



## Unemployment in Warwickshire

November 2025

### How is unemployment measured?

Unemployment in the UK includes people who meet the international definition of unemployment specified by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). It includes those aged 16 years or over:

*“who are without work, 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, but have found a job and are waiting to start it within the next two weeks.”*

### Labour Force Survey

The official unemployment rate in the UK is measured by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as part of the [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#) and reported on a quarterly basis. ONS survey results have suffered from declining response rates and as a result have recently been less reliable. There have been [efforts to resolve this](#), however this in itself raises questions of consistency of the data over time. Therefore, any sharp changes in the reported unemployment rate bring up questions of data quality issues.

The official **unemployment rate** is the 16+ unemployment count divided by the economically active population (the employed plus the unemployed, all aged 16+), for the same area. Furthermore, people moving into and out of official unemployment can be to or from either employment or economic inactivity. The unemployment rate can also be affected by large swings in estimated employment levels, as that forms the majority of the denominator.

### Administrative Data – Claimant Count

Administrative data is a direct count of all people in a group. Compared to data based on a small survey sample, it should be more reliable. There is good administrative data available around unemployment in the UK, known as the claimant count.

The **claimant count** is a measure of **people receiving unemployment related benefits**. Some of these benefits are time-limited or means-tested. For instance, someone can meet the definition of being unemployed yet not qualify for any benefits for other reasons. This variation can be seen in [this historical comparison](#) between unemployment (count) and claimant count.

Claimant count data is available by age, gender, and at small geographies. Like unemployment rates, claimant counts are reported monthly for the period of the previous 12 months. Nonetheless, this administrative data is not counting the same group of people as the survey-based official unemployment rate.

The **local claimant rate** is the number of claimants divided by the total 16-64 population, for the same area. Therefore, this is **not the same denominator** as the unemployment rate. This is not directly affected by changes in the local employment rate. The claimant rate is also more related to people moving from employment than from economic inactivity due to benefit qualification requirements. Movement from the claimant rate could be to employment, economic inactivity, or



to continuing unemployment (due to no longer qualifying for benefits yet still satisfying the definition of unemployment).

## Summary of measures

In summary, the official unemployment rate can be more dynamic than expected due to both the numerator and the denominator being based on the results of a survey. However, it is an attempt at directly measuring unemployment, including flows from economic inactivity. Alternatively, the claimant rate can be less dynamic than changes in real unemployment, because it is measuring people who are receiving unemployment related benefits instead of people seeking work. Nonetheless, any large movements in the local unemployment rate are expected to show clear movement in the local claimant rate.

## Trends in unemployment rates

### Labour Force Survey Data

In the 12 months to June 2025, the official unemployment rate for Warwickshire was **above the rate for Great Britain for the first time in over 20 years** (4.2% for Warwickshire vs. 4.1% in GB). This data indicates a jump of 5,000 people living in Warwickshire who are economically active but unemployed, from 7,700 in the 12 months to March 2025 to 12,700 in the 12 months to June 2025. This is alongside a drop in estimated employment of 7,000 people, from 295,200 in the 12 months to March 2025 to 288,200 in the 12 months to June 2025.

The latest national data shows that the unemployment rate for Great Britain jumped to 5.0% for the 12 months to September 2025. The unemployment rate for Warwickshire for the 12 months up to and including September 2025 will be available on 20 January 2026.

### Claimant Count Data

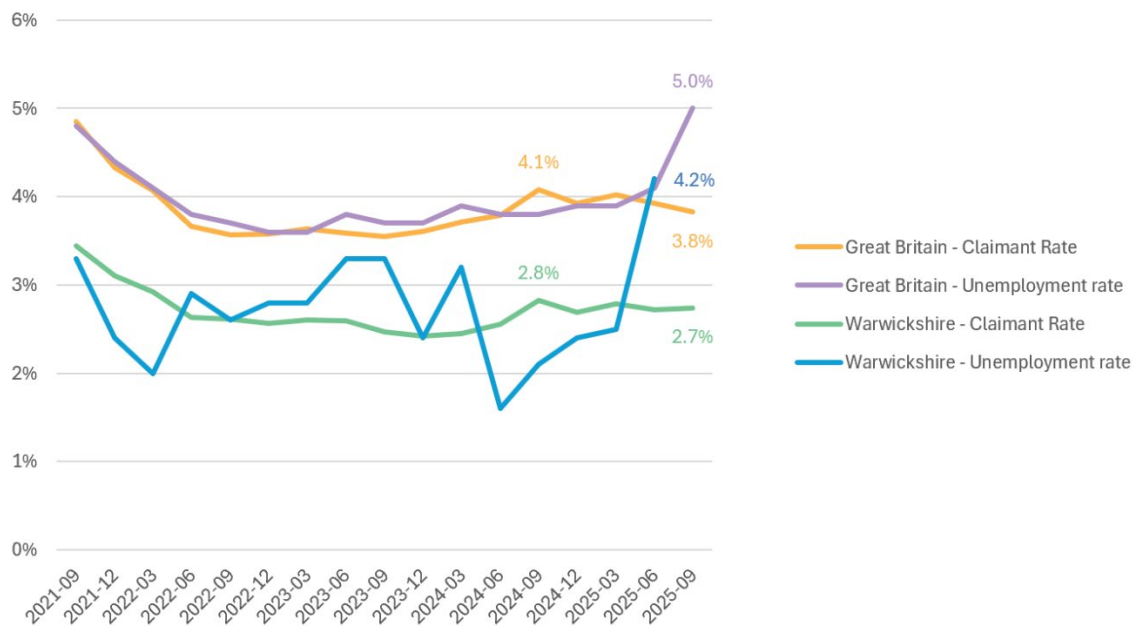
The claimant rate in Warwickshire has **dropped slightly from 2.8% to 2.7%** from the 12 months to September 2024 (n=10,920) to the 12 months to September 2025 (n=10,590) and remains well below a rate of **3.8% for Great Britain** in September 2025 (down from 4.1% in September 2024).

As the latest claimant rate is available for September and the unemployment rate is for June, the local claimant rate should show any major job losses, even if some newly unemployed people haven't signed up for benefits yet. If 5,000 more local people are unemployed and 7,000 fewer are employed, we would expect to see a noticeable increase in the number of local claimants - especially since there are fewer than 11,000 claimants overall - if most of those people lost their jobs in the same quarter.

Figure 1 shows that the claimant rate in Warwickshire (in green) has maintained a rate below 3.0% since 2022 and a consistent gap below the claimant rate for Great Britain (in orange) for the last 4 years. However, the unemployment rate data for Warwickshire (in blue) for the same period is less consistent with more pronounced peaks and troughs that are synonymous with survey data. The Warwickshire unemployment rate has been below the Great Britain rate until the latest data which saw an increase in Warwickshire followed by an increase for Great Britain. The claimant rate does not tell the same story as the unemployment rate for Warwickshire.



**Figure 1: Unemployment rate vs. claimant rate for Warwickshire vs. GB (Nomis)**



[Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics](#)

### Detailed claimant trends

A closer look at the claimant data within Warwickshire shows that the claimant rate in Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough at 4.1% is above the rate for Great Britain at 3.8% (Table 1). The claimant rate varies across the different districts and boroughs of Warwickshire, as well as by age band (Table 2). The highest claimant rate in Warwickshire is for under-25s in Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough at 6.2%. The lowest claimant rate is for over-50s in Stratford-on-Avon District at 1.4%.

**Table 1: Claimant rate by district & borough in Warwickshire vs. GB (DWP 16-64 years old)**

| Area                  | 2024-09 | 2024-12 | 2025-03 | 2025-06 | 2025-09 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| North Warwickshire    | 2.7%    | 2.6%    | 2.7%    | 2.7%    | 2.6%    |
| Nuneaton and Bedworth | 4.1%    | 3.9%    | 4.0%    | 4.0%    | 4.1%    |
| Rugby                 | 2.8%    | 2.6%    | 2.7%    | 2.7%    | 2.7%    |
| Stratford-on-Avon     | 2.1%    | 2.0%    | 2.0%    | 1.9%    | 2.0%    |
| Warwick               | 2.4%    | 2.3%    | 2.4%    | 2.3%    | 2.3%    |
| Warwickshire          | 2.8%    | 2.7%    | 2.8%    | 2.7%    | 2.7%    |
| Great Britain         | 4.1%    | 3.9%    | 4.0%    | 3.9%    | 3.8%    |



**Table 2: Claimant rate by district & borough and by age band in the year to September 2025 (DWP 2025-09)**

| Area                  | Aged 16 to 24 | Aged 25 to 49 | Aged 50 to 64 | Aged 16 to 64 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| North Warwickshire    | 3.8%          | 2.9%          | 1.6%          | 2.6%          |
| Nuneaton and Bedworth | <b>6.2%</b>   | 4.3%          | 2.8%          | 4.1%          |
| Rugby                 | 3.5%          | 2.8%          | 2.1%          | 2.7%          |
| Stratford-on-Avon     | 2.4%          | 2.3%          | <b>1.4%</b>   | 2.0%          |
| Warwick               | 2.2%          | 2.6%          | 1.9%          | 2.3%          |
| Warwickshire          | 3.5%          | 3.0%          | 2.0%          | 2.7%          |
| Great Britain         | 4.2%          | 4.3%          | 2.8%          | 3.8%          |

The increases in the count of over-16 year-olds claiming unemployment benefits (Table 3) are the most pronounced for under 25s, with an increase of 1.7% in the last month, 6.7% in the last 3 months, and 13.5% in the last year (from 1,815 in the 12 months to September 2024 to 2,060 in September 2025). However, the claimant count has gone up slightly for all age bands in the last month from a total of 10,540 in August 2025 to 10,590 in September 2025 in Warwickshire. Nonetheless, this is still below the highest recent Claimant Count in Warwickshire - which was 10,920 in September 2024.

**Table 3: Change in claimant count in Warwickshire by age band (Nomis 2025-09)**

| Increase             | Aged 16 to 24 | Aged 25 to 49 | Aged 50+ | All Aged 16+ |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|--------------|
| Last month           | 1.7%          | 0.6%          | -0.8%    | 0.5%         |
| Last quarter         | 6.7%          | 0.5%          | -3.7%    | 0.6%         |
| Sep 2024 to Sep 2025 | 13.5%         | -6.3%         | -6.3%    | -3.0%        |

## Conclusions

For the first time in over two decades, the official unemployment rate in Warwickshire has surpassed the national average, rising to 4.2% compared to 4.1% for Great Britain in the 12 months to June 2025. However, the claimant count - a more stable administrative measure - shows a slight decrease in Warwickshire, dropping from 2.8% to 2.7% over the same period, and remaining well below the national rate of 3.8%.

Whilst the official unemployment rate has become more volatile - partly due to survey limitations and changing methodologies - the claimant count remains a reliable indicator of local labour market pressures. The divergence between these measures underscores the importance of using both to understand the full scope of unemployment and its impact across Warwickshire's communities. Continued monitoring, especially for areas and age groups experiencing higher rates, is important with the ongoing local and national economic challenges.