

# Benefit claimants...in brief

September 2023

Some headline numbers for East Sussex:

In August 2023 there were 47,487 people in East Sussex claiming Universal Credit (UC), including 15,875 who were working (with or without additional work seeking requirements) and 10,212 who were searching for work.

Overall numbers of UC claimants are up 4.5% (2,053 claimants) from August 2022.

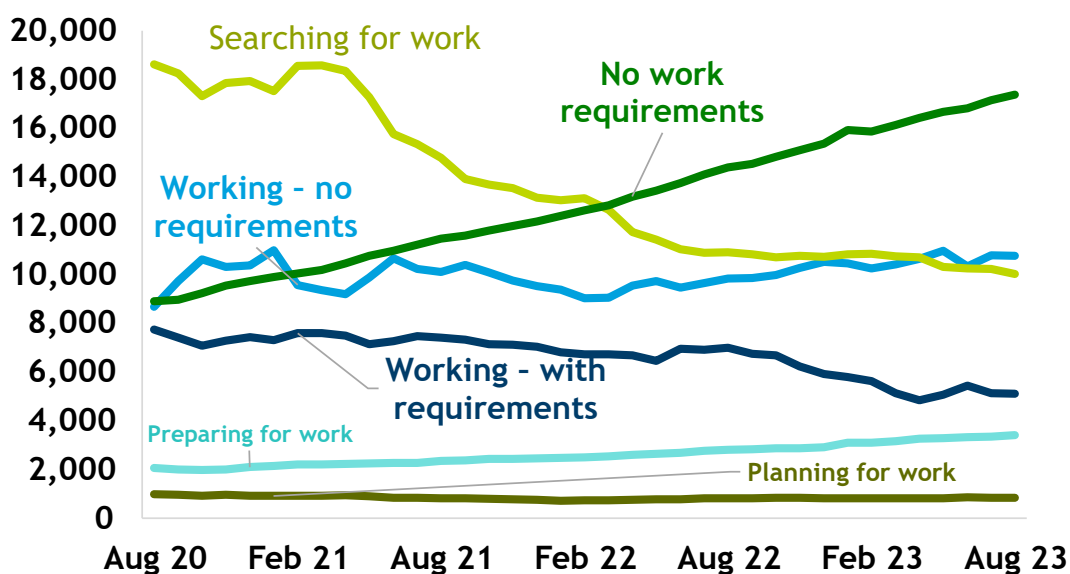
In February 2023 there were 72,069 working age people claiming at least one DWP benefit (including working people on UC or Housing Benefit, but not including those who claim Tax credits only), an increase of 198 claimants (up 0.3%) since February 2023. However this is still 13,093 more (up 22.2%) than in February 2020.

43,088 people were claiming a benefit because they were not in work, either because they were unemployed or because of sickness or caring responsibilities. This figure was up 1.2% (517 more claimants) than the previous year, and 24.4% (8,456 more claimants) higher than pre pandemic in February 2020.

In August 2023 there were 10,535 people claiming UC or Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) because they were unemployed and actively seeking work, 3.4% of working age people. This was 120 fewer claimants than in July 2023 (down 1.1%) and down 770 claimants (6.8%) since August 2022.

## Universal Credit Claimants [[note 1](#)]

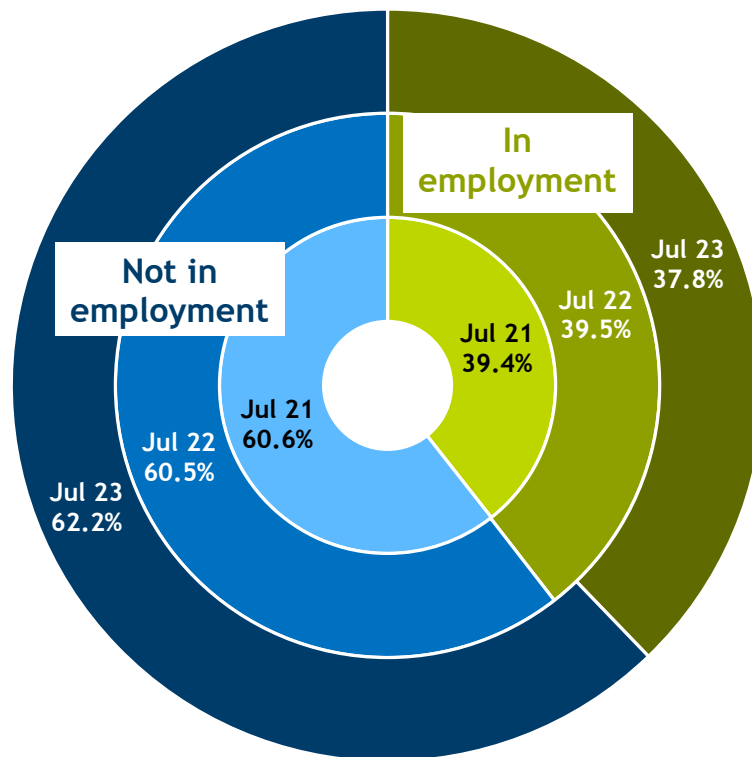
Universal Credit claimants by conditionality - August 2020-2023



In East Sussex in August 2023 there were 47,487 people claiming UC, this is 14.9% of working age people, close to the national rate of 15.0%. This figure is up 4.5% compared to a year ago, with 2,053 more claimants. In July 2023, 37.8% of all UC claimants in East Sussex were in work, a lower rate than a year ago when 39.5% of UC claimants were in work (employment indicator - see [note 2](#)). The number of claimants in the 'No work requirements' group continues to rise and now make up almost 37% of all people who claim UC (compared to 19% in August 2020).

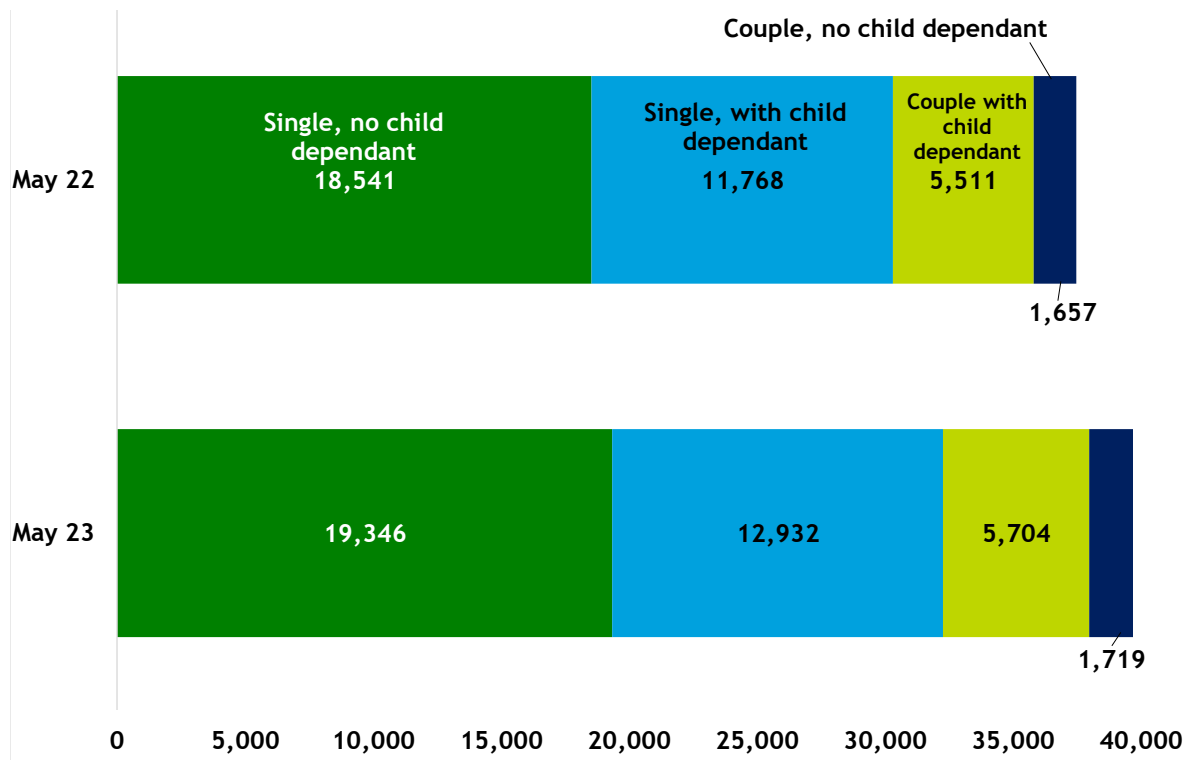
In East Sussex in May 2023 there were 39,709 households on UC. 49% of these UC claimants are single people with no children. 47% are families with children and 69% of these families are single parents. 19% of claimants are couples of whom 77% have Children. The number of single people has increased by 1,969 claimants (6.5%) in the year to May 2023, whereas the number of couples claiming UC has risen at a slower rate in the same period (up 255, 3.6%)

### Employment indicator of Universal Credit claimants in East Sussex - June 2021, 2022 and 2023 [\[note 2\]](#)

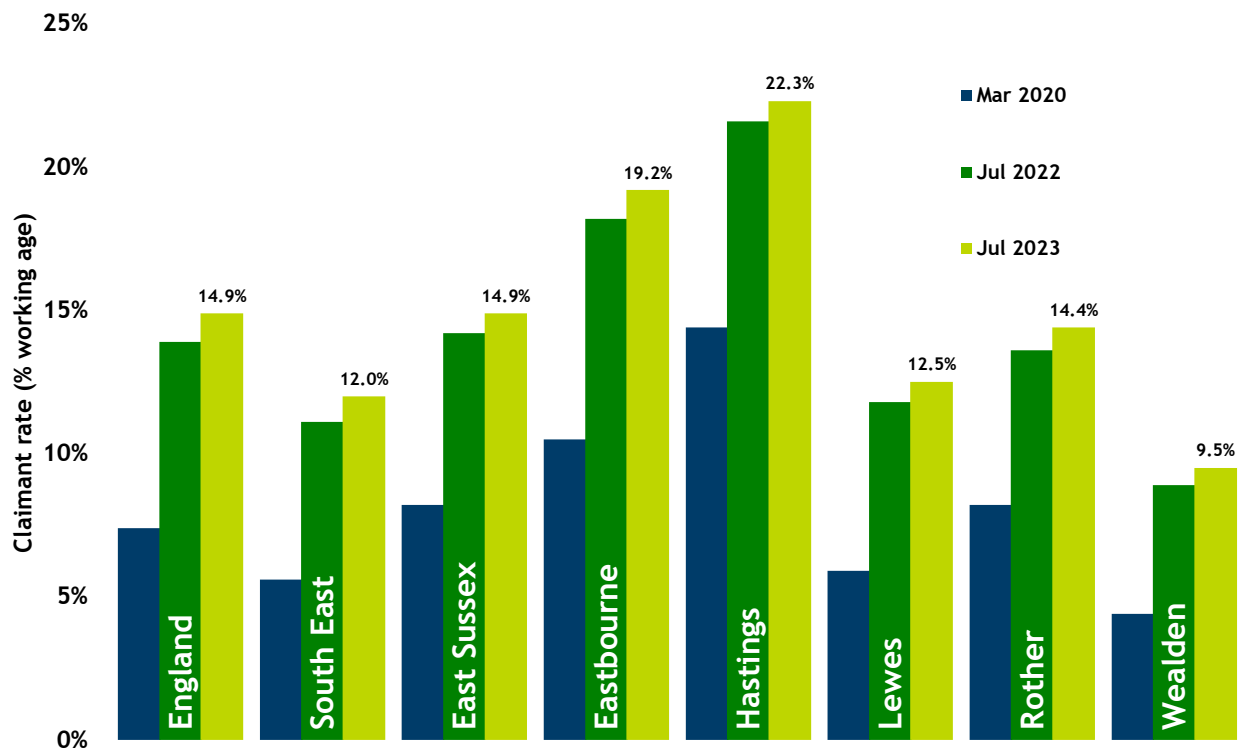


In July 2023, 37.8% of UC claimants were in employment (see [note 2](#) for definition). This is down from 39.5% in July 2022. This data refers to the employment indicator which shows whether earnings were recorded within an individuals' completed UC assessment period closest to the count date, as opposed to the conditionality data seen above which indicates the employment status of the individual on the count date.

### UC households in East Sussex, May 2022 and 2023, by family type



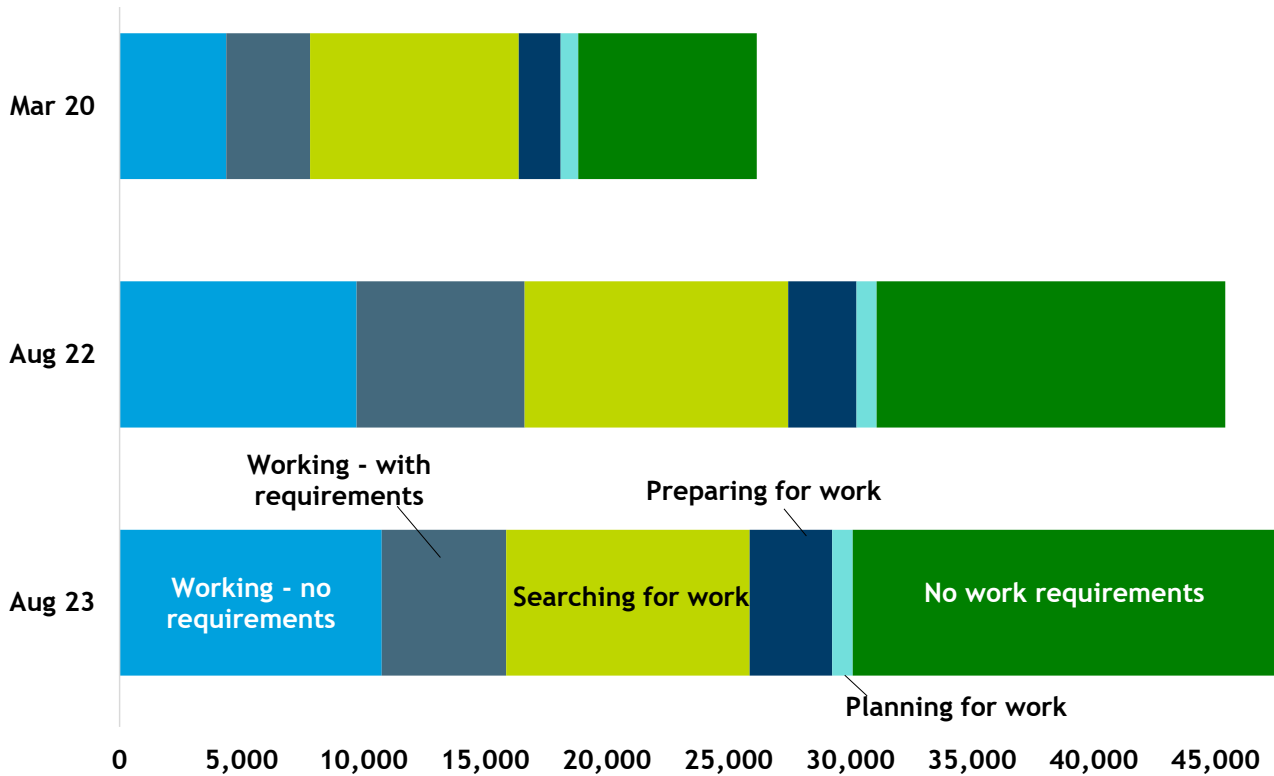
### Claimant rate for Universal Credit, March 2020, August 2022 and August 2023



Conditionality measure	Claimants	Percentage
All claimants	47,487	100%
Working (with or without requirements)	15,875	33.4%
Searching for work	10,006	21.1%
Preparing or planning for work	4,234	8.9%
No work requirements	17,362	36.6%

The table above shows the numbers of East Sussex UC claimants in each conditionality group in August 2023. The chart below shows the change in UC claimants and their conditionality group over time.

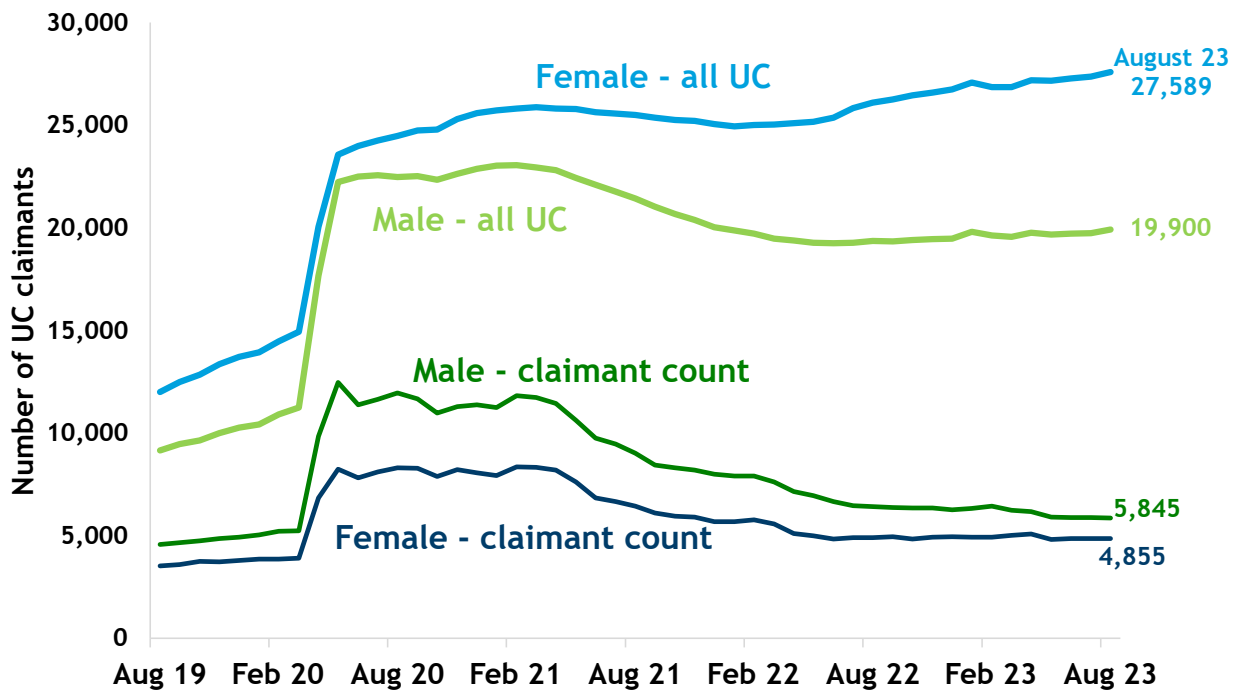
**Universal Credit claimants by conditionality in East Sussex, March 2020, August 2022 and August 2023**



## Definitions of conditionality groups

Conditionality group	Claimant conditions
Working: no requirements	Individual or household earnings over the level at which conditionality applies.
Working: with requirements	In work but could earn more, or not working but has a partner with low earnings.
Searching for work	Not working, or with very low earnings. Claimant is required to take action to secure work—or more/better paid work.
Preparing for work	Expected to start preparing for future even with limited capability for work at the present time or has a child aged 2. (Aged 3-4 prior to April 2017).
Planning for work	Expected to work in the future. e.g. Lone parent/lead carer of child aged 1. (Aged 1-2 prior to April 2017).
No work requirements	Not expected to work at present. Health or caring responsibility prevents claimant from working or preparing for work.

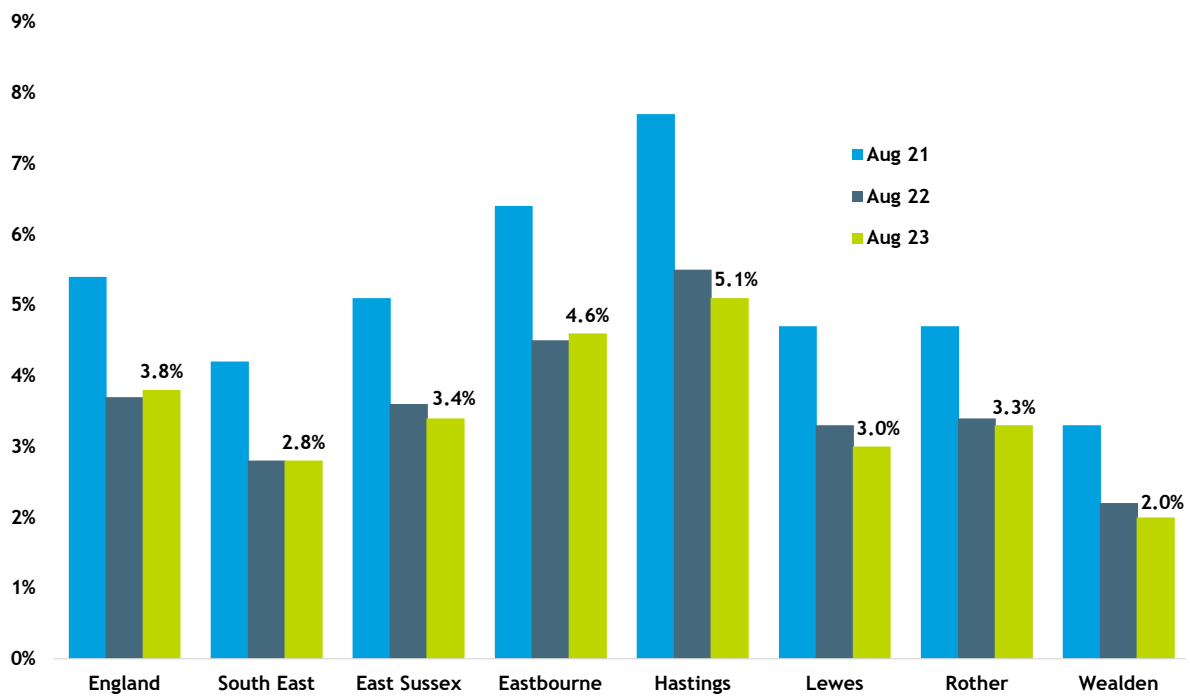
## Male and female claimants of Universal Credit and UC/JSA unemployed claimant count, August 2019- August 2023, East Sussex



## Claimant count [\[note 3\]](#)

There were 10,535 Unemployed JSA and UC claimants in East Sussex in August 2023 (3.4% of the working age population). This rate is lower than the England rate of 3.8%. In East Sussex numbers are falling; down 1.1% since July 2023 and down 6.8% since August 2022.

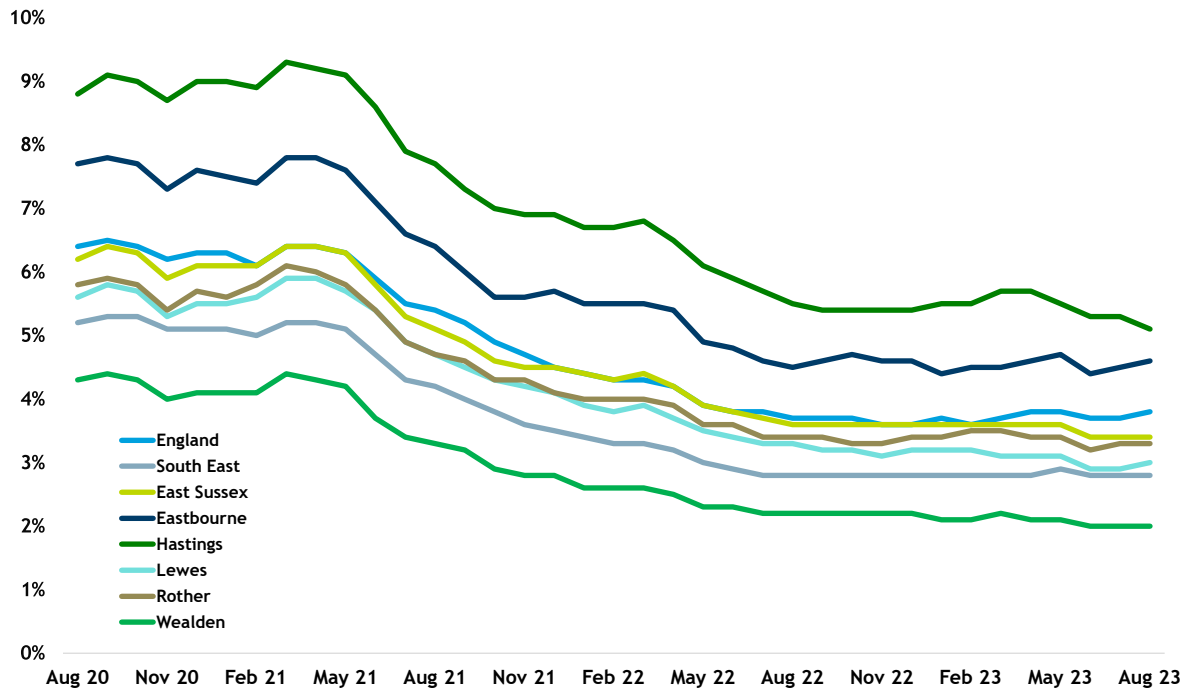
### Claimant rates in East Sussex, districts and comparators, August 2021, 2022 and 2023.



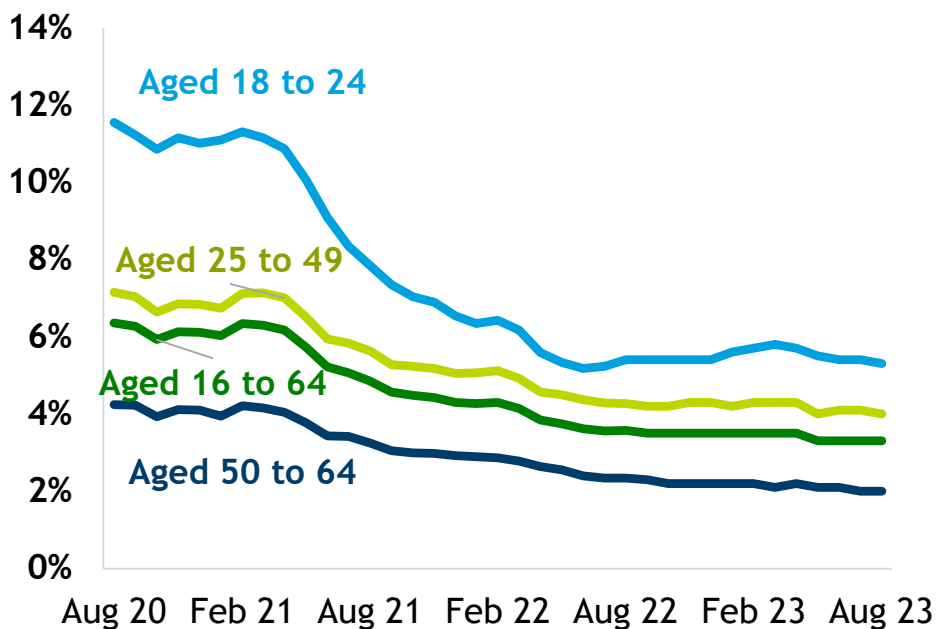
Unemployed claimant figures have fallen by 6.8% for all working age people in East Sussex in the year to August 2023. This decrease can be seen among all age groups, however there has only been a 1.6% decrease among those aged 18-24 in the past year, a slower decline than other age groups.

In August 2023 5.3% of people aged 18-24 in East Sussex were claiming UC/JSA compared to 5.4% in August 2022, but the rate was 7.8% in August 2021. These East Sussex figures are higher than the national average of 5.0% young claimants in England in August 2023. Figures are particularly high in Hastings, where 8.8% of young people are claiming UC/JSA, including 10.8% of young males.

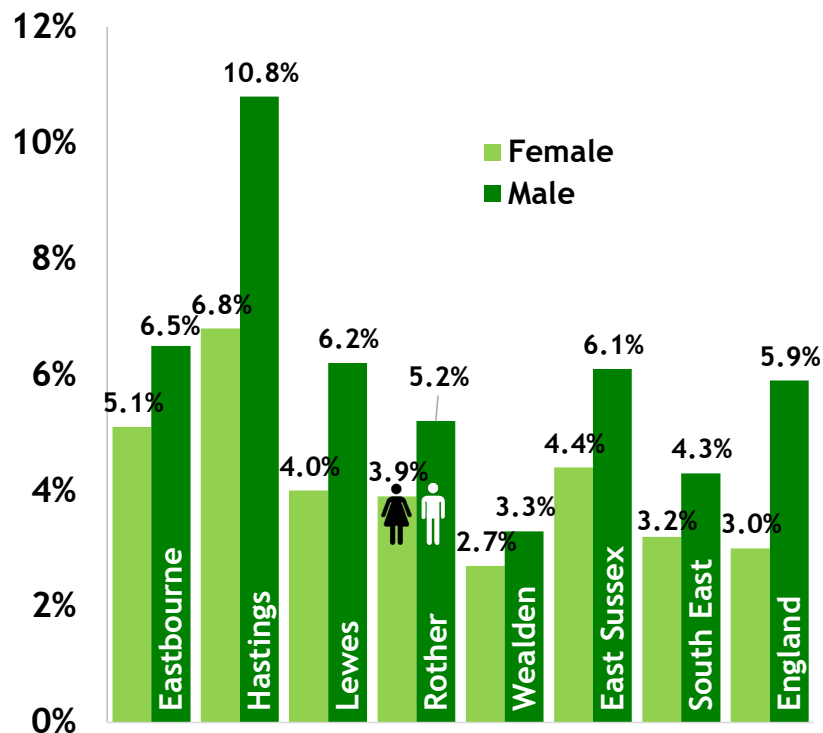
### Claimant rates in East Sussex districts and comparator areas, August 2020 - 2023



### Claimant rates in East Sussex, all working age and age groups, August 2020-2023



## Claimant rates among young people aged 18-24 by sex in East Sussex, districts and comparators, August 2023

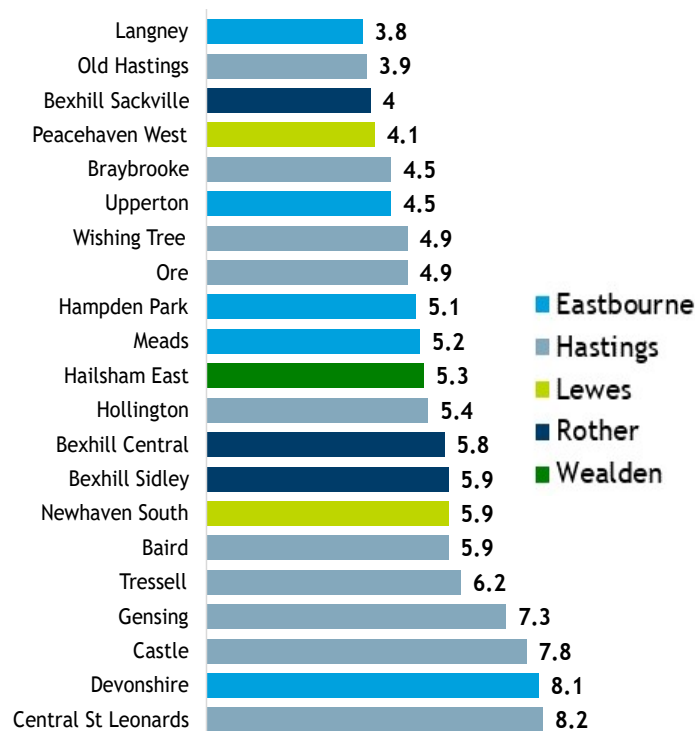


Claimant counts rose in Lewes (1.8%) and Wealden (0.8%) in the month to August 2023 but fell in all other districts. The biggest decrease was seen in Eastbourne (down 3.4%) with a decrease of 90 claimants in the month to August 2023. Numbers are now 6.8% lower than in August 2022 in the county.

- Wealden has seen a small increase in claimants up 15 (0.8%) in the month to August 2023, however since August 2022, it has seen the largest decrease in claimants of all East Sussex districts (down 9.7%). Eastbourne has seen a steady decline in claimants, down 3.4% from July 2023 and down 6.0% from August 2022.
- Wards: 21 post 2019 wards have rates above the England average, with the highest rates in Central St Leonards (8.4%), Castle (7.6%) and Gensing (7.6%) in Hastings, and Devonshire (7.9%) in Eastbourne. (see chart below)
- There has been a decrease in both male and female claimants in East Sussex, with female claimants down by 55 in the month to August 2023, and male claimants down 65 in the same period. Since August 2022 male claimants have dropped by 645, compared to 125 female claimants.
- 31 (post 2019) wards saw an increase in claimant numbers in the month to August 2023, while 45 wards saw a decline.



## Claimant Rates in August 2023 - (post-2019) wards at or above England rate (3.8%)



21 wards (post-2019) have a JSA/UC claimant rate equal to or higher than the national average of 3.8%. This includes 10 wards in Hastings, 5 in Eastbourne, 3 in Rother, 2 in Lewes and 1 in Wealden.

### Eastbourne

The claimant count decreased by 90 (3.4%) in August 2023. The claimant rate at 4.3% is well above the national average of 3.8%. Devonshire ward (post-2019) has the highest rate in the district (7.9%) but rates in Meads (5.1%), Hampden Park (4.8%) and Upperton (4.0%) are also higher than the national average. All wards in Eastbourne have seen a slight decline in the year to August 2023.

### Hastings

The claimant count decreased in Hastings by 25 (0.9%) in August 2023, and has seen a 5.7% decrease in the year to August 2023, but continues to have the highest levels of claimant count unemployment at 5.1%. 9 out of 16 wards have a rate at or above the national average, with the very highest rates in Central St Leonards (8.4%), Castle and Gensing (both 7.6%). There were falls in just 5 wards in August 2023 with 9 wards seeing an increase and two remaining stable this month.

### Lewes

Lewes saw an increase of 30 claimants (1.8%) in August 2023 but this figure is now 7.3% lower than in August 2022. Only 1 (post 2019) ward has a rate above the national average: Newhaven South (6.1%). Numbers rose in 8 wards, fell in 5 others and were stable elsewhere in the month to August 2023. Annually, only four Lewes wards have seen an increase in claimants, but these numbers are still small.

## Rother

The number of unemployed claimants decreased by 50 (3.1%) in the month to August 2023, and are down 6% since August 2022. 2 (post 2019) wards have rates above the national average, Bexhill Central (5.8%) and Bexhill Sidley (5.7%). In August 2023 there has been a decrease in claimants in 7 wards, an increase in 6 wards, while rates have remained stable in all other wards in Rother.

## Wealden

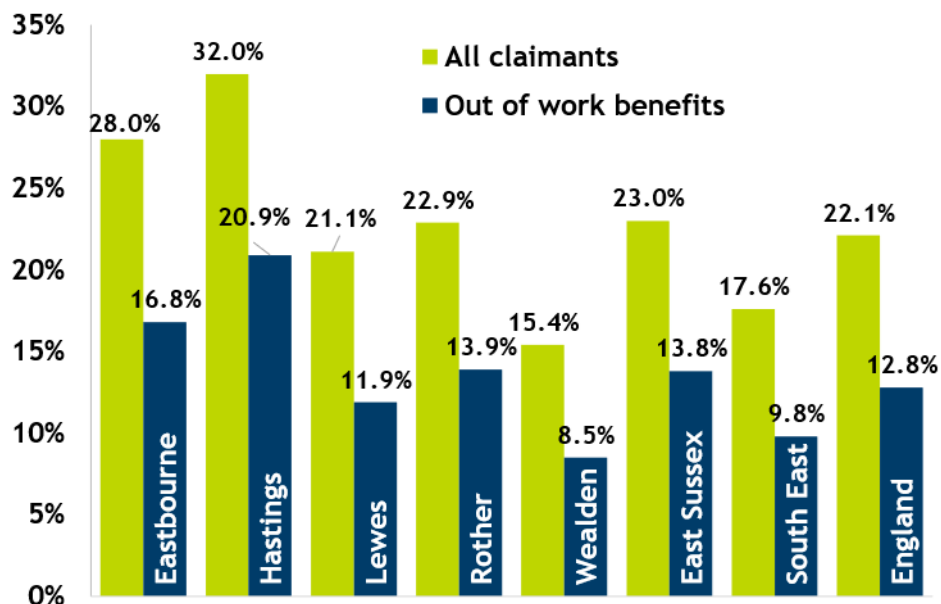
Claimant numbers in Wealden decreased by 15 (0.8%) in August 2023 and are now 9.7% lower than in August 2022. At 2.0%, the rate is well below the national average (3.8%), with only one (post 2019) ward having a rate above - Hailsham East, (5.1%). Numbers rose in 10 wards but fell or were stable elsewhere in August 2023. Numbers have dropped in 15 wards since July 2022, risen in 3 and remained stable elsewhere.

## Claimants of other DWP benefits

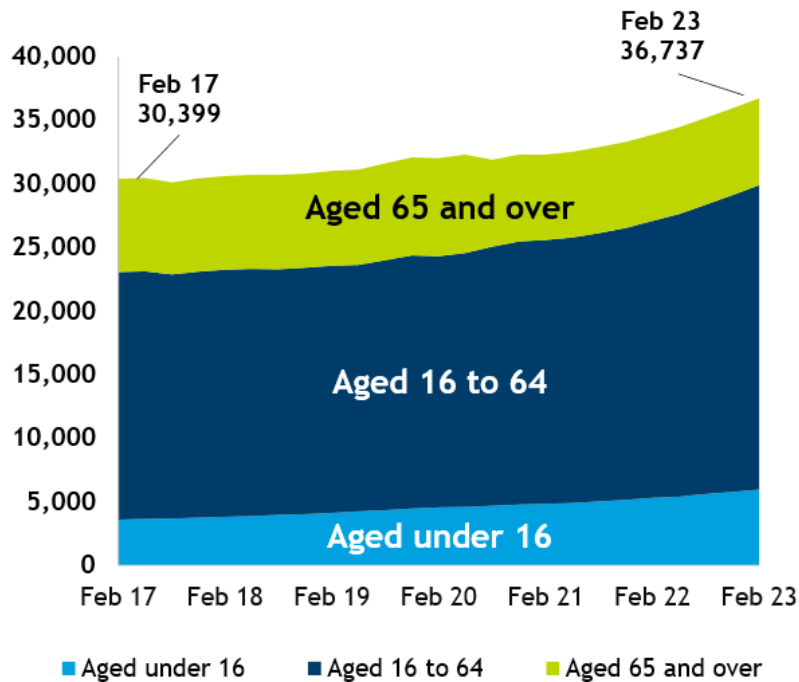
In February 2023 there were 72,069 working age people claiming at least one DWP benefit in East Sussex, (23.0% of the working age population) of whom 42,571 were on at least one Out-of-work benefit (13.8% of working age)

The Out-of-work figure is 1.2% higher than in February 2022, which compares to a 5.6% decrease in the Unemployed JSA/UC claimant count over the same period [\[note 4\]](#)

## Percentage of working age people claiming any DWP benefit and Out-of-work benefits in February 2023 in districts of East Sussex and comparators

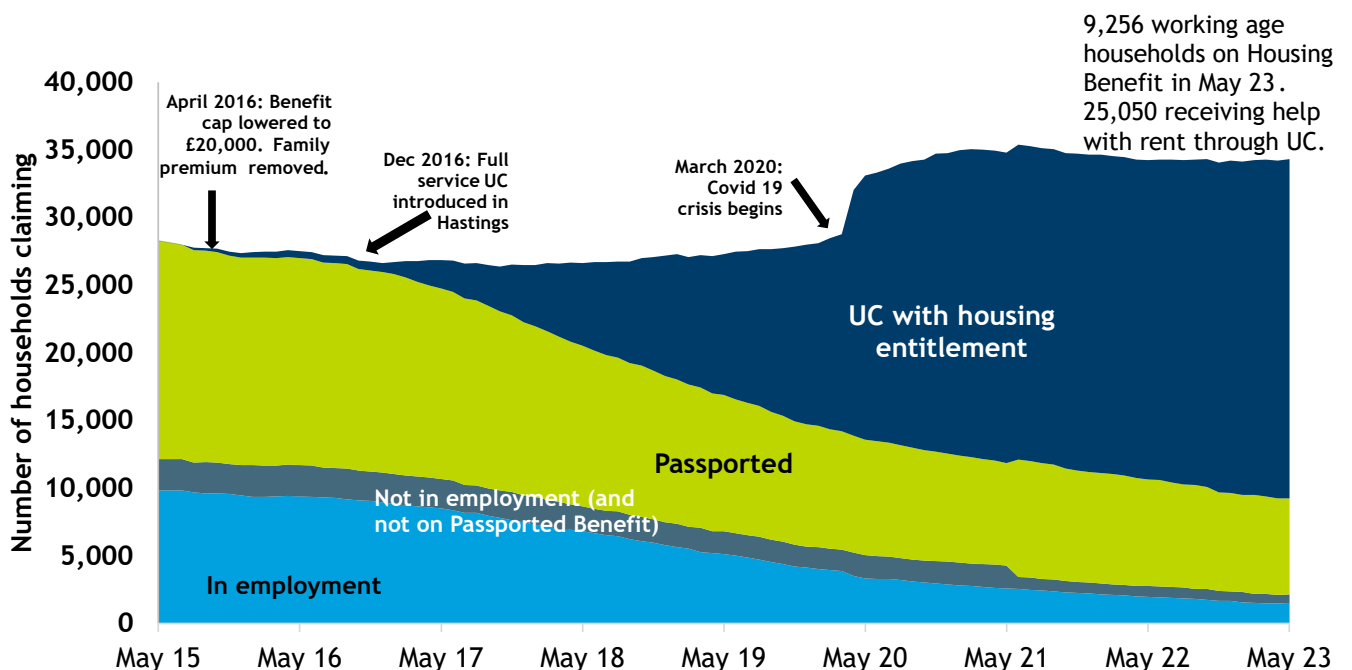


## DLA and PIP claimants in East Sussex by age, February 2017 - February 2023 [\[note 6\]](#)



The number of DLA and PIP claimants has continued to rise at a steady rate over the last 5 years and in February 2023 was 8.5% higher than the previous year. But while there was a 9.9% increase among those aged 16-64, the number of claimants who were under 16 rose by 12.7% in the year to August 2022, and those aged 65+ increased by just 0.6%.

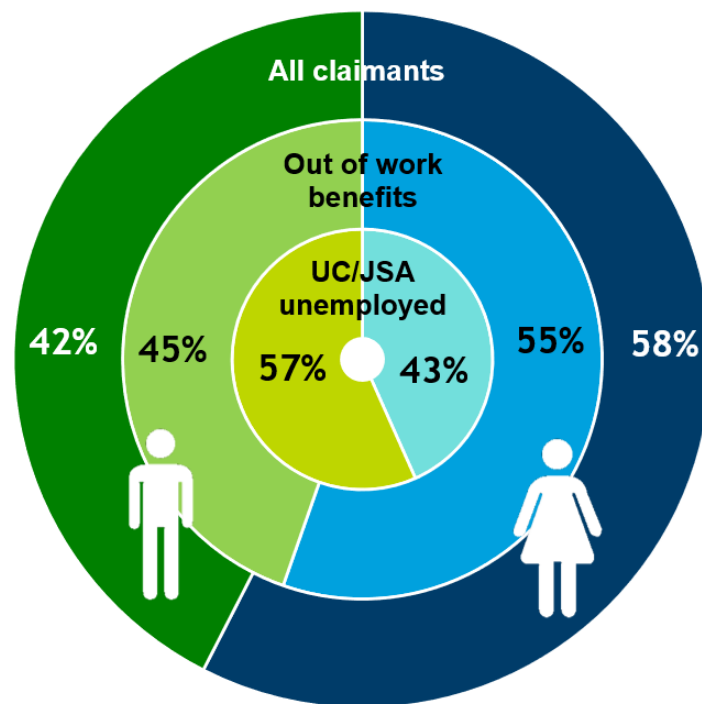
## Working age households on Housing Benefit and UC rented housing element, in East Sussex, May 2015-May 2023 [\[note 5\]](#)



Under the preceding benefits regime (before Universal Credit) some people could claim a number of different benefits (known as ‘legacy benefits’), so some of the following groups will overlap.

In East Sussex (February 2023) there were 12,483 people claiming Employment and Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit [\[note 4\]](#). 953 people were claiming Income Support (IS), of whom 496 were lone parents. 6,862 working age people were claiming carers allowance. There were 23,939 working age people claiming Disability Living Allowance or PIP, and 9,260 working age households claiming Housing Benefit.

### All working age DWP benefits, out-of-work benefits and UC/JSA unemployed claimants in East Sussex, by sex, February 2023



### Claimants on particularly low incomes

In East Sussex there are:

- 8,768 households whose LHA element of UC does not cover the private rent they pay (February 2023).
- 1,037 households (HB or UC) whose benefit is capped to £1,667 pcm regardless of the rent they pay or the size of their family (February 2023)
- 615 UC claimants receive a lower amount of benefit because they have been sanctioned (May 2023).
- If these groups do not overlap, in Spring 2023 there were around 10,420 people in the county who did not get sufficient benefits to cover their needs and their housing costs.

In East Sussex there are also 1,261 households whose UC does not cover all their social rent ('bedroom tax' - February 2023), and 716 households whose HB does not cover all their social rent (November 2022). Data is not available on the number of households on Housing Benefit whose LHA does not cover their private rent.

## **Glossary for data above:**

UC: Universal Credit; LHA: Local Housing Allowance; HB: Housing Benefit; PCM: per calendar month

### **Why are some claimants receiving particularly low amounts of benefit which may mean they experience hardship?**

Welfare benefits are supposed to be set at levels to provide sufficient income for people to be able to meet their very basic needs, such as rent payments, utility bills, and nutrition. However, a number of factors mean that many people who rely on benefits do not have even the minimum income needed to cover these expenses.

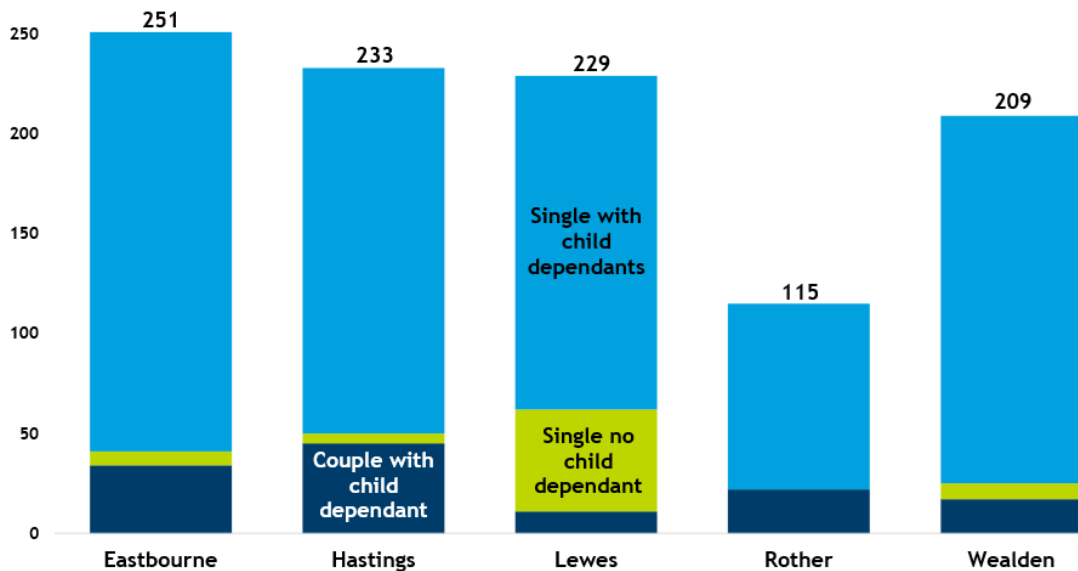
Firstly, welfare benefit increases have not kept up with inflation, especially following restricted increases in the years of austerity since 2010. There was a four-year benefit freeze between 2016 and 2020 which meant that in these years, benefits fell in value in terms of their purchasing power. 2022 had the greatest fall in the value of the basic rate of unemployment benefits since the start of annual uprating in 1972, (according to Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) research - [see note 7](#)), as the inflation rate was much higher than predicted in the formula.

Secondly, a number of claimants receive less than the minimum that is calculated to meet their family's needs because of different factors:

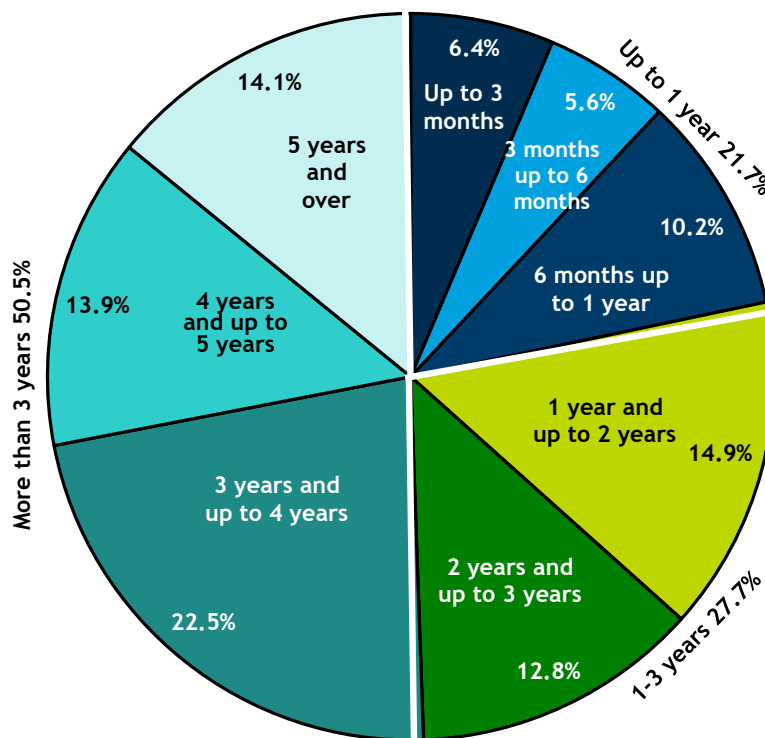
- 1) Restrictions on the amount of rent support they receive so that it does not cover all the rent due, via restrictions to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) for private tenants, or removal of Spare Room Subsidy ('Bedroom tax') for social tenants (applies to both UC and Housing Benefit). This means that claimants have to use some of the money they are nominally given for bills and food to pay their rent. If a claimant is evicted for non-payment of rent, they are generally considered to be 'intentionally homeless' and so not entitled to any support with finding housing. In May 2022, 7,887 households on UC did not receive sufficient LHA to cover their rent, and a further 1,226 UC claimant households were subject to removal of spare room subsidy. Data is not available for Housing Benefit (HB) claimants for whom the LHA used to calculate their benefit is lower than the rent they pay, but 851 HB claimants are subject to removal of spare room subsidy (out of 6,645 working age households who are social tenants on HB).
- 2) Many larger families are subject to the 'Benefit cap', whereby the maximum total amount of benefits a family can receive (outside London) is £20,000 per year (£1,667 per month (pcm)) including all housing support, regardless of the size of the family. The average rent for a 3 bedroom property in the county is £1,100 pcm (£1,250 in Wealden), meaning that a family with three or four children in a three bed home might be left with £566 per month for all bills, food, etc. Capped energy prices are expected to reach around £208 pcm in the autumn. 1,152 households in the county were subject to the Benefit Cap in August 2022, three quarters of whom were lone parents.
- 3) People who do not meet one or more conditions of their benefit claim without good reason, such as failing to undertake sufficient work-seeking activity, can have their benefit stopped or reduced. This is a benefit sanction, which reduces their standard benefit allowance (not including extra money for children or housing costs) for a period of time from 1 week up to 3 years if regime breaches continue. 655 people on UC were subject to a sanction in November 2022.

Another issue is the number of claimants who have been claiming for long periods of time. While a household may be able to manage with reduced income from benefits alone for a short period, it is more difficult to cope when they have had to rely on benefits for a protracted period. In August 2023, 51% (23,981) of all UC claimants had been receiving the benefit for at least 3 years, and more than 3 quarters of UC claimants (78% or 37,161 claimants) have been claiming the benefit for over 1 year.

### Number of households subject to Benefits Cap by household type, February 2023, districts

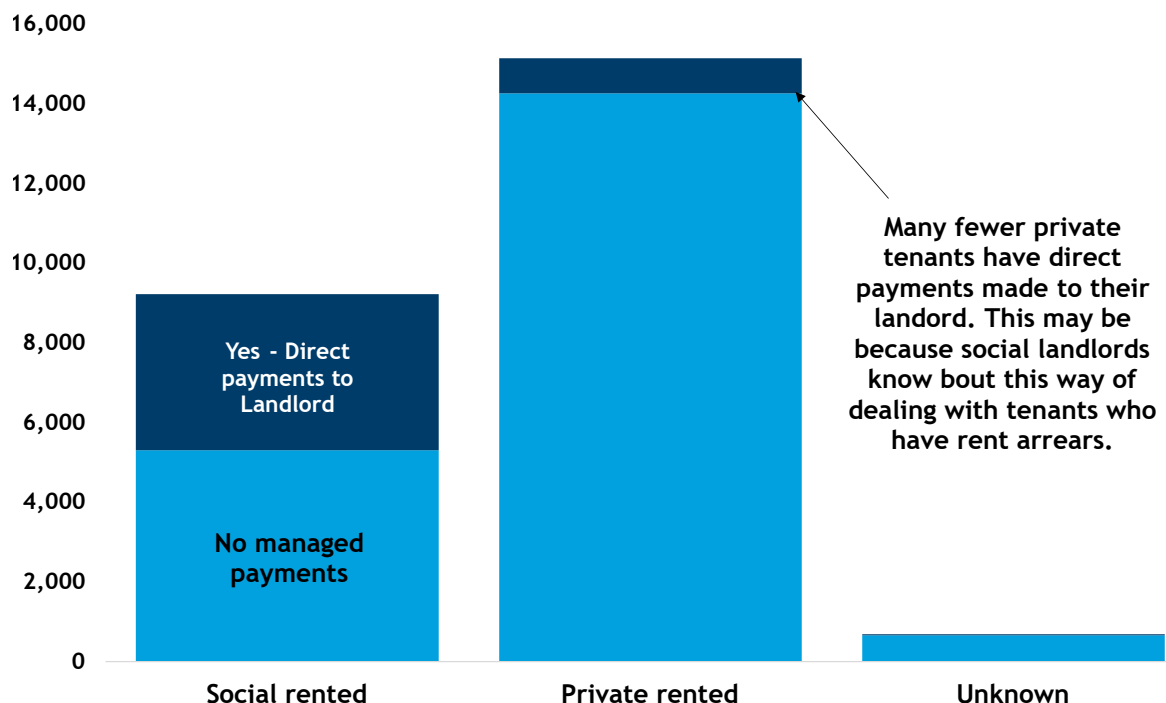


### Universal Credit claimants by duration in August 2023, East Sussex



Over half of UC claimants in East Sussex have now been claiming for 3 years or more, and over a quarter have been claiming for more than 4 years.

## Alternative Payment Arrangements - Managed Payments to Landlord in May 2023, East Sussex



Landlords of tenants who are on Universal Credit, and are in arrears with their rent are able to apply to have direct payment made to them.

## Pension age claimants

In East Sussex there were 136,948 claimants of Pension Age (PA: 66 years and over) in February 2023. 99,842 of all Pension age claimants are claiming State Pension only, while 35,252 are claiming another benefit (includes Pension Credit, Disability benefits, Housing Benefit, Carers allowance). 26% of PA claimants have at least one additional benefit. 24,608 of PA claimants are on at least one disability benefit. There are 1,857 PA claimants in East Sussex who receive no state pension (but get other benefits including Pension Credit).

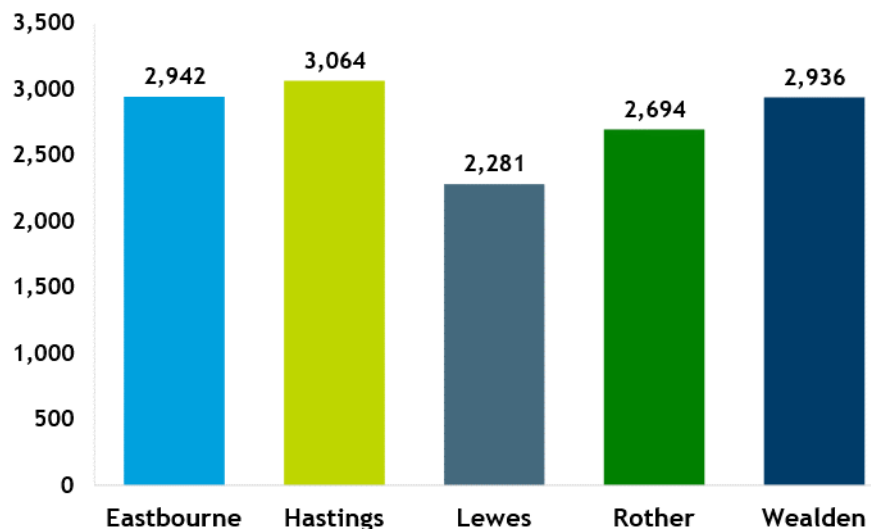
### All benefits paid to people of Pension age ([see note 8](#))

136,948 people aged 66+ claim at least one state benefit. The majority of these receive State Pension only (73%) and an additional 35,250 (26%) get at least one other benefit, including Pension Credit (PC), disability benefits (Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Attendance Allowance (AA) and Industrial Injuries Disability Benefit (IIDB)), Housing Benefit (HB) and Carers Allowance (CA). (Note that not all of these benefits are means tested. DLA/PIP claimants have to have made their claim before age 65. Disabled older claimants can apply for Attendance Allowance). 1,857 people receive no state pension at all, but are receiving other benefits including PC, DLA/PIP/AA/IIDB, HB and CA.

## Pension Credit ([see note 9](#))

Pension Credit gives claimants extra money to help with living costs if they are over State Pension age and on a low income. Pension Credit can also help with housing costs such as ground rent or service charges and might mean extra help if they are a carer, severely disabled, or responsible for a child or young person. A person can get Pension Credit even if they have other income, a pension, savings or own their own home. There were 13,901 PC claimants in East Sussex in February 2023.

### Number of claimants of Pension Credit in February 2023



### Pension Credit claimant rate by sex, districts and comparators, February 2023





## Further information and notes

This briefing analyses a variety of different benefits data, which is released by DWP for different time periods. UC and UC/JSA claimant count data is published on a monthly basis with data for the previous month, and the most recent data available is for August 2021, although employment indicator data for UC is only available for July 2021. Other benefits data is available for different time periods (e.g. Benefit Combinations is available for February 2021, Housing Benefits for May 2021). Please take care to ensure you understand that the data reflects how the situation was at that time period. Where we have combined data in one chart we have used the same time period.

### Note 1

Universal Credit is replacing six benefits: Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA); income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA); Income Support (IS); Housing Benefit (HB); Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC). Universal Credit is for people of working age who are on low incomes whether or not they work. The Full Service of Universal Credit has now been rolled out in all districts in the county, so all new income-related benefit claimants of working age now claim UC. Data for [Universal Credit claimants](#) and [households](#) is available on ESiF.

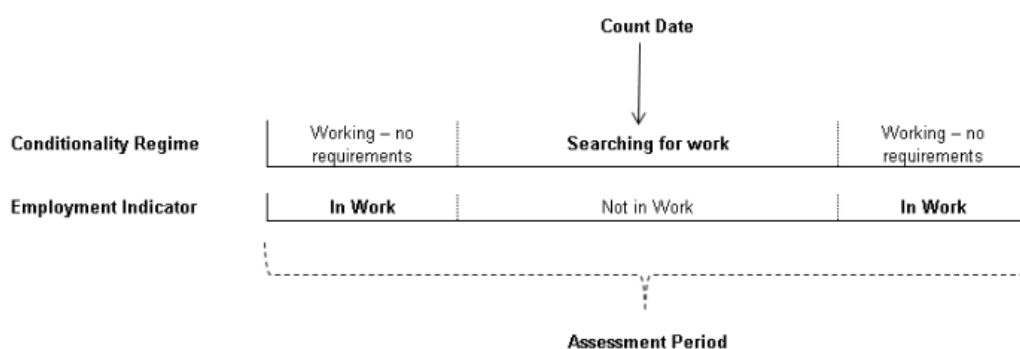
### Note 2

The Employment Indicator for Universal Credit shows whether earnings were recorded within an individual's completed UC assessment period closest to the count date. Employment detail is not yet available for August 2023.

The Conditionality Regime is based on an individual's circumstances on the count date.

It is therefore possible for an individual to be 'In Work' using one measure and 'Not in Work' using the other as shown in the example below. Care should be taken when interpreting any tables created by cross-tabulating these two variables.

This diagram shows how the two measures are related.



### Note 3

The Claimant Count measures the number of people who have made claims for benefits for reasons of unemployment. Most new claimants for benefit are covered by Universal Credit, but there are some claimants who do not qualify for UC because they have savings of over £16,000, but may be entitled to contributions-based JSA which is not means-tested. Detailed data on the Claimant count by [pre-2018 wards](#), [post-2019 wards](#), [age](#) and [towns](#) in East Sussex is available and is updated monthly.

The Full Service of UC has now been rolled out in all five districts since 2018. This means that all new claimants of means-tested benefits now claim UC rather than the legacy benefits including JSA, Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support, Housing Benefits and Tax Credits. People claiming non-means tested benefits such as contributions-based JSA and ESA, are still able to apply for and claim these benefits.

To qualify for JSA or UC as a job seeker, claimants must meet certain eligibility criteria which include being available for and actively seeking work, although they may work less than 16 hours per week and still be eligible if their earnings are very low. Work-seeking requirements were relaxed because of the Covid-19 crisis until July 2020, but were reinstated from that date. The count of JSA claimants include those claiming only National Insurance credits.

The Claimant rate is defined as the number of claimants resident in an area expressed as a percentage of the working age population resident in that area which includes all people aged 16-64. Rates for different age groups use the population of that age group. Population figures are derived from the latest Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-year population estimates, which are available for 2020. Rates will be recalculated once mid-year estimates based on the population figures from the 2021 Census are released later this year.

The Claimant Count is often used as an indicative measure of unemployment as it provides frequently updated information for a range of geographies. Care should be taken not to confuse this with ONS' official labour market statistics which use the International Labour Organisation's definition of the unemployment rate, which includes all those aged 16 plus who are out-of-work, but actively seeking work, including those claiming no benefits, as a percentage of all Economically Active people aged 16 and over.

#### **Note 4 - Benefit combinations**

The aim of the DWP's Benefit Combinations dataset is to look at the whole, combined picture for all DWP benefit claimants. Some people who claim benefits receive more than one type (for example DLA, IB and HB) depending on when they claimed and the reason for their claim, so combining individual claimant counts for different benefits may count the same claimant more than once. The Benefit Combinations data has been published by DWP to provide statistics on the number of individuals claiming a DWP benefit in total (i.e., counting each individual claimant only once within the data). The data is available on [ESiF](#).

The DWP data gives detail about many different combinations of benefits claimants. In the Benefit Combinations table in ESiF, different groups of claimants have been allocated to statistical groups to give an indication of the main reason why they are claiming benefit, enabling the numbers claiming different types of benefits to be better understood. If a claimant receives more than one benefit they will be allocated to the group which ranks highest in the following hierarchy:

**If claimant receives:**

JSA

ESA/IB

IS/PC

UC out-of-work claimants: includes:

Searching, planning or preparing for work groups

**then allocated to:**

UC unemployed and JSA

Incapacity benefits

Income support (or PC)

UC unemployed and JSA

UC no work requirement group	UC no work requirements
HB	Housing benefit
Other benefits - excluding those above	Other benefits
UC working with or without requirements	UC working

Claimants who are out-of-work in the Benefit Combinations dataset include all those claimants who are claiming and not in work (or searching for work), which includes all people in the Jobseeker, Incapacity benefits, Income Support, UC unemployed and UC no work requirements groups. This table is intended to create a figure which aligns with previous out-of-work benefits measures which were published by the DWP on the Nomis website, which included all claimants of benefits such as ESA/IB who were too sick or disabled to work and those IS claimants with children under the age of one.

For household level benefits (UC, PC and HB), both the main claimant and partner (if applicable) are included in the statistics as separate individuals. This differs from publication elsewhere of PC and HB statistics where figures show number of claims regardless of whether for a single person or a couple. HMRC administered benefits such as Tax Credits and Child Benefit are not included in the statistics, but households who receive Tax Credits may start to claim Universal Credit if their circumstances change.

## Definitions

A DWP benefit claimant is defined for the purposes of these statistics as the individual who is claiming benefit on their own behalf, or in the case of Universal Credit, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit, an individual who is part of a single or couple claim for benefit. An individual is not counted as a benefit claimant if they are a beneficiary of another persons benefit claim but are not claiming any benefit in their own right.

## DLA/PIP/AA

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a non-means tested benefit for disabled people who need assistance with personal care or mobility. From 2013 DWP started to replace DLA for working age people with Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and all new claims are now made to PIP rather than DLA, while existing DLA claimants aged less than 65 on 8th April 2013 are gradually being invited to switch to PIP. However, people can continue to receive PIP or DLA after reaching state pension age if they continue to satisfy the entitlement conditions. Attendance Allowance (AA) is a benefit for people at state pension age or over who are so severely disabled that they need a great deal of help with personal care or supervision. Essentially these three benefits each offer help for similar sets of circumstances, although under slightly different qualifying conditions. As such they have been banded together and the benefit combinations statistics simply show PIP/DLA for Working Age individuals, or PIP/DLA/AA for State Pension Age individuals, where the individual could be on any of the benefits shown at the reference date. ESiF at [district level](#) with a breakdown by age and sex, and at [\(pre-2018\) ward level](#), with a breakdown by age group.

## Incapacity Benefits

ESA/IB/SDA/IS(IB) are benefits paid to people who are too sick or disabled to work. Incapacity Benefit (IB), Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) (for those under pension age), and Income Support for those claiming on the basis of incapacity (IS(IB)) closed to new claimants from 2008, with existing claimants migrated to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) on a rolling program since that date. Migration is not yet fully completed.

Essentially these four benefits each offer help for similar sets of circumstances, although under slightly different qualifying conditions. As such they have been banded together where at the reference date the individual could be on any of ESA; IB and/or SDA (separately or in combination); and IS where IB and/or SDA is also in payment.

ESA can be contributions-based (see JSA below) or income-based, but income-based ESA is being replaced by Universal Credit. ESiF has tables giving data about people claiming [ESA and IB](#).

### **Income Support (IS) and Pension Credit (PC)**

IS is a legacy benefit for those claiming on the basis of incapacity (IS(IB)) or because of parenting or caring responsibilities. IS(IB) closed to new claimants from 2008, with most existing claimants migrated to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). Migration is not yet fully completed. [Benefit Combinations](#) statistics include IS(IB) cases in the INCAP category defined above. Those claiming Income Support on the basis of something other than incapacity (e.g. carers, lone parents etc.) are shown as IS within these statistics.

Pension Credit (PC) gives claimants extra money to help with living costs if they are over State Pension age and on a low income. Pension Credit can also help with housing costs such as ground rent or service charges and might allow a claimant to get extra help if they are a carer, severely disabled, or responsible for a child or young person. A person can get Pension Credit even if they have other income, a pension, savings or own their own home. Some partners of PC maybe under age 65 and are included in the Benefit Combinations data. PC data is now available on ESiF.

### **Housing Benefit (HB)**

HB is a benefit paid to help people pay their rent if they are unemployed, on a low income or claiming benefits. HB is being replaced by Universal Credit, but in certain circumstances new claims may still be made, such as if someone is getting the severe disability premium with their income support or if someone is in supported, sheltered or temporary housing. Housing Benefit data is published on ESiF at LSOA level by [employment status](#) and by [family type](#).

### **Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)**

JSA is a working age benefit for people who are not in full time employment (work less than 16 hours per week) and are available for, and actively seeking, work. Income-based JSA is being replaced by Universal Credit (UC).

JSA is either contribution-based or income-based depending on the jobseekers circumstances:

- **Contribution-based JSA:** People can get contribution-based JSA if they've paid enough Class 1 National Insurance contributions. They can get this type of JSA even if their partner works or they have savings over £16,000. New style JSA is a type of contribution-based JSA which can be applied for if someone lives in a UC full service area - it can be claimed on its own or at the same time as UC.
- **Income-based JSA:** People would be eligible for income-based JSA if the following applied: they work less than 16 hours per week on average; their partner works less than 24 hours per week on average; they and their partner had £16,000 or less in savings between them. People cannot get income-based JSA and UC at the same time - all new unemployed claimants now claim UC.

## Universal Credit (UC)

UC was introduced in April 2013 and is now available in all areas to all claimant types. The following benefits are being replaced as Universal Credit rolls out: Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support (IS), Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit (HB). An individual claiming Universal Credit may have to do work-related activity in order to get full entitlement to Universal Credit. Each eligible adult will fall into one of six conditionality regimes based on their capability and circumstances. These are then grouped by DWP into three groups:

### UC 'Out-of-work'

- Searching for work (Not working, or with very low earnings. Claimant is required to take action to secure work - or more / better paid work. The Work Coach supports them to plan their work search and preparation activity.)
- Planning for work (Expected to work in the future. Lone parent / lead carer of child aged 1 (or aged 1-2 prior to April 2017). Claimant required to attend periodic interviews to plan for their return to work.)
- Preparing for work (Expected to start preparing for future even with limited capability for work at the present time or a child aged 2 (or aged 3-4 prior to April 2017), the claimant is expected to take reasonable steps to prepare for work including Work Focused Interview.)

### UC No Work Requirements

Claimants in this group are not expected to work at present. Health or caring responsibility prevents claimant from working or preparing for work.

### UC Working

- Working - with requirements (In work but could earn more, or not working but has a partner with low earnings.)
- Working - no requirements (Individual or household earnings over the level at which conditionality applies. Required to inform DWP of changes of circumstances, particularly if at risk of decreasing earnings or losing job.)

Data on [Universal Credit claimants](#) and households on Universal Credit, by [family type](#) and [Local Housing Allowance](#) status are published on ESiF

Figures in the benefit combinations data are affected by the introduction of Universal Credit (UC). The main changes have been:

- increasing number of individuals claiming UC with corresponding decreasing number of individuals claiming JSA, ESA, IS and HB.
- increasing number of individuals claiming UC who would previously have claimed Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit and who would not have appeared in these statistics until their UC claim began.

At present only customers who claim "UC Out-of-work only", "UC Working only", "UC No Work Requirements only", "UC Out-of-work & PIP/DLA" and "UC No Work requirements & CA" are identifiable in the specific benefit combinations - customers who claim UC where

conditionality regime is unknown or alongside another benefit appear in the "other" category. This will be reviewed as the UC caseload increases.

### **Note 5**

In this chart, data for Housing Benefit by employment status has been combined with data on Universal Credit claiming households who are awarded a 'housing entitlement' to help with social or private rent payments. The Universal Credit data was obtained from the DWP's [StatXplore](#) website. Housing Benefit data is published on ESiF at LSOA level by [employment status](#) and by [family type](#).

### **Note 6**

Data on the number of DLA/PIP claimants is available on ESiF, by [\(pre-2018\) ward](#) and [age group and sex](#) - see above for full definition.

### **Note 7**

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) publish an annual update of their Minimum Income Standard report, which analyses pay and benefit levels, and gives an estimate of the minimum income needed to afford a reasonable standard of living. It can be accessed [here](#).

### **Note 8**

Benefit Combinations data for Pension age claimants is not currently published on ESiF, but is available from [DWP StatXplore](#).

### **Note 9**

Pension Credit data is published on ESiF [here](#).

## **Contact details**

For further information about unemployment, benefits, claimants and other labour market data please contact Emma Corby by email [emma.corby@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:emma.corby@eastsussex.gov.uk).

The Research and Intelligence Team, Governance Services, provides demographic and socio-economic data, intelligence and insight to support East Sussex County Council and other East Sussex Partners. The Team also manages East Sussex in Figures (ESiF), the Local Information System for East Sussex.

ESiF is a web-based information system that contains detailed, up-to-date and reliable information on a very wide range of topics. It is free and easy to use. ESiF lets you specify exactly what data you want to see (for the places and time periods you are interested in) and how you want to view it (as a table, chart or map).

You can also use ESiF to view Area Profiles which can be accessed from the ESiF welcome page. Area profiles are a quick and easy way to access key information for a local area. Profiles are currently available at local authority, (pre-2018) ward and parish level, for a number of different themes: Population and households, Equalities, Economy, Evidence for funding, Sustainability appraisal (district only) and Transport.

Visit [www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk](http://www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk) or e-mail [esif@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:esif@eastsussex.gov.uk) for more information.