

Statistical bulletin

Workless Households for Regions across the UK: 2013

UK households in which no-one aged 16 or over is in employment, focusing on regional differences and the reasons why people living in workless households are not working.



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1. In January to December 2013

- Nottingham was the top workless area for the first time since comparable records began with 30.1% of households being workless. Glasgow City (29.8%) and Liverpool (27.2%) were in the top five workless areas for the tenth consecutive year
- The highest percentage of workless households in Wales was in the Central Valleys where 23.8% of households were workless, while in Northern Ireland, 20.3% of households were workless
- The lowest percentage of workless households in the UK was concentrated in South East England, with the lowest in West Sussex at 9.0%
- Excluding student households, Glasgow City was the highest workless area with 28.6% of workless households, followed by East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire Mainland (28.5%) and then Nottingham at 27.3%
- Sickness, both long-term and temporary, was the main reason given for not working by people aged 16-64 years living in workless households across all the regions of England and countries of the UK

2. Main definitions

This document is concerned with **workless** households in the UK for the period January to December in each year.

For the purposes of this bulletin, estimates only include those households where **at least one person is aged 16 to 64**.

Workless households are households where no-one aged 16 or over is in employment. These members may be unemployed or inactive. Inactive members may be unavailable to work because of family commitments, retirement or study, or unable to work through sickness/disability.

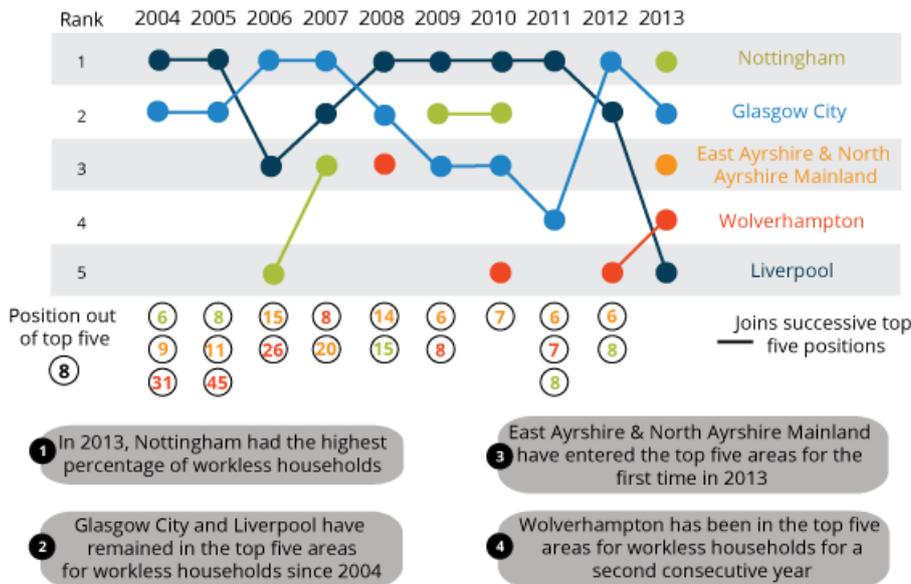
Student households are households where all adults are aged 16-24 and in full time education. This excludes households where all members are in education but some members are aged 25 years or more.

3. Nottingham was the top workless area for the first time since comparable records began

Between January and December 2013, Nottingham had the highest percentage of workless households (those which include at least one person aged 16 to 64 and where no-one aged 16 or over is in work) for the first time since comparable records began in 2004, with 30.1% being workless. This was up on the previous year when 26.4% of households were workless. This can partly be attributed to a greater number of people giving sickness or disability as their reasons for not working compared with 2012.

Over the same period, Glasgow City had the second highest percentage of workless households at 29.8%, down from having the highest percentage last year with 30.2% workless households. Glasgow City and Liverpool have remained in the top five workless areas since comparable records began in 2004.

Five areas of the UK with the highest percentage of workless households: 2004 to 2013



Source: Annual Population Survey (APS)

Looking at the five areas with the highest percentage of workless households over the period 2004 to 2013, Glasgow and Liverpool remained the dominant areas. Liverpool remained in the top five throughout this period while Glasgow remained in the top four. In contrast, East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire Mainland rose to the top five for the first time since comparable records began.

The highest percentage of workless households in Wales was in the Central Valleys where 23.8% of households were workless. This area comprises of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff, and was the tenth highest across the UK. In Northern Ireland, 20.3% of households were workless.

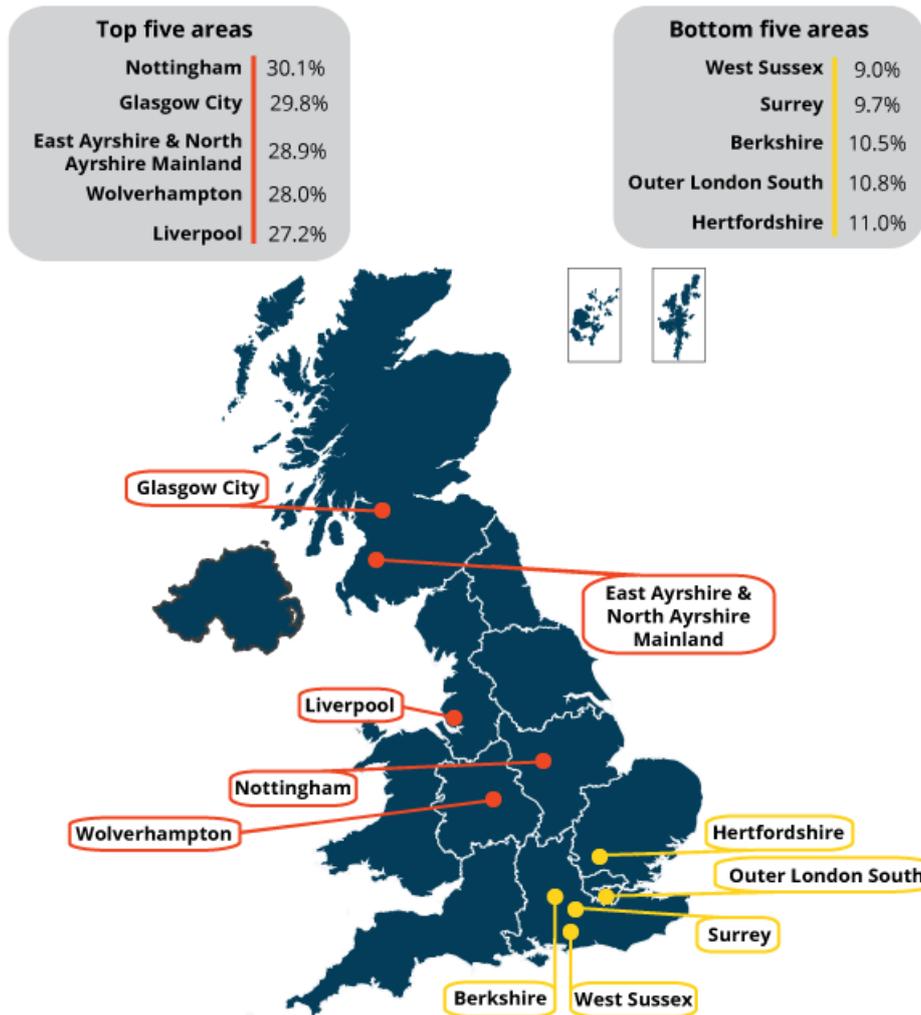
The common link among some of the areas with the highest percentage of workless households is that they were all heavily industrialised in the last century. Glasgow was once a major force in shipbuilding as well as other engineering but competition overseas has seen that decline since the 1960s. Liverpool had a large manufacturing base and one of the UK's largest docks, which have both been in decline since the 1970s. Wolverhampton also saw a decline in its iron and steel works industry during the twentieth century. Nottingham on the other hand had a strong textiles industry that prospered during the industrial revolution and declined during the 1950s and 1960s.

Lowest rate of workless households in West Sussex

In 2013, the lowest percentages of workless households in the UK were concentrated in the South East of England. West Sussex had the lowest percentage at 9.0%, followed by Surrey (9.7%), Berkshire (10.5%), Outer London – South (10.8%) and Hertfordshire (11.0%)

Top and bottom five areas for workless households in the UK in 2013

Percentage of households which were workless



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Source: Annual Population Survey (APS)

Sickness or disability the main reason for being workless across the country

Sickness, both long-term and temporary, was the main reason given for not working by people aged 16-64 years living in workless households across the UK.

In Northern Ireland, of the people living in workless households, 36.4% said they were not working because of sickness or disability. In Scotland, 33.7% gave this reason with 28.5% in Wales and 26.6% in England. Across the regions of England the lowest percentage not working because of sickness or disability was in London where 22.2% of people in workless households gave this reason.

Inactivity reasons by country in 2013

Northern Ireland had the highest percentage of people in workless households stating that they were sick/disabled



¹ Being sick/disabled was the most common reason given by people in workless households. The country with the highest percentage was Northern Ireland

³ Wales had the highest percentage of people in workless households stating that they had retired early at 18%

² England had the highest percentage of people in workless households stating that they were unemployed at 20%

⁴ Northern Ireland had the highest percentage of people in workless households stating that they were looking after the family/home at 20%

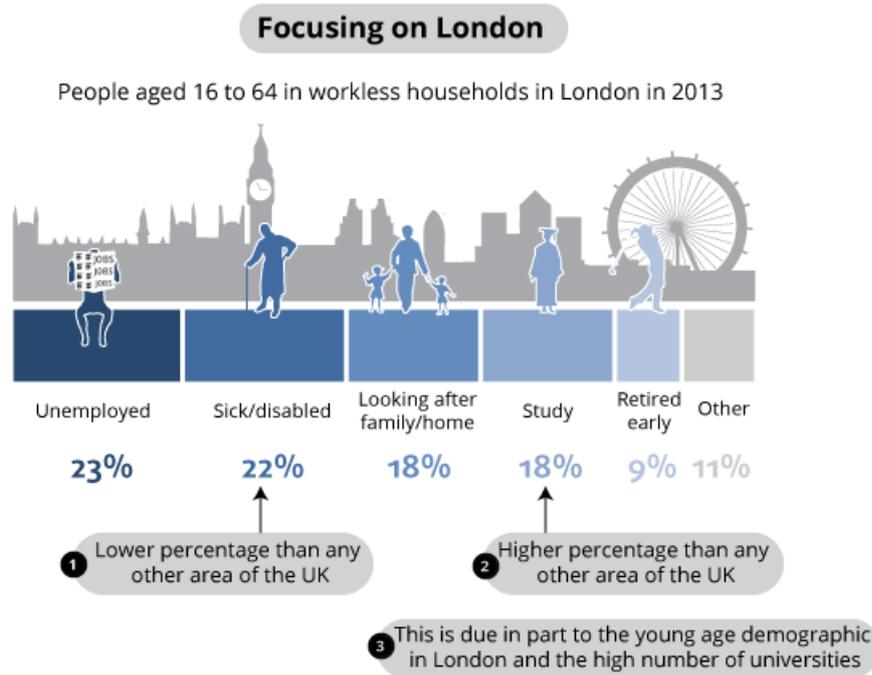
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Source: Annual Population Survey (APS)

Concentrating on Nottingham, in January to December 2013, 27.5% of people in workless households stated they were not working due to sickness or disability. This was a rise from 21.3% a year earlier, and was the main reason for the increase in the number of people living in workless households. There was also a rise in the percentage of people in workless households that were unemployed, from 24.5% in 2012 to 26.0% in 2013, while the percentage of people giving study as their reason for not working fell from 52.7% of workless households in 2012 to 43.8% in 2013.

Focusing on people in workless households who were studying, London had the highest percentage across the UK, at 17.6%, partly explained by the many universities in the region. The South West and East of England had the highest percentage of people aged 16 to 64 in workless households giving retirement as their reason for not working. This is partly explained by both regions having a slightly higher than average age demographic.

Reasons for worklessness in London in 2013



Source: Annual Population Survey (APS)

Excluding student households, Glasgow City had the highest workless rate

Workless households include student households (households where all adults are aged 16-24 and in full time education). As student households contain members who are not traditionally expected to be in employment, the working and workless rates have also been calculated excluding student households.

In January to December 2013, excluding student households the UK average workless rate was 16.7%. This was 0.5% percentage points lower than the rate including student households. London and the East Midlands were the regions with the highest percentage of people not working due to study, as a result the workless household rates for these regions fell once student households were excluded: London from 16.1% to 15.6% and East Midlands from 16.8% to 16.1%.

Once student households were excluded, Glasgow City had the workless rate at 28.6%, followed by East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire Mainland at 28.5%, while Nottingham moved down to the third highest with 27.3% of households being workless. The exclusion of students only changed the ranking of the top three workless areas but did not change the overall composition of the top ten workless areas.

Top and bottom five for workless households in the UK in 2013, excluding student households

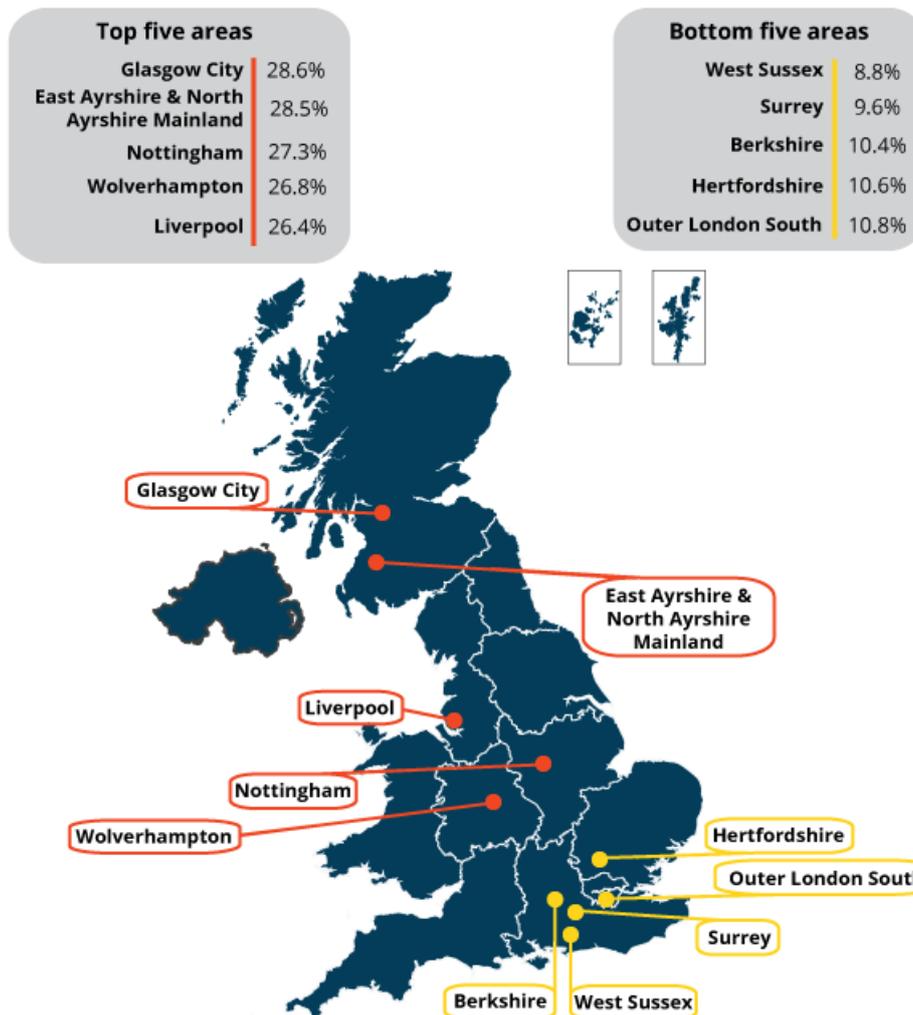
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Top and bottom five areas for workless households in the UK in 2013

Percentage of households which were workless when student households are excluded



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Source: Annual Population Survey (APS)

4. Background notes

1. Concepts and definitions:

- Estimates within this statistical bulletin only cover households that contain at least one person aged 16 to 64

- A household is defined as a single person, or a group of people living at the same address who have the address as their only or main residence and either share one main meal a day or share living accommodation (or both)
- A working household is a household that contains at least one person aged 16 to 64, where all individuals aged 16 and over are in employment
- A mixed household is a household that contains at least one person aged 16 to 64, where at least one person aged 16 and over is in employment and at least one other is either unemployed or inactive
- A workless household is a household that contains at least one person aged 16 to 64, where no-one aged 16 or over is in employment
- Rankings are based on Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics Level 3 areas (NUTS3)
- People refer to those aged 16 to 64
- Children refer to all children under 16

2. Workless Households for Regions across the UK, 2013: [Pre-release access list](#)

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