

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)³

- **Staffordshire has seen 26,200 self-employed workers claim for the second SEISS grant up to the end of September** and a take-up rate of 66% for those eligible through the scheme, just below the regional and national average take-up rates of 67%.
- **Stoke-on-Trent had 7,500 SEISS claims up to the end of September**, equivalent to 72% of those eligible. This is the highest rate the West Midlands Region upper-tier authorities.

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) Statistics: October 2020

County and district / unitary authority	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 30/9/20	Total value of claims made to 30/9/20 (£)	Average value of claims made to 30/9/20 (£)	Total Take-Up Rate
Stoke-on-Trent UA	10,500	7,500	16,800,000	2,200	72%
Cannock Chase	5,000	3,600	9,800,000	2,700	71%
Tamworth	3,000	2,000	5,100,000	2,500	69%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	5,200	3,500	8,900,000	2,500	68%
SSLEP	50,000	33,700	84,200,000	2,499	67%
Lichfield	4,800	3,200	8,700,000	2,700	67%
South Staffordshire	5,300	3,500	9,300,000	2,600	67%
West Midlands (all West Midlands)	261,000	175,000	424,000,000	2,400	67%
United Kingdom	3,390,000	2,261,000	5,703,000,000	2,500	67%
Staffordshire County	39,500	26,200	67,400,000	2,600	66%
East Staffordshire	5,200	3,400	7,800,000	2,300	65%
Stafford	5,600	3,600	9,300,000	2,600	63%
Staffordshire Moorlands	5,400	3,300	8,500,000	2,500	62%

- Nationally, **transport and storage, construction, education and arts, entertainment and recreation are the sectors which have seen the highest take-up rates.**

³ Source: HMRC - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/self-employment-income-support-scheme-statistics-october-2020>

The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs)⁴

- Updated data published by the British Business Bank shows that businesses in all parts of the UK are continuing to make use of and benefiting from Coronavirus loan schemes.
- The data shows the regional distribution of loans under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs), which are schemes designed to provide financial support to businesses across the UK that are losing revenue and seeing their cashflow disrupted, as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak.
- As at the 4th October, there were 4,722 CBILS loans in the West Midlands for a total of just over £1.1bn. This represented 8% of the total number of CBILS loans UK-wide.
- While for BBLs loans the West Midlands there were a total of 102,322 loans for a total of just over £3.1bn and represented 8% of all UK loans, behind only the North West and East of England outside of London and the South East (34% combined).
- Generally, the proportion of loans in each region is equivalent to their share of the business population across the UK.
- The Wholesale and Retail sector has accessed a significantly higher proportion of CBILS loans (18%) than its share of the business population (9%), with Manufacturing (13% v 5%) and Accommodation and Food Services (8% v 3%) following a similar pattern.
- The Wholesale and Retail sector also accessed a relatively high proportion of Bounce Back Loans compared to its business population share (16% v 9%), as did businesses in Accommodation and Food Services (8% v 3%) and Real Estate Services (6% v 2%).
- The British Business Bank has also released constituency level data for CBILS and BBLs. The following table shows the breakdown for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent constituencies:

⁴ Source: British Business Bank - <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/regional-analysis-of-coronavirus-loan-schemes-shows-continued-even-distribution-across-the-uk/>

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BLS) Statistics: 4th October 2020

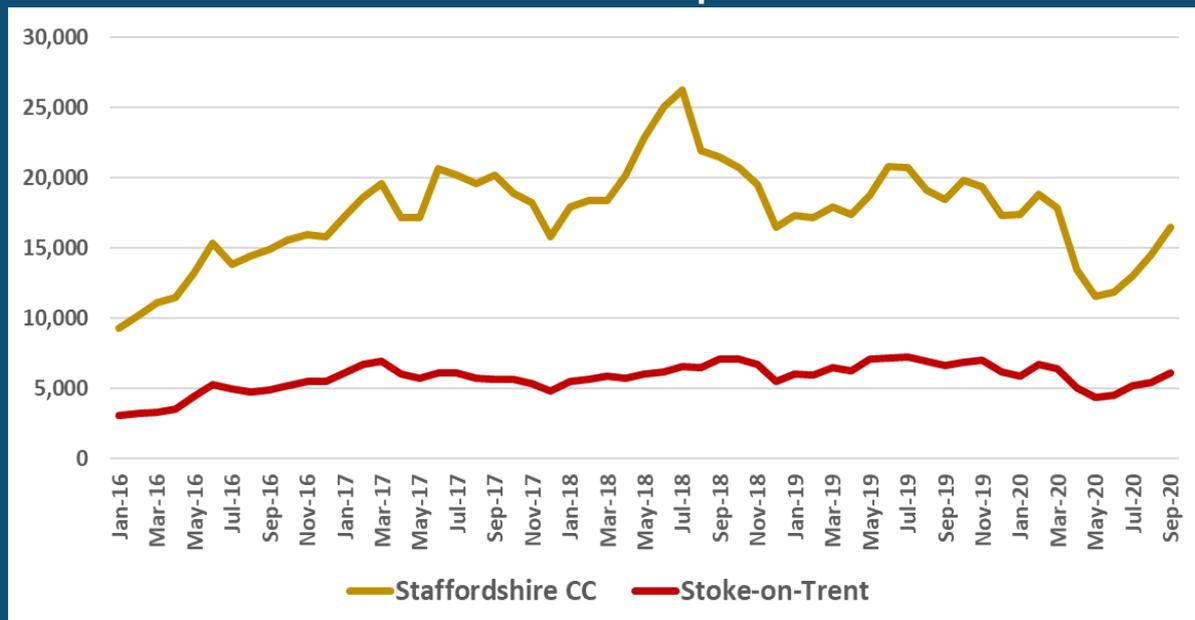
Constituency	CBILS		BLS		TOTAL		% of SSLEP Loans	% of SSLEP Businesses
	Number of Loans Offered	Value of Loans Offered (£)	Number of Loans Offered	Value of Loans Offered (£)	Number of Loans Offered	Value of Loans Offered (£)		
Burton	94	19,793,958	1,800	52,831,717	1,894	72,625,675	10%	10%
Lichfield	91	16,941,556	1,781	51,077,851	1,872	68,019,407	10%	11%
Tamworth	119	35,404,678	1,612	47,623,498	1,731	83,028,176	9%	9%
Cannock Chase	90	19,273,531	1,602	46,260,210	1,692	65,533,741	9%	9%
Stone	55	11,604,993	1,597	47,062,473	1,652	58,667,466	9%	10%
South Staffordshire	65	15,072,530	1,578	46,381,395	1,643	61,453,925	9%	10%
Stafford	69	10,528,405	1,468	41,887,171	1,537	52,415,576	8%	9%
Stoke-on-Trent Central	65	17,929,751	1,348	41,416,847	1,413	59,346,598	8%	6%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	69	17,096,032	1,295	39,677,826	1,364	56,773,858	7%	6%
Stoke-on-Trent North	66	12,698,562	1,248	36,497,202	1,314	49,195,764	7%	6%
Staffordshire Moorlands	50	7,507,782	1,224	35,158,515	1,274	42,666,297	7%	9%
Stoke-on-Trent South	48	13,590,439	1,032	30,883,940	1,080	44,474,379	6%	5%
Staffordshire	702	153,223,465	13,957	407,960,656	14,659	561,184,121	79%	84%
Stoke-on-Trent	179	44,218,751	3,628	108,797,989	3,807	153,016,740	21%	16%
SSLEP	881	197,442,216	17,585	516,758,645	18,466	714,200,861	100%	100%
West midlands	4,722	1,119,000,000	102,322	3,117,000,000	107,044	4,236,000,000		
UK	56,491	13,928,241,876	1,268,981	38,330,294,758	1,325,472	52,258,536,634		

- As at the 4th October, there were a combined 18,466 CBILS and BLS loans in the SSLEP area equivalent to £714m, this represented 17% of the total loans in the West Midlands. The proportion of loans in the SSLEP area is largely in-line with areas share of the business population in the West Midlands (18%).
- In terms of local constituencies, Burton had the highest number of loans with 1,894 while Tamworth had the highest value of all loans with just over £83m.
- For most constituencies the proportion of loans in the SSLEP area is largely in-line with their share of the business population in the SSLEP. However, the constituencies in the north including Stoke-on-Trent Central, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent North and Stoke-on-Trent South all have higher proportions of the total loans in the SSLEP compared to their share of the business population.
- This financial support has been vital in supporting businesses across all sectors, protecting jobs, but in particular those in sectors that have been impacted hardest by the pandemic, helping to keep people in work.

Job Vacancies⁵

- As seen over recent months, we have continued to witness a recruitment uplift in Staffordshire during September. Between August 2020 and September 2020 there was an **increase in job vacancies of 14% equivalent to nearly 2,000 more job vacancies which is above the growth seen regionally (11%) and nationally (9%).**
- **Stoke-on-Trent saw a 12% growth with just over 630 more vacancies in September compared to August.**
- **Staffordshire's year-on-year decline in September stood at 11% which was in-line with the decline seen nationally,** this is certainly a positive change give that over previous months of the crisis we have generally seen greater year-on-year declines than those seen nationally associated to having more jobs in the sectors hardest hit by COVID.
- **Stoke-on-Trent fared better than the national average with a year-on-year decline in vacancies of 8% in September.**

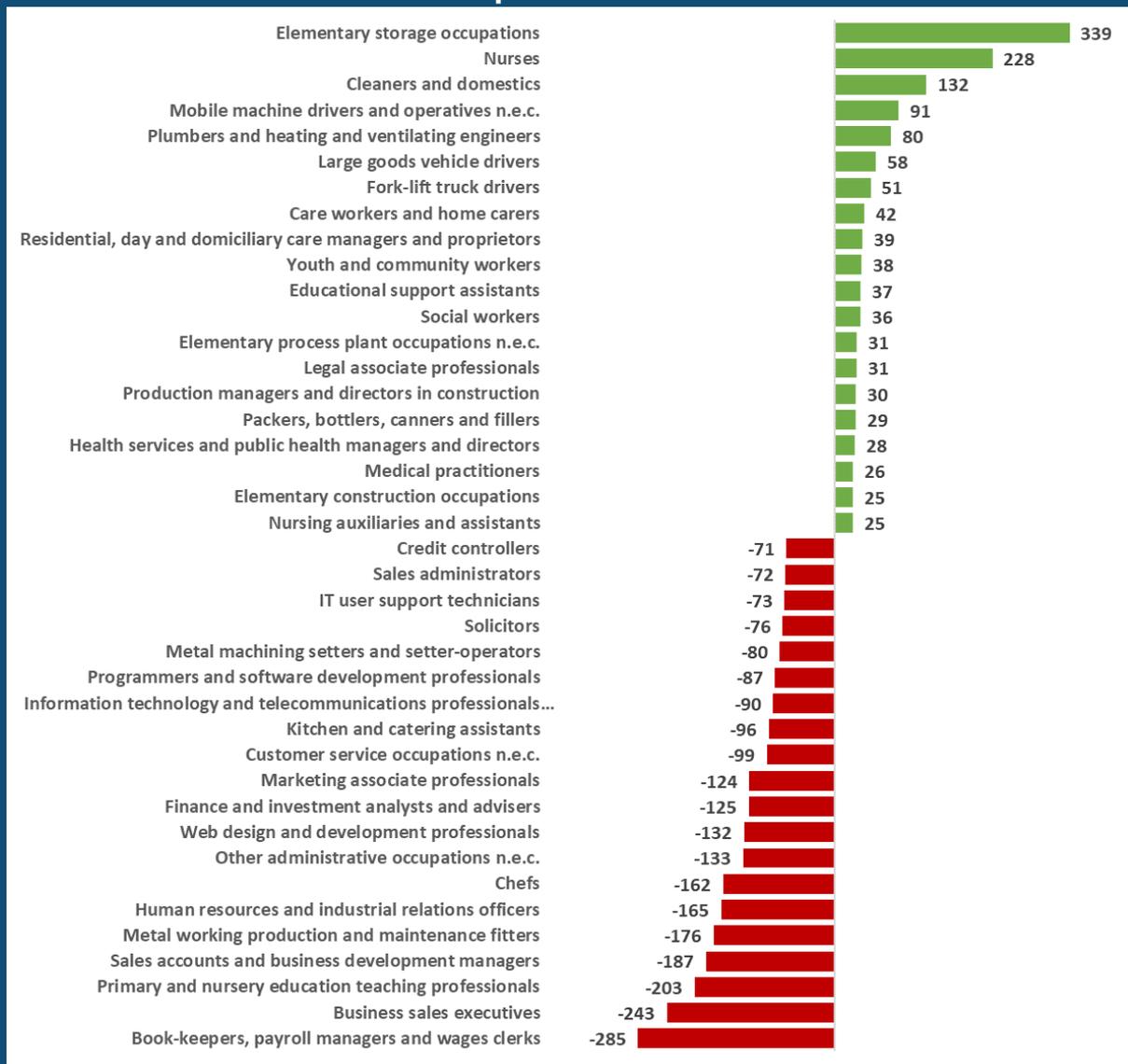
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Unique Job Vacancies Trend



- Although we have seen a decline in vacancies for most occupations since the crisis started, particularly within sectors and roles hardest hit by the lockdown, we are starting to see some growth in far more occupations than witnessed previously during the pandemic.
- **The main recruitment growth occupations between Feb (pre-COVID) and September have been elementary storage occupations, nurses, cleaners, drivers, plumbers and care workers/managers.**

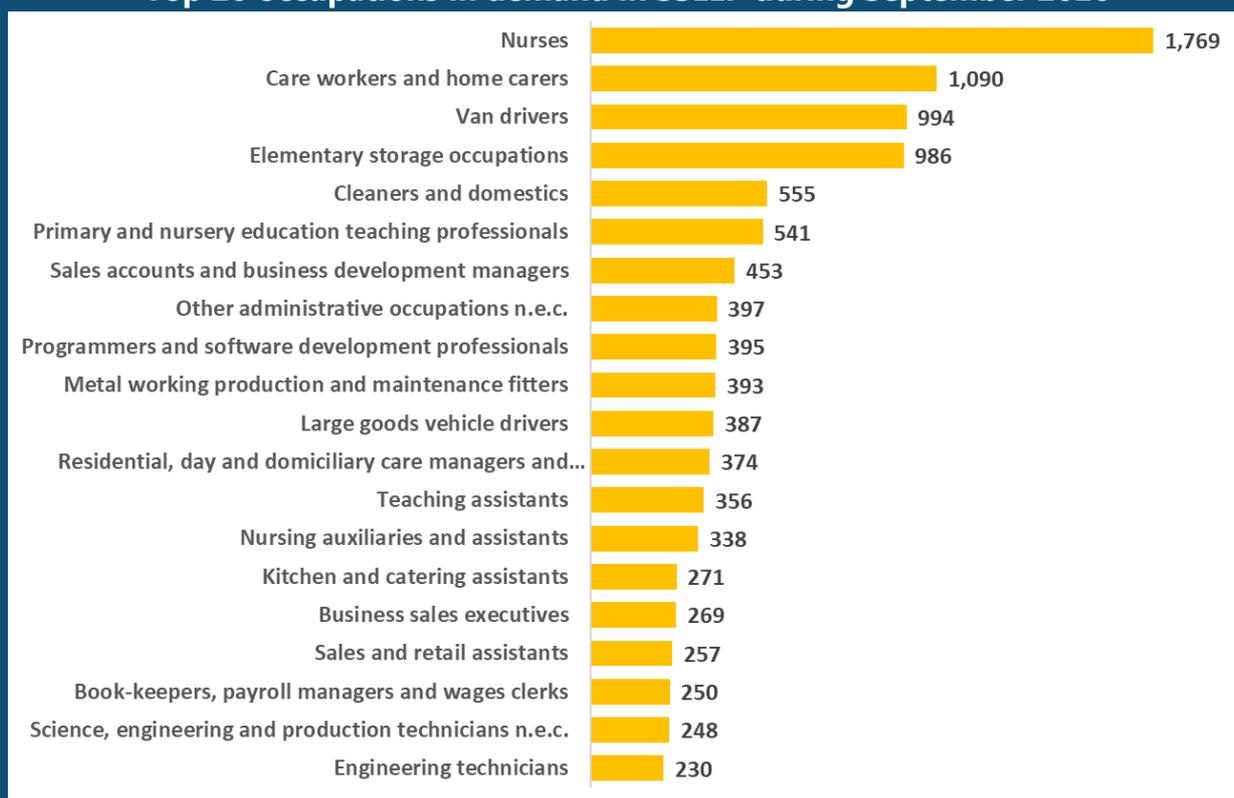
⁵ Source: EMSI

Top 20 occupations declining and top 20 increasing between Feb 2020 (Pre-COVID) and Sept 2020 in SSLEP



- While demand for **nurses and social care workers and home carers** remains by far the strongest of all occupations. Alongside health and social care roles, there is also comparatively high demand for workers to support distribution including van drivers and **elementary storage occupations**. There is also demand for **primary and nursery education teaching professional**, which is an area which was badly impacted during lockdown. As well as these more sector specific roles, there is continuing and growing demand for workers which support numerous sectors including **sales and business development managers, programmers and software development professionals, admin roles and cleaners**.

Top 20 occupations in demand in SSLEP during September 2020



- However, the overall fall in the number of job vacancies and increasing competition for jobs suggests that those unfortunate enough to lose their jobs may struggle to find new ones at least in the short-term, although there are still opportunities available with increasingly more coming online.

Job Vacancies Summary Table

Area / SSLEP Occupational Group	Sept 2019 Unique Postings	Feb 2020 Unique Postings	July 2020 Unique Postings	Aug 2020 Unique Postings	Sept 2020 Unique Postings	Aug-Sept 2020 (Month on Month Change)	Aug-Sept 2020 Monthly % Change	Feb-Sept 2020 (Month on Month Change)	Feb-Sept 2020 Monthly % Change	Sept 2019- Sept 2020 (Year on Year Change)	Sept 2019- Sept 2020 Annual % Change
Staffordshire CC	18,422	18,813	12,976	14,475	16,455	1,980	14%	-2,358	-13%	-1,967	-11%
Stoke-on-Trent	6,622	6,713	5,229	5,453	6,084	631	12%	-629	-9%	-538	-8%
SSLEP	25,044	25,526	18,205	19,928	22,539	2,611	13%	-2,987	-12%	-2,505	-10%
West Midlands	175,414	171,108	119,528	125,738	138,972	13,234	11%	-32,136	-19%	-36,442	-21%
England	1,911,080	1,967,280	1,496,347	1,568,662	1,704,867	136,205	9%	-262,413	-13%	-206,213	-11%
South Staffordshire	511	648	589	652	757	105	16%	109	17%	246	48%
Stafford	4,266	4,376	3,289	3,678	4,343	665	18%	-33	-1%	77	2%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	1,728	1,690	1,272	1,451	1,627	176	12%	-63	-4%	-101	-6%
East Staffordshire	3,102	3,206	2,236	2,607	3,013	406	16%	-193	-6%	-89	-3%
Lichfield	2,120	2,050	1,571	1,730	1,880	150	9%	-170	-8%	-240	-11%
Cannock Chase	2,236	2,201	1,598	1,752	1,978	226	13%	-223	-10%	-258	-12%
Tamworth	2,754	2,753	1,553	1,609	1,783	174	11%	-970	-35%	-971	-35%
Staffordshire Moorlands	1,705	1,889	868	996	1,074	78	8%	-815	-43%	-631	-37%
Elementary Occupations	2,488	2,115	1,722	2,088	2,578	490	23%	463	22%	90	4%
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	2,128	2,033	1,260	1,734	2,185	451	26%	152	7%	57	3%
Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	2,349	2,421	2,141	2,204	2,477	273	12%	56	2%	128	5%
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	1,466	1,699	1,450	1,501	1,590	89	6%	-109	-6%	124	8%
Professional Occupations	5,542	6,371	5,315	5,365	5,806	441	8%	-565	-9%	264	5%
Skilled Trades Occupations	2,418	2,293	1,330	1,614	1,911	297	18%	-382	-17%	-507	-21%
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	4,822	4,938	3,031	3,334	3,616	282	8%	-1,322	-27%	-1,206	-25%
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	1,171	1,055	541	612	692	80	13%	-363	-34%	-479	-41%
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	2,660	2,601	1,415	1,476	1,684	208	14%	-917	-35%	-976	-37%

Notes

Claimant Count and ILO Unemployment Definitions

The Claimant Count is a measure of the number of working age people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed, including those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work.

ILO unemployment data is obtained from the national Labour Force Survey. The definition for unemployment is those without a job, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks, or; are out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start work in the next two weeks.

Understanding the differences between the Claimant Count and ILO Unemployment

According to the UK Claimant Count for May, claimant unemployment increased to 2.8 million and a rate of 7.8% – a rise of 125% in just two months, the fastest rate of growth on record. However, the ILO measure shows that unemployment has remained largely unchanged at around 1.3 million and a rate of 3.9%. Understanding the reasons why there is this difference is important for policymakers trying to determine whether we are currently in the middle of an unemployment crisis or whether this is to come as the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) is gradually withdrawn.

The following section tries to explain this incredibly confusing, complicated and often contradictory data.

The main reasons for the difference between the Claimant Count and ILO measures include:

- **The two measures describe different periods** – for claimant unemployment, the numbers refer to claimants on a specific 'count date' with the last three being 12 March, 9 April and 14 May. Therefore, these are point-in-time estimates, and handily we can compare what the situation was about a week before the crisis (12 March) with how things were two months later (14 May).

The ILO measure is a three-month average of survey responses between early February and late April 2020. This means that two months pre-date the crisis, while one month (April) is since the crisis began. However, ONS does release [single month estimates](#) (latest available April 2020) which show a drop in employment in April of 320,000 explained almost entirely by fewer people self-employed but only slight increase of 40,000 unemployed. Instead there is a steep rise in 'economic inactivity' which is those who are out of work but are not looking and/ or available for work.

- **Difference in measuring economic inactivity/worklessness** - the Claimant Count measures those who are required to look/be available for work as a condition of benefit, while the ILO measure is those who say that they actually are actively seeking and available for work. The Labour Force Survey is recording a single-month increase in the number of people out of work (unemployed and economically inactive) of 330,000, but nearly 290,000 of these people are not looking for work (economically inactive). The majority of this rise is people previously self-employed and are either not eligible for, or not yet been paid, income under the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS).
- **Claimant Count now includes more workers on low-income** - In the Claimant Count, people with earned income can be counted as claimant unemployed if their earnings in the reference month are below a set threshold (£338 per month for a single person, or £541 per month for a couple). Before Universal Credit (UC), short-hours working was penalised and so these numbers were generally low. However, UC incentivises short-hours work, and so we've seen a growth in recent years in the number of people treated as being unemployed but who have some earnings. The detailed data for UC suggests that 190,000 of the 1 million increase between March and April was accounted for by working claimants – so around one fifth of the rise.
- **Difference in recording people who are 'in work'** – in the Labour Force Survey you are recorded as in employment even if you have not done any work that week but 'have a job or business that you were away from... (and that you expect to return to)". Obviously this category of workers 'away' from work now captures about 9 million people furloughed under the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) who are continuing to earn, but it also includes people who consider themselves to be employees or self-employed but who have no earnings. 'Real time' Pay As You Earn data suggests that this may be mainly employees, with the number of paid employees falling by 450,000 between March and April. This 450,000 could include a large number of people who may have been due to start a job in March or April but have been told that their job isn't available yet and may also be people who had very few or irregular hours before the JRS was introduced and whom employers have not submitted a JRS claim. These people may be describing themselves as being workers with a job that they are away from, rather than as being actively seeking a new job.
- **Benefit take-up/eligibility impact on the Claimant Count** – given that the claimant count only counts those who claim benefit it may be under-stating the growth in worklessness. We know that many unemployed people do not claim, and particularly young people (usually due to eligibility). Under UC, there have been on average 450,000 more ILO unemployed young people than claimant unemployed and even if that gap narrows in the crisis, as tends to happen in recessions, it's possible that ILO youth unemployment will remain significantly higher than the claimant measure.

Summary table outlining the potential estimates for the Claimant Count rise in April

Potential Proportion of Claimant Count Change Mar-20 to Apr-20	Potential Number of Claimants	Potential Reasons for being a Claimant	Labour Force Survey Categorisation
44%	450,000	New Job Starters/PT employees/Self-employed with no income claiming Universal Credit not supported by JRS	In Employment - even if not done any work that week but 'have a job or business that were away from... (and that expect to return to)' – rather than unemployed
28%	292,500	Self-employed ceased trading or have very low income claiming Universal Credit (and are either not eligible for, or not yet been paid, income under the SEISS)	Economically inactive - people out of work but are not looking for work - majority people previously self-employed
18%	190,000	Working part-time low income workers claiming Universal Credit	In Employment
10%	100,000	Potential Redundancies	
100%	1,032,500	Claimant Count Increase Mar-20 to Apr-20	

- It is hoped that this analysis has provided further clarity as to why we have seen such a spike in the number of claimants early in the crisis. What is clear is that we have seen a record fall between March and April in the number of people working and not being supported by JRS. We have also seen worklessness rising at a faster rate than at any time before. Although very few of the decline in the numbers 'working' had translated into higher unemployment in April, it is envisaged that this may be the case if people are unable to get back into work quickly.
- Looking forward, the growth in claims for UC is slowing and so the growth in the Claimant Count is also likely to slow as well. That said claimant unemployment is currently at the highest level on record. The main concern now is what happens to many workers as JRS is gradually withdrawn and it is important that we are thinking now about how to support people that are made redundant and what policy interventions are needed.