profits of that business. The government-supported training and employment programmes series does not include all people on these programmes; it only includes people engaging in any form of work, work experience or work-related training who are not included in the employees or self-employed series. People on these programmes not engaging in any form of work, work experience or work-related training are not included in the employment estimates; they are classified as unemployed or economically inactive.

A [comparison between estimates of employment and jobs](#) is available on our website.

## Regional employment

The employment rate for people aged from 16 to 64 for the UK was 74.6% for the period December 2016 to February 2017. This is an increase of 0.1 percentage points compared with the previous period (September to November 2016).

The UK region with the highest employment rate was the South West at 78.8%, followed by the South East at 78.6% and the East of England at 77.0%. The highest rates for the same period last year were in the East of England and the South East, both at 77.9%.

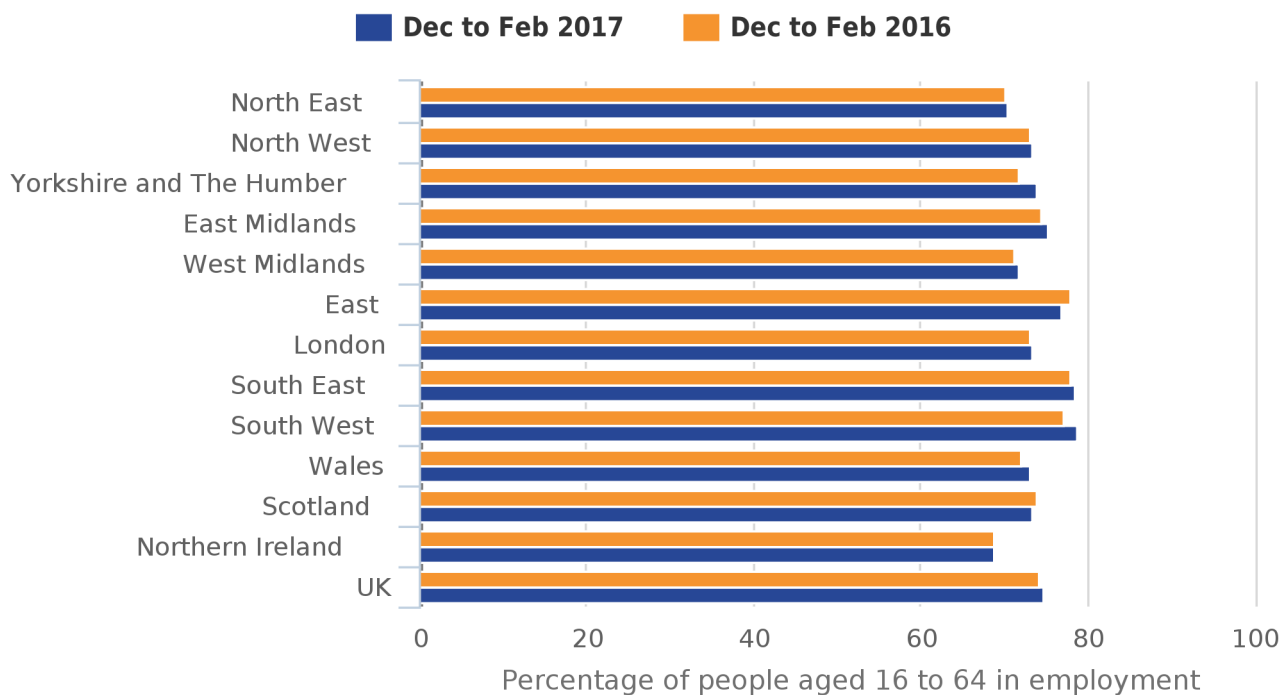
The region with the lowest employment rate was Northern Ireland at 68.8%, followed by the North East at 70.5% and the West Midlands at 71.7%. The lowest rate for the same period last year was also in Northern Ireland at 68.8%.

The largest increase in the employment rate estimates compared with the previous period (September to November 2016) was for the South West, at 1.5 percentage points, followed by the North West and Wales, both at 0.5 percentage points. The employment rate for the South West is now at a record high, just above rates in mid 2015, following a slight dip in the rate estimate between those points.

The largest decrease in the employment rate estimates was for the West Midlands at just 0.7 percentage points, followed by the East Midlands at 0.6 percentage points. The West Midlands has had some unusually high estimates in the last year, which means that despite the latest fall, the estimate is still higher than it was a year ago.

**Figure 1: Employment rates by region and comparison year on year, seasonally adjusted, December to February 2016 and December to February 2017**

UK regions



Source: Labour Force Survey: Office for National Statistics

Over the year, the region with the largest increase in the employment rate was Yorkshire and The Humber, with an increase of 1.8 percentage points, followed by the South West, with an increase of 1.7 percentage points.

The East of England had the largest decrease in the employment rate at 0.9 percentage points, followed by Scotland at 0.4 percentage points.

## Where to find data about employment

Employment estimates are available for each region in [Dataset HI00 – Headline LFS indicators for all UK regions](#) and [HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions \(Tabs 1 and 2\)](#), and [Datasets LI01 to LI05 Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain](#), for this and further estimate breakdowns by age or geographies.

These tables contain data produced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS). A note in the section Understanding and working with labour market statistics on the relationship between the LFS and APS entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin.

## 5 . Workforce jobs (first published 15 March 2017)

### Things you need to know about workforce jobs

Workforce jobs measures the number of filled jobs in the economy. The estimates are mainly sourced from employer surveys such as the Short-Term Employment Surveys (STES) and the Quarterly Public Sector Employment Survey (QPSES). Workforce jobs is a different concept from employment, which is sourced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), as employment is an estimate of people and some people have more than one job.

A [comparison between estimates of employment and jobs](#) article is published on our website.

The service sector consists of the following industries:

- wholesale and retail trade
- repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles, transport and storage
- accommodation and food service activities
- information and communication
- financial and insurance activities
- real estate activities
- professional, scientific and technical activities
- administrative and support service activities
- public administration and defence
- compulsory social security
- education
- human health and social work activities
- arts, entertainment and recreation
- other service activities
- people employed by households

The production sector consists of the following industries:

- mining and quarrying
- manufacturing
- electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- water supply, sewerage, waste and remediation activities

The “other” sector consists of agriculture, forestry, and fishing and construction industries.

The Northern Ireland self-employed component of the workforce jobs is published by the [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#) (NISRA) as part of the [Economic and Labour Market Statistics](#).

## **Regional workforce jobs**

Workforce jobs increased in 7 of the 12 regions of the UK between September 2016 and December 2016. The largest increase of 33,000 was in the East of England, followed by the East Midlands, which increased by 26,000.

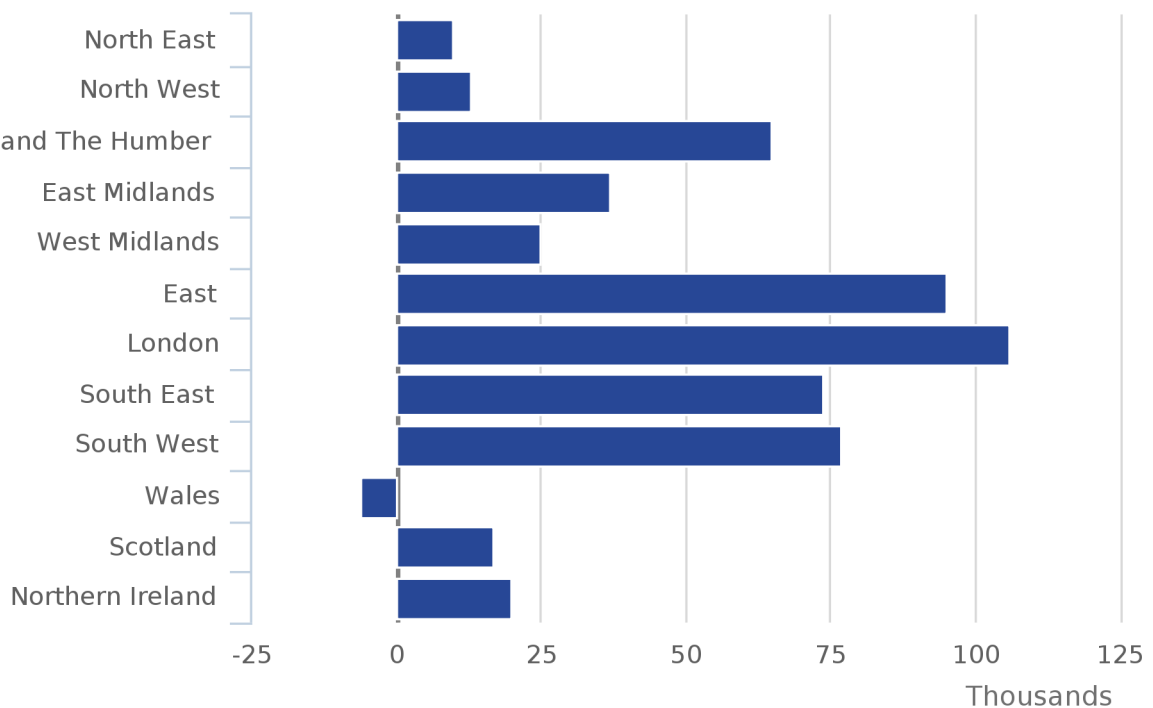


The largest decrease was in the South East, which decreased by 11,000, followed by the North West and the West Midlands, which both decreased by 8,000.

Compared with the same month last year (December 2015), the largest increase in workforce jobs was in London, with an increase of 106,000. The only decrease was in Wales, at 6,000.

**Figure 2: Change in workforce jobs, by region, seasonally adjusted, December 2015 and December 2016**

**UK regions**



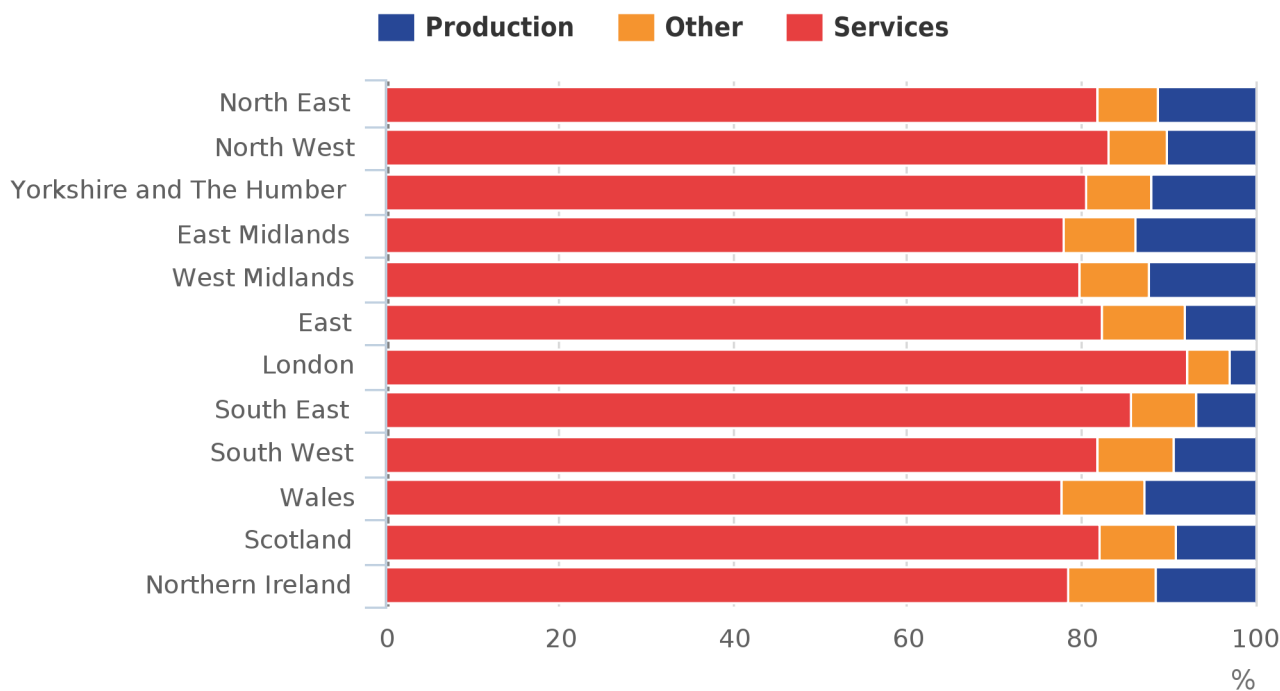
**Source: Office for National Statistics**

The East Midlands had the highest proportion of jobs in the production sector, at 13.7%, while London had the lowest proportion, at 2.8%. This is due to London having primarily service-based industries within its region, such as financial and administrative sectors.

For the service sector, London had the highest proportion, at 92.2%, whilst Wales had the lowest proportion at 77.8%. The service sector currently accounts for 83.6% of the total workforce jobs in the UK.

**Figure 3: Proportion of workforce jobs by broad industry group, by region, December 2016**

UK regions



Source: Office for National Statistics

## Where to find data about workforce jobs

Workforce jobs estimates are available for each region in [Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions](#) (Tabs 4 and 5).

While comparable estimates for workforce jobs by industry begin in 1978, there is information back to 1841, based on census data (not comparable with the latest estimates), available from [2011 Census Analysis](#) on our website.

## 6 . Actual hours worked

### Things you need to know about actual hours worked

Actual hours worked measures the number of hours worked in the economy. Changes in actual hours worked reflect changes in the number of people in employment and the average hours worked by those people.

### Regional actual hours worked

For the period January to December 2016, the UK region with the highest average actual weekly hours worked (for all workers) was London at 33.7 hours, followed by Northern Ireland at 33.0 hours. Yorkshire and The Humber had the lowest number of hours worked at 31.3 hours.

The UK region with the largest increase in the average hours worked, compared with the same period last year (January to December 2015) was the South East, with an increase of 0.8 hours, a percentage increase of 2.4%. This was followed by London, with an increase of 0.7 hours (percentage increase of 2.0%). The largest decrease in the average hours worked was in the East Midlands, with a decrease of 0.6 hours (1.8%).

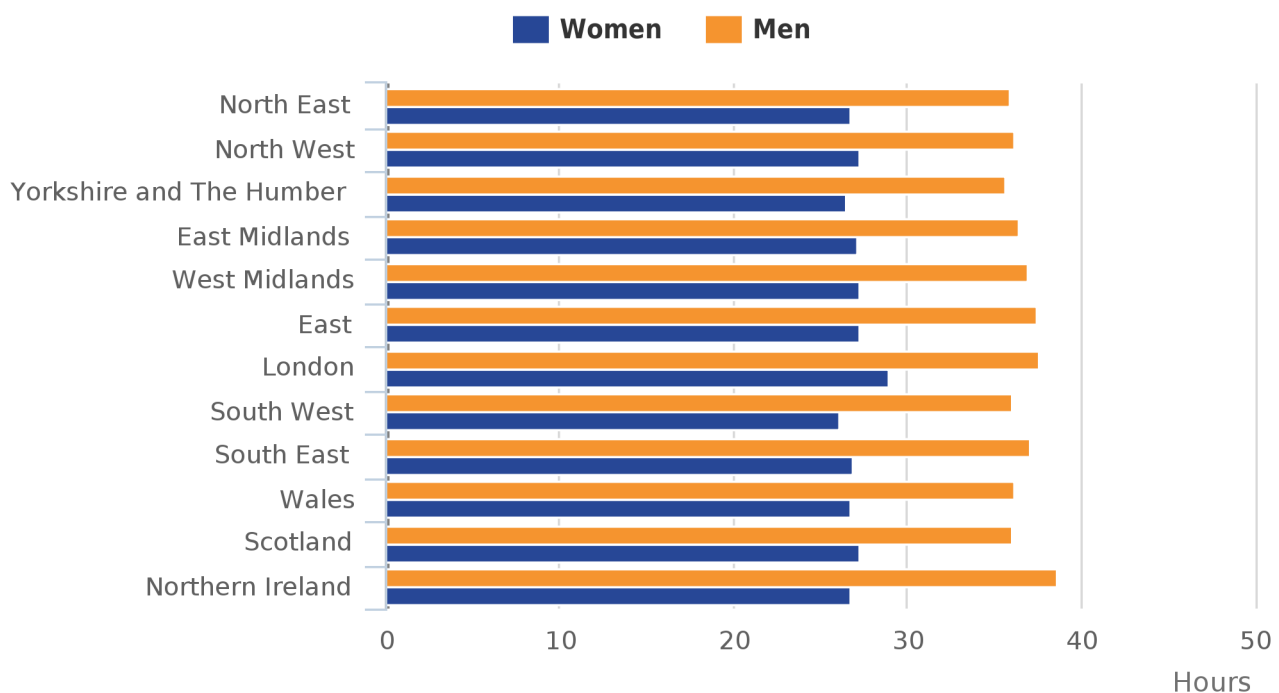
The region with the highest average actual weekly hours worked in full-time jobs was London, at 38.4 hours. This represents an increase of 0.8 hours and a percentage increase of 2.1%, compared with the same period last year. The lowest were Scotland, the North East and the North West, all at 36.9 hours. For part-time jobs, the region with the highest average hours worked was Northern Ireland at 17.0 hours and the lowest was the South East at 15.8 hours.

For men, the region with the highest average hours worked was Northern Ireland, at 38.6 hours and for women it was London, at 28.9 hours. The largest difference in average hours worked between men and women was in Northern Ireland, where men worked on average 11.8 more hours a week than women. The largest change compared with the same period last year (January 2015 to December 2015), was seen for men in the East Midlands, where the average hours worked decreased by 2.6%: from 32.6 hours to 32.0 hours and for women in Northern Ireland, where the average hours worked decreased by 2.3%: from 27.4 hours to 26.8 hours per week.

The region with the largest difference in total hours worked between men and women was London, where men worked a total of 34.0 million more hours than women. The region with the smallest difference was Northern Ireland, where men worked only 7.0 million more hours than women.

**Figure 4: Average (mean) actual weekly hours of work, by region and by sex, January 2016 to December 2016**

UK regions



Source: Annual Population Survey: Office for National Statistics

## Where to find data about hours worked

Hours worked estimates are available for each region in [Datasets HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions](#) (Tab 6). These estimates are based on data from the Annual Population Survey (APS).

The national data is also available at the UK labour market statistical bulletin in Datasets [Hour1-Actual weekly hours worked \(seasonally adjusted\)](#) and [Hour2-Usual weekly hours worked \(seasonally adjusted\)](#). These estimates are based on data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

## 7 . Unemployment

### Things you need to know about unemployment

Unemployment measures people without a job who have been actively seeking work within the last 4 weeks and are available to start work within the next 2 weeks.

### Regional unemployment

Regional estimates for the unemployment rate are quite volatile, which needs to be allowed for when considering the pattern of change over time.

The unemployment rate for people aged 16 and over for the UK was 4.7%, for the period December 2016 to February 2017. This has decreased by 0.1 percentage points compared with the previous period (September to November 2016).

The UK region with the highest unemployment rate was the North East at 6.4%. This was also the region with the highest rate for the same period last year at 8.0%. The next highest rates were seen in London, at 5.9% and the West Midlands, at 5.7%. The region with the lowest rate was the South East at 3.4%, followed by the South West at 3.5%.

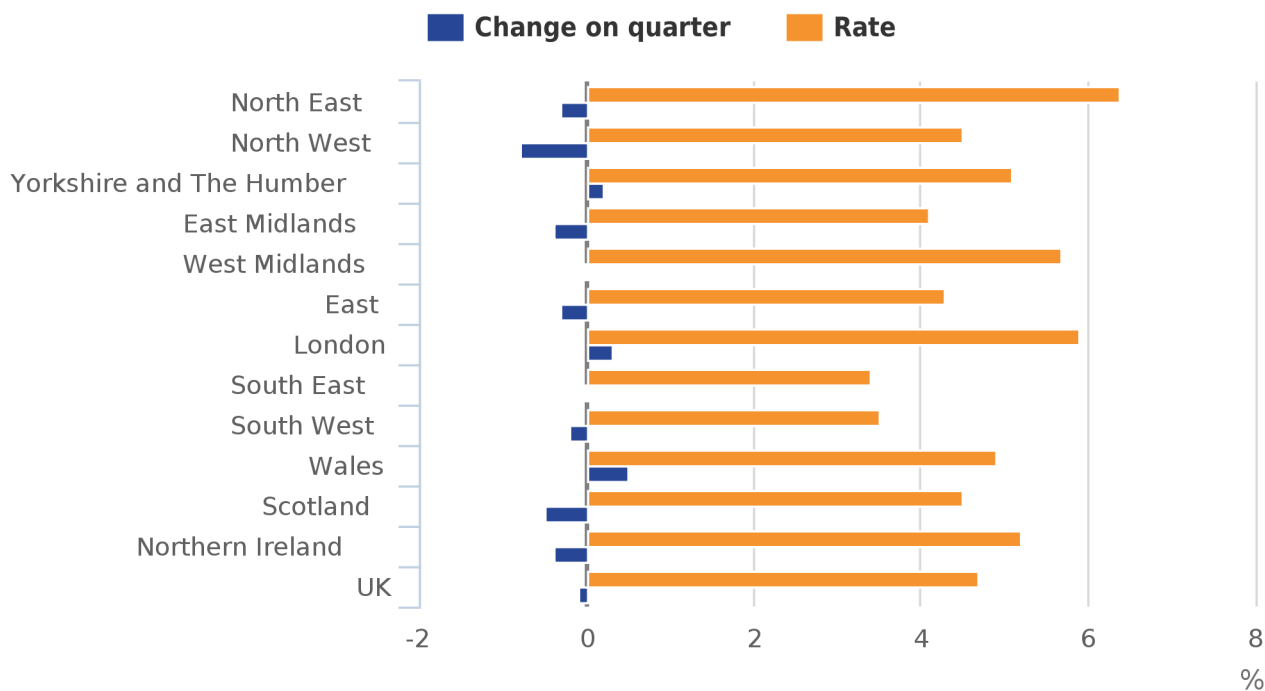
Allowing for some individual volatility, the overall pattern for the last few years has been for gently falling unemployment rates.

The region with the largest decrease in the unemployment rate on the previous period (September to November 2016), was the North West at 0.8 percentage points, followed by Scotland at 0.5 percentage points.

The largest increase in the unemployment rate on the previous period (September to November 2016), was seen in Wales, at 0.5 percentage points, followed by London, at 0.3 percentage points. The increase in Wales follows a pattern where Wales has had very low unemployment rates.

**Figure 5: Unemployment rates by region, seasonally adjusted, December 2016 to February 2017**

UK regions



Source: Labour Force Survey: Office for National Statistics

The majority of regions are showing decreases in the unemployment rate compared with a year ago, with the exception of the East of England and West Midlands, which increased by 0.7 and 0.2 percentage points respectively. The largest decrease was in the North East and Scotland, both at 1.6 percentage points, followed by Yorkshire and The Humber, at 1.2 percentage points.

## Where to find data about unemployment

Unemployment estimates are available for each region in [Dataset HI00 – Headline LFS indicators for all UK regions](#) and [HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions](#) (Tab 2(2)), and Datasets [LI01 to LI05 – Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain](#), for further estimate breakdowns by age or geographies.

These tables contain data produced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS). A note in the section Understanding and working with Labour Market Statistics on the relationship between the LFS and APS entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin.

## 8 . Economic inactivity

### Things you need to know about economic inactivity

Economically inactive people are not in employment but do not meet the internationally accepted definition of unemployment. This is because they have not been seeking work within the last 4 weeks and/or they are unable to start work within the next 2 weeks.

## Regional economic inactivity

The economic inactivity rate for people aged from 16 to 64 for the UK was 21.6%, for the period December 2016 to February 2017. This is the same as the previous period (September to November 2016). The UK region with the highest rate was Northern Ireland at 27.3%, followed by the North East at 24.4%. The region with the lowest rate was the South West at 18.2%, followed by the South East at 18.6% and the East of England at 19.4%.

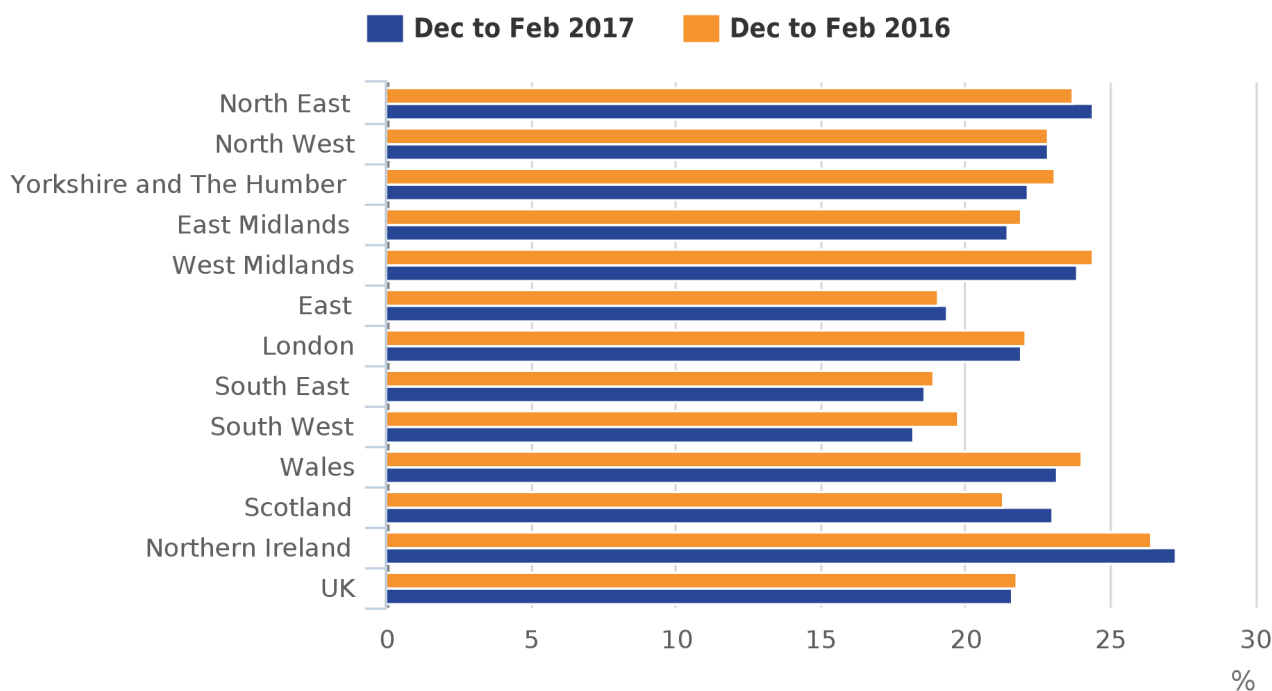
The region with the largest increase in the economic inactivity rate on the previous period (September to November 2016) was the East Midlands, with an increase of 0.9 percentage points, followed by the West Midlands and Northern Ireland, both with an increase of 0.8 percentage points. The South West had the largest decrease in the rate, of 1.4 percentage points, followed by Wales, with a decrease of 0.9 percentage points.

Over the year, the region with the largest increase in the economic inactivity rate was Scotland, with an increase of 1.8 percentage points, followed by Northern Ireland, with an increase of 0.9 percentage points. The largest decrease in the rate was in the South West, at 1.6 percentage points, followed by Yorkshire and The Humber, at 0.9 percentage points.

Northern Ireland also had the highest economic inactivity rate at 26.4%, in the same period in 2016. The current rate is now 5.7 percentage points higher than the UK rate.

**Figure 6: Economic inactivity rate by region and comparison year-on-year, seasonally adjusted, December 2015 to February 2016 and December 2016 to February 2017**

UK regions



Source: Labour Force Survey: Office for National Statistics

## Where to find data about economic inactivity

Economic inactivity estimates are available for each region at [Dataset HI00 – Headline LFS indicators for all UK regions](#) and [HI01 to HI12 – Headline indicators for individual UK regions](#) (Tabs 10 and 11), and [Datasets LI01 to LI05 – Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain](#), for further estimate breakdowns by age, reason or geographies.

These tables contain data produced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS). A note in the section Understanding and working with labour market statistics on the relationship between the LFS and APS entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin.

## 9 . Local labour market indicators

### Things you need to know about labour market indicators

Local labour market indicators cover employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and jobs density, for sub-regional geographic areas such as local and unitary authorities, counties and regions in the UK for the most recent 12-month period available of the Annual Population Survey (APS). The jobs density of an area is the number of jobs per head, of resident population, aged 16 to 64.

### Indicators from the Annual Population Survey

For the period January to December 2016, the local authorities with the highest employment rates in Great Britain were Stroud at 89.6%, Broxtowe at 87.5%, Eden at 87.2% and Blaby at 87.0%. Sandwell is the local authority with the lowest rate at 61.3%, followed by Weymouth and Portland at 62.1% and Rochdale at 62.5%. For the same period last year, the highest rates were in Rushmore at 89.2% and Shetland Islands at 87.3%.

For the period January to December 2016, the local authorities with the highest unemployment rates in Great Britain were Hartlepool at 9.0%, followed by Birmingham at 8.7%. The local authorities with the lowest rates were Uttlesford at 2.1%, followed by South Northamptonshire, South Cambridgeshire and Woking, all at 2.3%. These were followed by a further 37 local authorities all under 3.0%. For the same period last year, there were 53 local authorities with a rate of less than 3.0%.

### Jobs densities (first published 18 January 2017)

The jobs density of an area is the number of jobs per head, of resident population, aged 16 to 64. In 2015, the highest jobs density in Great Britain was the City of London at 84.29 and the lowest was Lewisham at 0.40. Westminster (4.30) and Camden (2.23), both in London, were the next highest jobs densities. The highest jobs density outside London was the Isles of Scilly at 2.01. After Lewisham, the lowest jobs densities were East Renfrewshire at 0.43, followed by East Dunbartonshire at 0.45 and Waltham Forest at 0.46.

### Where to find data about local labour market indicators

Annual Population Survey (APS) estimates are available at [Datasets LI01 to LI05 – Local indicators for sub-regional areas of Great Britain](#) and Claimant Count estimates are available at Datasets [CC01 – Claimant Count by unitary and local authority](#) and [CC02 – Claimant Count by parliamentary constituency](#), [CC02.1 – Claimant Count for constituencies of the Scottish Parliament](#), and [CC03 – Claimant Count for Local Enterprise Partnerships](#) in this statistical bulletin.

These tables contain data produced from the APS. A note in the section Understanding and working with labour market statistics entitled What is the relationship between the APS and the LFS? is included in this bulletin

## 10 . Upcoming changes and further publication dates

## Developments planned for next month's release

There will be revisions to estimates derived from the Labour Force Survey (including estimates of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity) back to May to July 2012, resulting from taking on board the latest population estimates and a review of the seasonal adjustment process.

## Future Publication dates

17 May 2017  
14 June 2017  
12 July 2017  
16 August 2017  
13 September 2017  
18 October 2017

## 11 . Links to related statistics

- [UK Labour Market statistics](#)
- [Public sector employment](#)
- [Young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\)](#)
- [Labour Productivity](#)
- [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings \(ASHE\)](#)
- [Business Register and Employment Survey \(BRES\)](#)
- [regional and local area statistics are also available at NOMIS®](#)

We have also produced:

- [ad hoc data and analysis related to employment and employee types](#)
- [methodological articles related to employment and employee types](#)

## Historic articles published in Economic and Labour Market Review and Labour Market Trends

Articles about labour market statistics were published in Labour Market Trends (up until 2006) and in Economic and Labour Market Review (from 2007 to 2011). Editions of [Labour Market Trends](#) are available from July 2001 until January 2006, when the publication was discontinued. Editions of [Economic and Labour Market Review](#) are available from the first edition, published in February 2007, up until the last edition, published in May 2011.

## 12 . Quality and methodology



## Accuracy and reliability of survey estimates

Most of the figures in this statistical bulletin come from surveys of households or businesses. Surveys gather information from a sample rather than from the whole population. The sample is designed carefully to allow for this, and to be as accurate as possible given practical limitations such as time and cost constraints, but results from sample surveys are always estimates, not precise figures. This means that they are subject to a margin of error which can have an impact on how changes in the numbers should be interpreted, especially in the short term.

Changes in the numbers reported in this statistical bulletin (and especially the rates) between 3-month periods are usually not greater than the margin of error. In practice, this means that small, short-term movements in reported rates (for example, within plus or minus 0.3 percentage points) should be treated as indicative, and considered alongside medium and long-term patterns in the series and corresponding movements in administrative sources, where available, to give a fuller picture.

## Quality information

One indication of the reliability of the main indicators in this bulletin can be obtained by monitoring the size of revisions. These summary measures are available in Dataset [S02 Regional labour market: Sampling variability and revisions summary](#) spreadsheet and show the size of revisions over the last five years.

The revised data may be subject to sampling or other sources of error. Our standard presentation is to show five years' worth of revisions (that is, 60 observations for a monthly series, 20 for a quarterly series). Further information on the quality of and methods for workforce jobs estimates can be found in the [quality and methodology information report](#).

## Other quality information

The Quality and Methodology Information documents for labour market statistics contain important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data and how it compares with related data
- users and uses of the data
- how the output was created
- the quality of the output including the accuracy of the data

[Labour market Quality and Methodology Information](#)

[Labour Force Survey Quality and Methodology Information](#)

[Vacancy Survey Quality and Methodology Information](#)

[Workforce Jobs Quality and Methodology Information](#)

[Average weekly earnings \(AWE\) Quality and Methodology Information](#)

Further information about the Labour Force Survey (LFS) is available from:

- [the Labour Force Survey user guide](#)
- [Labour Force Survey performance and quality monitoring reports](#)

Details of the [policy governing the release of new data](#) are available from the [UK Statistics Authority](#) website.

