

This monitor aims to pull together information across regional partners to understand the impacts of Covid19 on the economy. Where possible it will utilise all forms of quantitative and qualitative intelligence. However we urge caution in the use of the contents as this is an emerging situation.

This week we include the dashboard of indicators monitoring the economy. As would be expected, they reflect the current pandemic circumstances. Deaths from coronavirus are on the rise for the first time since May. Youth claimant counts are relatively stable but stand at 44k or 8.9% of 16-24 year olds (21k more than pre pandemic). All claimants over 16 stands at 214k (6.4% of the adult population) and 97K more than March. PMI business activity index has dropped slightly to 58.5 after rising to 61.9 but it is still in expansion; future business is maintaining its high score of 67.8. The region continues to have the highest levels of apprenticeship vacancies of all combined authority areas and unique job postings are continuing to increase for the third month in a row to 101k but still are not at pre-pandemic levels. Quarterly Exports stands at £27.5bn, 8.7% of the UK, but have decreased by 18%.

Key issues

- Global coronavirus cases have now surpassed the 40 million mark. Ireland has returned to a national lockdown, closing non-essential stores, bars and restaurants for at least six weeks. People have also been urged to stay within five kilometres of their homes. Europe's outbreak has continued to spread at alarming rate, with daily case records in Germany, Greece and the Netherlands. Wales has imposed a 'fire break' lockdown, closing non-essential retailers and requiring its population to stay at home for two weeks. Scotland has also confirmed an extension of its central belt closure of pubs and bars. The Sheffield City-region has entered Tier 3, as has Greater Manchester, following publically controversial talks between local leaders and central government.
- The annual Birmingham Economic Review, produced by the University of Birmingham's City-REDI and the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, has been published.
- 53% of manufacturing firms will be using the new Job Support Scheme from November, to support subsidised part time working. 71% of firms are not stockpiling inventory ahead of the final exit from the EU and the potential for 'no deal'
- For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region employment rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was 74.5%. For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands region unemployment rate (aged 16 years and over) was 4.6%, which has decreased by 0.4 percentage points since the previous quarter.
- For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region economic inactivity rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was 21.8% - an increase of 0.2 percentage points from the previous quarter.
- There were 43,985 youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2020, this is an increase of 970 people when compared to September 2020.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published its annual State of Care report where it warns that Covid-19 is magnifying inequalities and 'risks turning fault lines into chasms'.
- Overall national footfall for the week ending 11th October 2020 increased to around 70% of its level in the same period in 2019.
- At a regional level, the latest weekly data when compared to the previous week shows the largest increase was in the South West while there was a moderate decrease in Northern Ireland. The South West also has the highest level of footfall when compared to the same period in 2019; the lowest levels were seen in Wales, Scotland and Greater London.
- There were 18,420 incorporations in the week ending 9th October 2020; this is above the incorporations recorded in the same week as 2019 which was 13,259.
- Regional level analysis shows that the West Midlands the overall registered death figures increased from 1,045 in the week of 2nd October to 1,053 in the week of 9th October. The number of registered deaths related to Coronavirus increased from 31 to 43 over the same period.
- While car continued to be the main way to travel, there was an increase in the proportion travelling by public transport. There was a decrease in the proportion walking/cycling. The increase in public transport use was noted for all journey purposes, particularly work trips, and was noted amongst car owners and non-car owners.

Global, National and Regional Outlook

Ben Brittain WMREDI

Global Outlook

Global cases have now surpassed the 40 million mark.

Ireland has returned to a national lockdown, closing non-essential stores, bars and restaurants for at least six weeks. People have also been urged to stay within five kilometres of their homes. Europe's outbreak has continued to spread at alarming rate, with daily case records in Germany, Greece and the Netherlands.

In vaccine news, Moderna Inc. said it expects interim results of its Covid-19 shot in November.

However, it is "[completely unrealistic](#)" to expect a Covid-19 vaccine to be widely available by the end of this year, Severin Schwan, CEO of Swiss pharma giant Roche Holding AG, has cautioned.

Novartis AG CEO Vas Narasimhan has also cited a similar late-2021 timeline.

AstraZeneca Plc may resume its U.S. vaccine trial as early as [this week](#).

U.S. drug-safety inspectors found continuing quality-control problems at a New Jersey plant Eli Lilly & Co. is using to help produce its Covid-19 antibody therapy.

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin are continuing to discuss a coronavirus relief package, a Pelosi aide [said Monday](#), as time draws short to reach agreement on a bill that could pass by Election Day.

The House Speaker, Pelosi, told House Democrats that significant areas of disagreement are standing in the way of any deal. President Donald Trump said that if his administration did reach an agreement with Democrats, he would lean on congressional Republicans to support the package.

National Outlook

[Headline CPI inflation](#) rate has been recorded at 0.5 percent in September. However, if the impact of the VAT cuts and other expenditure tax changes are removed, prices register at 2.2 percent up on a year ago. This is above the Bank of England's inflation target.

Wales has imposed a "[fire break](#)" lockdown, closing non-essential retailers and requiring its population to stay at home for two weeks. Scotland has also confirmed an extension of its central belt closure of pubs and bars. The Sheffield City-region has entered Tier 3, as has Greater Manchester, following publically controversial talks between local leaders and central government.

Regional Outlook

The annual Birmingham Economic Review, produced by the University of Birmingham's City-REDI and the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce, has been [published](#).

It is an in-depth exploration of the economy of England's second city and a high-quality resource for informing research, policy and investment decisions. It shows, amongst other factors that:

- GVA growth: 6.1% increase in GVA per capita in 2017-2018
- FDI track record: 2nd best performing UK city for FDI (outside London) 2019
- Centrally located: 90% UK businesses & consumers within 4 hours travel time
- Lower skills base: 12.9% of the working age population have no qualifications

COVID-19: A global health & economic crisis, felt locally

- Significant case rate: 11,500 cumulative cases of COVID-19 in Birmingham as of 1st October 2020
- Wider impact on mental health: 26% of West Midlands businesses saw an increase in workforce mental health concerns
- Economic disruption: 71% of Greater Birmingham businesses saw a fall in domestic sales Q2 2020
- Jobs losses: 68% increase in the Birmingham unemployment claimant count Feb-Aug 2020

Impacting Key Sectors:

- City centre economy: 48% reduction in city centre footfall in August compared to pre-lockdown levels
- Automotive & supply chain: 40.2% decrease in UK car production to Jan-August 2020 vs. 2019
- Hospitality & tourism: 79% of eligible West Midlands accommodation & food services roles furloughed at the end of July
- Arts, culture & live events: 69% of eligible West Midlands arts, entertainment, recreation & other services roles had been furloughed by the end of July

OECD Economic Surveys: United Kingdom 2020

[Navigating the United Kingdom towards fairer weather](#)

The United Kingdom is sailing through troubled waters. Like other economies, the country is experiencing one of the most severe downturns in decades since the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis. In addition, it has to manage its exit from the European Union, following almost 50 years of deep integration, and address its long-standing productivity gap. The country is at a critical juncture. Decisions made now about management of the COVID-19 crisis and future trade relationships will have a lasting impact on the country's economic trajectory for the years to come. The latest [OECD Economic Survey of the United Kingdom](#) investigates these three inter-related issues in depth and puts forward recommendations to steer towards fairer weather.

Moving from emergency to a new phase of targeted support is essential to chart a course to a sustainable recovery. The United Kingdom has been hit hard by the COVID-19 crisis. Policy reaction to limit long-term scarring of the economy has been massive. A large majority of firms applied to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Since July, the Government has moved to a new phase of support by phasing out some emergency measures, and extending and introducing others, including programmes to help people get back to work.

A key challenge will be ensuring that people in activities that are lastingly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis are able to move to new activities and do not become detached from the labour market. It will be important to ensure support remains available as needed given epidemiological and economic developments, and to consider introducing more targeted measures. Further increasing active labour market spending to support displaced and low-skilled workers will also help to get people back to work in good-quality jobs and to support low-income households. The crisis also provides an opportunity to move toward a greener economy and to meet the UK's ambitious target of zero net emissions by 2050 by investments that will help to lower emissions in the transport sectors.

A smooth exit from the EU Single Market and Customs Union and maintaining close trade relationships with the UK's largest trading partners will be essential to maintain on course toward a sustainable recovery. Estimates from the OECD METRO model suggest that the trade impact of entering a Free Trade Agreement with the European Union with zero tariffs and without quotas would be

much less costly than an exit without a deal (Arriola et al., 2020). Firms will nevertheless have to adapt to new trading relations and the overall output loss could amount to 3.5% in the medium term compared to the present situation. About two-thirds of the cost would come from rising trade costs on goods and the remaining third stems from rising regulations on services. Keeping low barriers to trade and investment vis-à-vis EU and non EU countries and seeking high market access for services, including financial services, would help key sectors to continue to flourish.

Fostering productivity in the service sector is key to ensuring recovery and sustained growth. Productivity growth in the United Kingdom has consistently underperformed relative to expectations and has been disappointed more than in most other OECD economies since at least the global financial crisis (Figure 1). Sluggish productivity growth in the service sectors was the main factor behind this weak performance. Raising productivity will help to sustain employment and wages, but there is no silver-bullet: it will require a broad range of policies.

Keeping low barriers to trade and competition will create a supportive environment for strong productivity performance for the UK service sectors. Prioritising digital infrastructure in the allocation of the planned increase in public investment would bring large productivity dividends. Further increasing public spending on training to develop the digital skills of low-qualified workers, who have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 crisis, will be a double-dividend policy, boosting productivity and lowering inequality. Navigating through the current waves will be challenging, but policy can steer a course to a fairer, greener and more resilient economy.

Figure 1. Productivity growth has been weak

Real output per hour, change from start of recession



Source: OECD calculations based on ONS (2020), Labour productivity database, July.

Data: <https://stat.link/3vd4tl>

Top 10 Reads from the Web, from Strategy and Economy,

Keziah Watson WMCA

- Liam Byrne has edited a newly released book in partnership with [The Parliamentary Network](#), looking at the pillars for a just recovery. The book tackles the three rises in temperature, tech, and trade wars, all of which will change the way the world works.
- [The Covid Recovery Commission](#) has released the first of its three reports looking at how best to create jobs and opportunities that allow people to thrive. The first paper looks at communities, and the issues caused by a heavily centralised government, and calls for standards against which to measure the success of 'levelling up'.
- [The National Infrastructure Commission](#) is offering advice to cities on developing local infrastructure strategies to underpin improvements in transport, housing and employment prospects. The principles recommend engaging a range of stakeholders, stress test plans against potential shocks, and a pragmatic approach to what is possible.
- Public debt looks set to rise to historic levels, with fiscal targets in tatters and one of the worst economic situations in Europe, the [IFS Green Budget](#) reports. Consequently, levelling up is complicated by Brexit and COVID, part of the answer to which might be an annual Spending Review.
- [The District Councils Network](#) strongly criticises the idea that larger unitary councils are the best solution for local government in the UK, citing that the UK has some of the largest local government units already. They also cite numerous pieces of research that explain that there is no good reason for larger councils, and combined authorities should be considered as part of the way forward.
- Clare Hatton has recommended this article on Leuven by [Bloomberg](#), a Belgian city which has been recognised as the European Union's Capital of Innovation. By creating a radical participation forum where every set of stakeholders from the city government to citizens have 20% of the votes, everyone is equal partners and hold each other to account, which has created some remarkable successes and community buy in.
- [Historic England](#) shows that the number of historical sites at risk of permanent damage or loss has increased in 2020, with possible reasons including being a lack of local people with the skills to do the job. Whilst some sites have been removed from the register, the net number has increased and now includes Dudley Castle.
- [REAL Centre](#) has released their first report on how the services provided by the NHS have changed in England over the past two decades. There has been a greater increase in emergency care in comparison to community or GP consultations, the opposite of what successive governments have intended, which is the result of not fully understanding all of the factors that contribute to changing practices within the NHS.
- [The National Audit Office](#) analyses the efforts made on the government's Superfast Broadband Programme. Although the current infrastructure has been able to cope with the increased traffic during the pandemic, there are concerns that rural areas are still missing out on the roll out of fibre cables and that the work done now may be obsolete in 10 years.
- [The Institute of Directors](#) shows that 54% of Directors fear a no deal Brexit would amplify the impacts of COVID. Worryingly, the same report shows that only 21% of businesses are currently prepared for Brexit.

Manufacturing's Perspective on Innovation and International Trade

Make UK have released two new reports detailing insight in to manufacturing perspective.

1). [Make UK Innovation Monitor 2020](#)

Key findings:

IDTs are fast becoming a reality for manufacturers with 8 in 10 believing IDTs will be a reality in their business by 2025. Yet, third remain in the conception phase. There are also regional, sectoral and size variation when it comes to the adoption of IDTs and where manufacturers are on their digital journey.

While manufacturers are aware of the benefits of IDTs (44%) many are not yet adopting them. For example whilst half of manufacturers are aware of augmented and virtual reality they aren't yet utilising them.

The traditional barriers to adoption remain, particularly around access to skills and limited technical knowledge and competence. Finance is an increasing concern, with a lack of funds to invest in IDTs a barrier for many businesses, in particular SMEs.

COVID has renewed the focus on resilience, and this creates significant opportunities for investment in IDTs. However, the pandemic will hit many manufacturers' spend on in-house R&D with two-fifths planning to decrease spend.

Awareness of many Government support measures for R&D is extremely low with 3/4s unaware of Made -Smarter. The R&D tax credit is however better known (8 in 10 manufacturers aware).

20% of small businesses in the North West area, where Made Smarter pilot operates are in the revolution phase of adoption, second only to the South East at 33% suggesting that the model is working and making the case for its roll-out.

Policy recommendations to Government:

- *Bespoke, dedicated support to manufacturing SMEs should be made consistently available across the country: In England, the best way of doing this is the extension of the Made Smarter SME adoption programme to all regions.*
- *Fiscal incentives to support digitalisation and research and development spend must be increased: starting in the forthcoming budget.*
- *Additional investment allowances for technology related investments would be a good way of doing this.*

2). [Make UK International Trade Report -](#)

Key Recommendations:

- *Further develop on-the-ground support with in-market contacts, agents and other advisors with the local knowledge to help companies succeed in new markets*
- *Establish a database of overseas companies in target countries to enable effective market research for manufacturers*
- *Boost skills base through the introduction of a financial package for exporters to improve technical capability and provide grants and practical support to assist exporters attending trade shows and similar events overseas*
- *Develop a national guidance website for business covering all destinations UK manufacturers send their workers in order to service products for customers*

Make UK West Midlands Polling Results

At what level is your business operating at now compared to the start of the year?

- 1-10% - 0
- 11-25% - 6%
- 26-50% - 6%
- 51-75% - 29%
- 75-99% - 47%
- 100% fully operating – 12%

As the Job Retention scheme comes to an end this month, will you be utilising the new Job Support Scheme from November, to support subsidised part time working?

- Yes – 24%
- No – 53%
- Unsure – 24%

With the new ‘Pay as you Grow’ repayments announcement made by the Chancellor for CBILS, are you now more confident growing and repaying the debt undertaken at your business?

- Yes – 12%
- No - 0
- Unsure – 18%
- Have not taken any loans in response to Covid-19 – 71%

Will your company be getting involved in the KickStart scheme to offer 6 month work placements for 16-24 year olds?

- Yes, as a single employer offering 30 placements - 0
- Yes, through an intermediary such as Make UK – 35%
- No – 65%

Which of the following measures do you think Government should prioritise to immediately support UK manufacturing? (select up to three)

- Waive business rate bills and reduce the overall cost of business rates – 53%
- Provide additional support and flexibility when recruiting apprentices – 18%
- Support those at risk of redundancy with retraining and upskilling – 41%
- Support for businesses to manage debt sustainably – 18%
- Increase investment allowances on capital expenditure – 53%
- Increase the R&D tax credit limit – 35%
- Roll out of 5G – 29%
- Offer a more generous scheme to protect jobs than the new Job Support Scheme – 35%
- None of the above - 0

Is your business stockpiling inventory ahead of the final exit from the EU and the potential for ‘no deal’?

- Yes – 29%
- No – 71%

Claimant Count and Labour Market Statistics: October 2020

Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates have been reweighted to account for the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on survey interviewing methods (Further details can be found [here](#)).

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a study of the employment circumstances of the UK population. It is the largest household study in the UK and provides the official measures of employment and unemployment.

UK Summary

- Early estimates for September 2020 suggest that there is little change in the number of payroll employees in the UK; up 20,000 compared with August 2020 (to 28.3m). Since March 2020, the number of payroll employees has fallen by 673,000; however, the larger falls were seen at the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- Data from the Labour Force Survey show the employment rate has been decreasing since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, while the unemployment rate and the level of redundancies have been increasing in recent periods. Total hours worked, while still low, show signs of recovering and there are fewer people temporarily away from work.
- Vacancies also show signs of a recovery, with a record quarterly increase in the recent period. Annual growth in employee pay strengthened in August 2020 as employees continued to return to work from furlough; this followed strong falls in months since April when growth was affected by lower pay for furloughed employees, and reduced bonuses.

West Midlands Region Summary

- **For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region employment rate** (aged 16 – 64 years) was **74.5%**. Since the three months ending May 2020, the employment rate has increased by 0.2pp while the UK decreased by 0.3pp. The overall, UK employment rate was 75.6%. The West Midlands was one of four regions to experience an increase in the employment rate.
- **For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region unemployment rate** (aged 16 years and over) was **4.6%**, which has decreased by **0.4pp since the previous quarter**. The UK unemployment rate was 4.5%, an increase of 0.4pp

from the previous quarter. The only region to see a decrease in the unemployment rate estimate compared with the previous quarter (March to May 2020) was in the West Midlands by -0.4pp.

- **For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region economic inactivity rate** (aged 16 – 64 years) was **21.8%** - an increase of **0.2pp** from previous quarter. The UK economic inactivity rate stood at 20.8%, remaining unchanged from the previous quarter.

WMCA 3 LEP Summary

- There were **214,680 claimants aged 16 years and over in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in September 2020, this is an increase of 3,000 people when compared to August 2020. This equates to an increase of 1.4%, which is above the UK growth rate of 0.8%. Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, compared to March 2020 (117,590) the number of claimants has increased by 97,090 (+82.6% compared to +113.6% for the UK).
- Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of claimants as proportion of residents aged 16 to 64 years old was 8.2% in September 2020 compared to 6.5% for the UK
- There were **43,985 youth claimants in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in September 2020, this is an increase of 970 people when compared to September 2020. This equates to an increase of 2.3%, which is above the UK growth rate of 1.4%. However, across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, compared to March 2020 (22,835) the number of claimants has increased by 21,150 (+92.6% compared to +121.9% for the UK). Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of claimants as percentage of residents aged 16 to 24 years old was 8.9% in September 2020 compared to 7.6% for the UK.

Claimant Count and Labour Market Statistics: October 2020

Claimant count for people aged 16+:

There were **214,680 claimants aged 16 years and over in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in September 2020, this is an increase of 3,000 people when compared to August 2020. This equates to an increase of 1.4%, which is above the UK growth rate of 0.8%. However, across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, compared to March 2020 (117,590) the number of claimants has increased by 97,090 (+82.6% compared to +113.6% for the UK). Also, when compared to September 2019 (109,295), the number of claimants has increased by 105,385 (+96.4% compared to 132.6% for UK).

Within the WMCA (3 LEP), the **Black Country LEP had 66,960 claimants** aged 16 years and over in September 2020, this is an increase of 900 (+1.4%) claimants from the previous month. When compared to March 2020 (38,275) the number of claimants has increased by 28,685 (+74.9%). Also, when compared to September 2019 (35,220), the number of claimants has increased by 31,740 (+90.1%).

In Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, there were 34,595 claimants aged 16 years and over in September 2020, this is an increase of 500 (+1.5%) claimants since August 2020. However, across the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP area, when compared to March 2020 (15,825) the number of claimants has increased by 18,770 (+118.6%). Also, when compared to September 2019 (14,300), the number of claimants has increased by 20,295 (+141.9%).

The following table shows a breakdown of number of claimants aged 16+ and change by selected months across the WMCA and for the UK:

Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of claimants as proportion of residents aged 16 to 64 years old was

8.2% in September 2020 compared to 6.5% for the UK.

Within the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16 to 64 years old varies across the 3 LEPs with the Black Country at the highest with 9.1%, followed by GBSLEP with 8.9% and then CWLEP with 5.8%.

At local authority level, the number of claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16 to 64 years old varies from 11.2% in Birmingham to 4.2% in Warwick and also in Stratford-on-Avon.

Youth Claimants (Aged 16-24)

There were **43,985 youth claimants in the WMCA** (3 LEP) area in September 2020, this is an increase of 970 people when compared to August 2020. This equates to an increase of 2.3%, which is above the UK growth rate of 1.4%. However, across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, compared to March 2020 (22,835) the number of claimants has increased by 21,150 (+92.6% compared to +121.9% for the UK). Also, when compared to September 2019 (21,340), the number of claimants has increased by 22,645 (+106.1% compared to 139.6% for UK).

Within the WMCA (3 LEP), the **Black Country LEP had 14,100 youth claimants** in September 2020, this is an increase of 405 (+3.0%) claimants from the previous month. When compared to March 2020 (7,750) the number of claimants has increased by 6,350 (+81.9%). Also, when compared to September 2019 (7,275), the number of claimants has increased by 6,825 (+93.8%).

In Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, there were 6,870 youth claimants in September 2020, this is an increase of 175 (+2.6%) claimants since August 2020. However, across the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP area, when compared to March 2020 (2,920) the number of claimants has increased by 3,950 (+135.3%). Also, when compared to September 2019 (2,690), the number of claimants has increased by 4,180 (+155.4%).

	Sept. 2019	March 2020	August 2020	Sept. 2020	Sept 2020 (Claimants as proportion aged 16-64) Rates %	% Change (Aug 20 – Sept 20)	% Change (Mar 20 - Sept 20)	% Change (Sep 19 - Sept 20)
Birmingham	46,975	49,370	80,630	82,060	11.2	1.8%	66.2%	74.7%
Bromsgrove	1,095	1,165	2,720	2,765	4.7	1.7%	137.3%	152.5%
Cannock Chase	1,400	1,655	3,750	3,700	5.8	-1.3%	123.6%	164.3%
Coventry	7,115	8,000	16,350	16,765	6.7	2.5%	109.6%	135.6%
Dudley	8,230	8,515	14,690	14,830	7.7	1.0%	74.2%	80.2%
East Staffordshire	1,455	1,720	3,885	3,900	5.3	0.4%	126.7%	168.0%
Lichfield	1,090	1,320	3,085	3,060	5.0	-0.8%	131.8%	180.7%
North Warwickshire	760	845	2,100	2,125	5.4	1.2%	151.5%	179.6%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	2,635	2,830	5,445	5,440	6.9	-0.1%	92.2%	106.5%
Redditch	1,485	1,535	3,295	3,345	6.4	1.5%	117.9%	125.3%
Rugby	1,520	1,535	3,245	3,280	5.0	1.1%	113.7%	115.8%
Sandwell	9,615	10,780	19,070	19,435	9.5	1.9%	80.3%	102.1%
Solihull	3,545	3,650	7,525	7,675	6.0	2.0%	110.3%	116.5%
Stratford-on-Avon	955	1,050	3,160	3,155	4.2	-0.2%	200.5%	230.4%
Tamworth	1,265	1,490	2,965	2,935	6.2	-1.0%	97.0%	132.0%
Walsall	7,735	8,605	15,185	15,410	8.9	1.5%	79.1%	99.2%
Warwick	1,320	1,570	3,800	3,835	4.2	0.9%	144.3%	190.5%
Wolverhampton	9,645	10,380	17,115	17,280	10.6	1.0%	66.5%	79.2%
Wyre Forest	1,470	1,580	3,665	3,685	6.3	0.5%	133.2%	150.7%
WM 7 Met.	92,855	99,300	170,570	173,455	9.4	1.7%	74.7%	86.8%
Black Country LEP	35,220	38,275	66,060	66,960	9.1	1.4%	74.9%	90.1%
Coventry and Warwickshire LEP	14,300	15,825	34,095	34,595	5.8	1.5%	118.6%	141.9%
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP	59,775	63,490	111,525	113,125	8.9	1.4%	78.2%	89.3%
WMCA (3 LEP)	109,295	117,590	211,680	214,680	8.2	1.4%	82.6%	96.4%
West Midlands Region	133,290	144,350	268,650	271,845	7.4	1.2%	88.3%	104.0%
United Kingdom	1,164,740	1,268,620	2,688,110	2,709,210	6.5	0.8%	113.6%	132.6%

Claimant Count and Labour Market Statistics: October 2020

Please note data is only available at a regional level – please see quarterly Annual Population Survey section for lower level analysis.

For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region employment rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was **74.5%**. Since the three months ending May 2020, the employment rate has increased by 0.2pp while the UK decreased by 0.3pp. The overall, UK employment rate was 75.6% with the highest **employment rate** within the UK for the three months ending August 2020 in the South East (79.1%) and the lowest was in Northern Ireland (70.6%).

For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region unemployment rate (aged 16 years and

over) was **4.6%**, which has decreased by **0.4pp** since the previous quarter. The UK unemployment rate was 4.5%, an increase of 0.4pp from the previous quarter. The highest unemployment rate in the UK for the three months ending August 2020 was in the North East (6.6%), with the lowest unemployment rate in Northern Ireland at 3.7%.

For the three months ending in August 2020, the West Midlands Region economic inactivity rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was **21.8%** - an increase of **0.2pp** from previous quarter. The UK economic inactivity rate stood at 20.8%, remaining unchanged from the previous quarter. The highest **economic inactivity** rate in the UK for the three months ending August 2020 was in Northern Ireland (26.6%), with the lowest in the South East (17.4%).

Source: Labour market in the regions of the UK, September 2020

UK Labour Market Statistics – Vacancies

BCCEIU

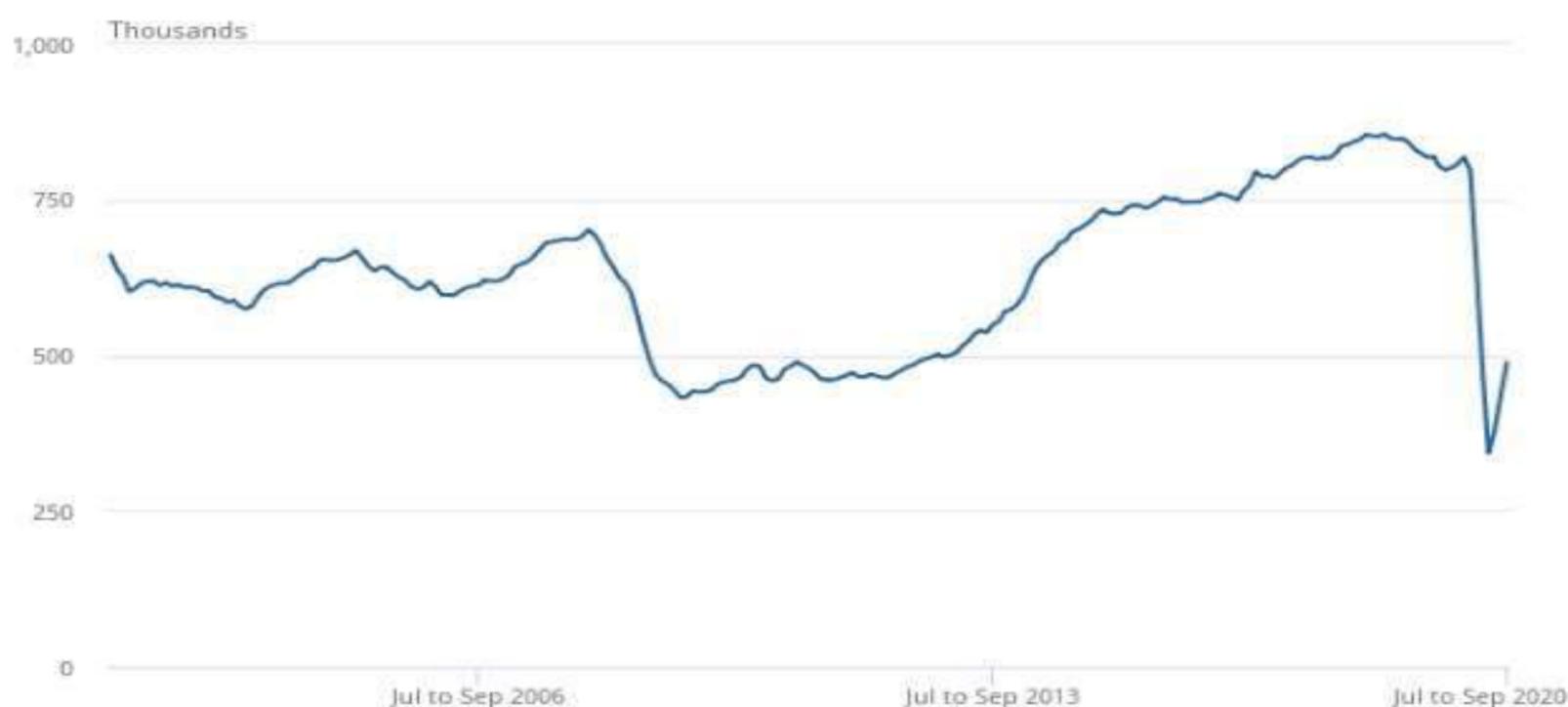
After a record low of 343,000 vacancies in April to June 2020 there has been an estimated record quarterly increase of 144,000 to 488,000 vacancies in July to September 2020. Vacancies remain below the pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic levels and are 332,000 (40.5%) less than a year ago.

The quarterly growth in vacancies is being driven by businesses with fewer than 50 employees, with an estimated increase of 55,000 vacancies for businesses with one to nine employees and 43,000 for businesses with 10 to 49 employees.

Source: UK labour market: September 2020

Number of Vacancies in the UK, seasonally adjusted between July to September 2001 and July to September 2020

The experimental single-month estimates of vacancies indicate an increase of approximately 50% in vacancies for September 2020 compared with June 2020. However, estimated vacancies for September 2020 are still around 30% less than in March 2020.



	Employment rate - June to August 2020 (aged 16 to 64 years)	Change on March to May 2020	Unemployment rate- June to August 2020 (16 years +)	Change on March to May 2020	Inactivity rate – June to August 2020 (aged 16 to 64 years)	Change on March to May 2020
UK	75.6%	-0.3pp	4.5%	0.4pp	20.8%	0.0pp
Great Britain	75.7%	-0.3pp	4.5%	0.4pp	20.6%	0.0pp
England	76.0%	-0.3pp	4.5%	0.4pp	20.3%	0.0pp
North East	71.8%	-2.1pp	6.6%	1.4pp	22.9%	0.8pp
North West	75.2%	-0.1pp	4.3%	0.3pp	21.3%	-0.2pp
Yorkshire and The Humber	74.1%	0.1pp	4.2%	0.3pp	22.6%	-0.4pp
East Midlands	75.4%	-1.6pp	4.4%	0.3pp	21.0%	1.4pp
West Midlands	74.5%	0.2pp	4.6%	-0.4pp	21.8%	0.2pp
East	77.4%	-0.4pp	4.1%	0.4pp	19.1%	0.1pp
London	76.1%	0.7pp	5.3%	0.0pp	19.8%	-0.6pp
South East	79.1%	-0.4pp	4.1%	1.0pp	17.4%	-0.6pp
South West	76.7%	-1.6pp	4.1%	0.6pp	19.8%	1.1pp
Wales	72.7%	-1.5pp	3.8%	1.0pp	24.4%	0.7pp
Scotland	73.9%	0.4pp	4.5%	0.0pp	22.6%	-0.4pp
Northern Ireland	70.6%	-0.3pp	3.7%	1.2pp	26.6%	-0.7pp

Care Quality Commission Annual State of Care

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published its annual State of Care report where it warns that Covid-19 is magnifying inequalities and 'risks turning fault lines into chasms'. According to the report, before COVID-19 care was 'generally good', although social care was 'fragile' as a result of a lack of long-term funding solution. The CQC says the pandemic has exacerbated problems within the social care sector, and that the long-standing need for reform, investment and workforce planning in adult social care has been thrown into sharp relief by the pandemic.

Impact of the coronavirus: Key points

As the pandemic gathered pace, health and care staff across all roles and services showed resilience under unprecedented pressures and adapted quickly to work in different ways to keep people safe.

In hospitals and care homes, staff worked long hours in difficult circumstances to care for people who were very sick with COVID-19 and, despite their efforts to protect people, tragically they saw many of those they cared for die. Some staff also had to deal with the loss of colleagues to COVID. A key challenge for providers has been maintaining a safe environment – managing the need to socially distance or isolate people due to COVID-19. Good infection prevention and control practice has been vital.

The crisis has accelerated innovation that had previously proved difficult to mainstream, such as GP practices moving rapidly to remote consultations. The changes have proved beneficial to, and popular with, many. But many of these innovations exclude people who do not have good digital access, and some have been rushed into place during the pandemic.

The pandemic has had a major impact on elective care and urgent services such as cancer and cardiac services, and there is huge pent-up demand for

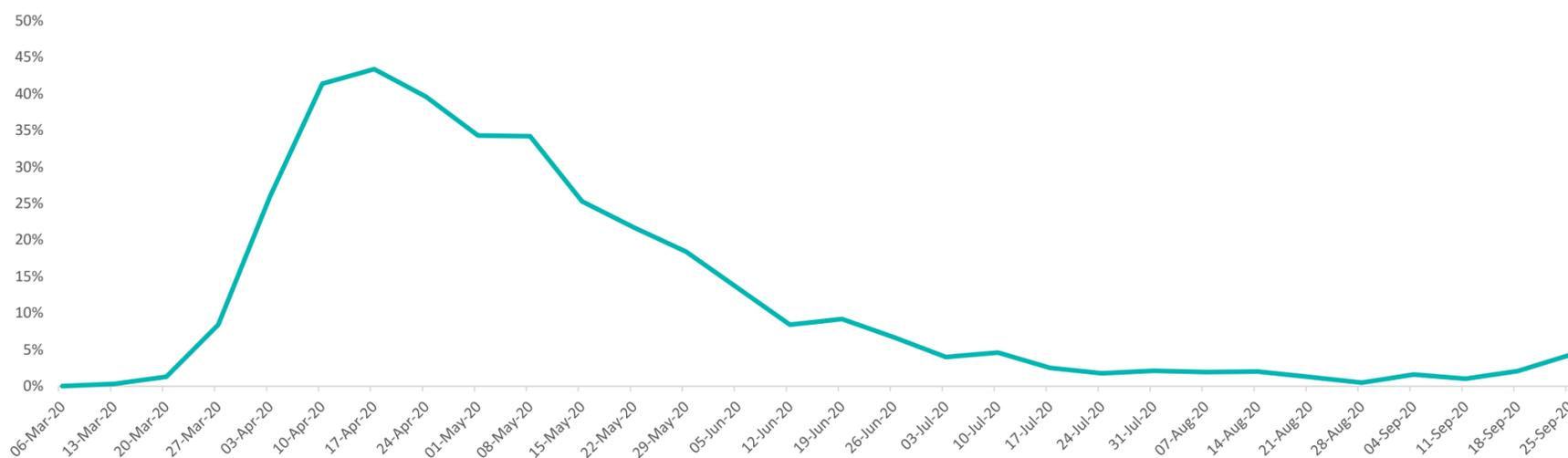
care and treatment that has been postponed. The pandemic is having a disproportionate effect on some groups of people, and is shining a light on existing inequality in the health and social care system. It is vital that we understand how we can use this knowledge to move towards fairer and more equitable care, where nobody's needs go unmet.

It is important that the learning and innovation that has been seen during the pandemic is used to develop health and social care for the future. New approaches to care, developed in response to the pandemic and shown to have potential, must be fully evaluated before they become established practice.

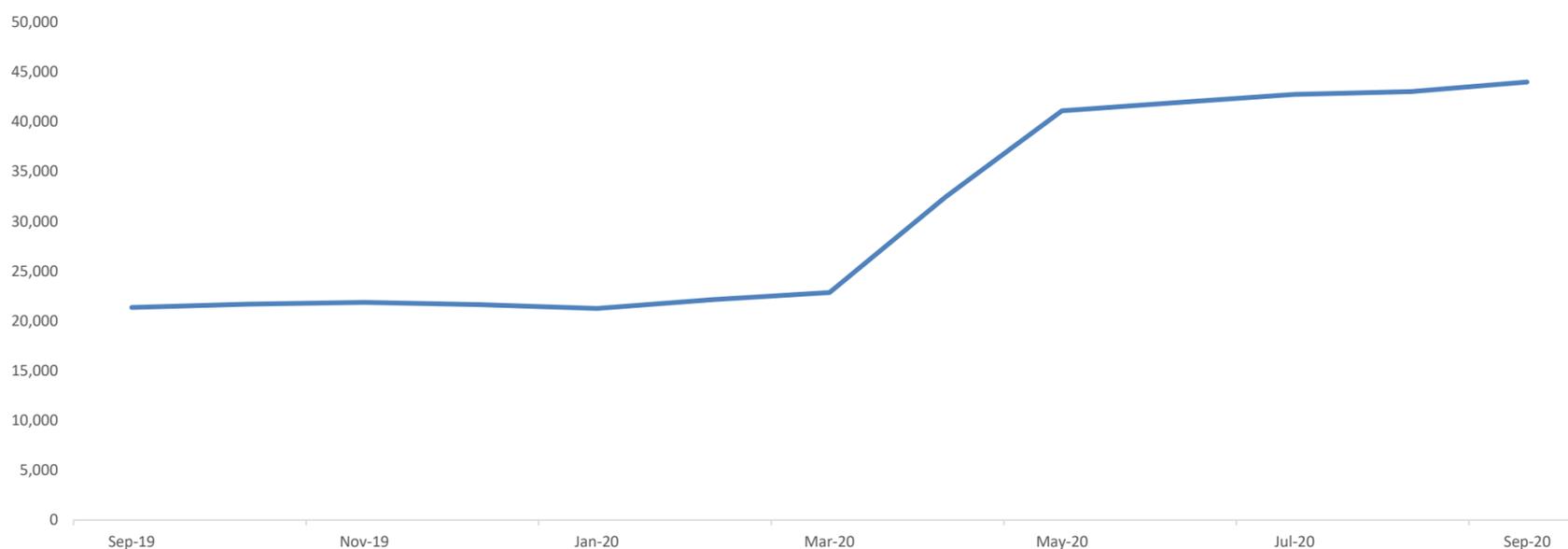
Ian Trenholm, Chief Executive of CQC, said:

'Pre-Covid, the health and care system was often characterised as resistant to change. Covid has demonstrated that this is not the case. The challenge now is to maintain the momentum of transformation, but to do so in a sustainable way that delivers for everyone – driven by local leadership with a shared vision and supported by integrated funding for health and care. There is an opportunity now for Government, Parliament and health and care leaders to agree and lay out a vision for the future at both a national and local level. Key to this will be tackling longstanding issues in adult social care around funding and operational support, underpinned by a new deal for the care workforce. This needs to happen now – not at some point in the future. Covid is magnifying inequalities across the health and care system – a seismic upheaval which has disproportionately affected some more than others and risks turning fault lines into chasms. As we adjust to a Covid age, the focus must be on shaping a fairer health and care system – both for people who use services, and for those who work in them.'

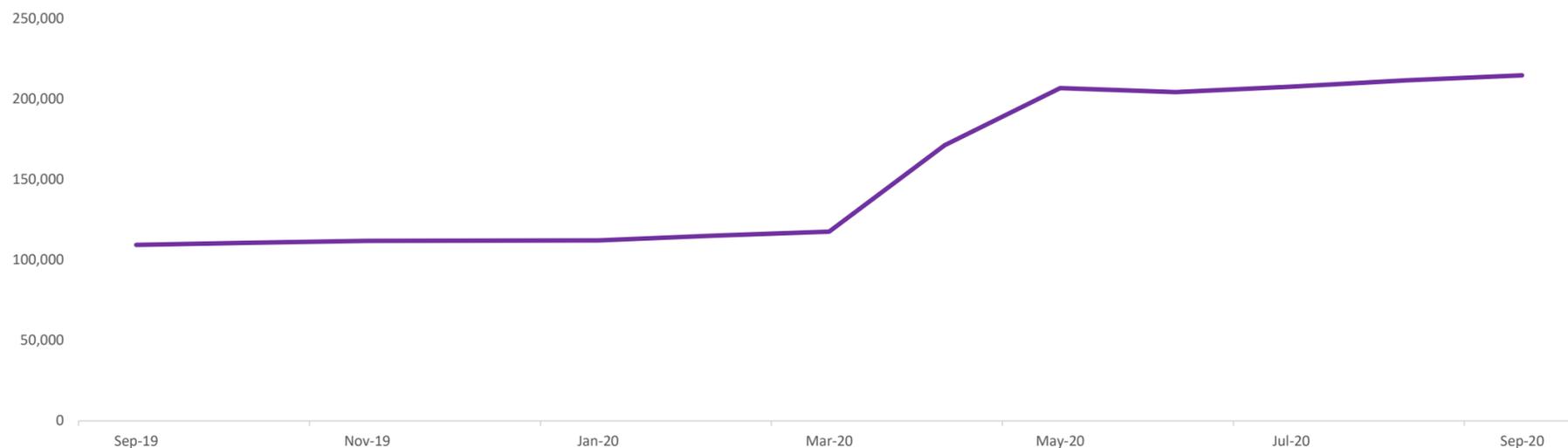
You can read the report online [here](#).



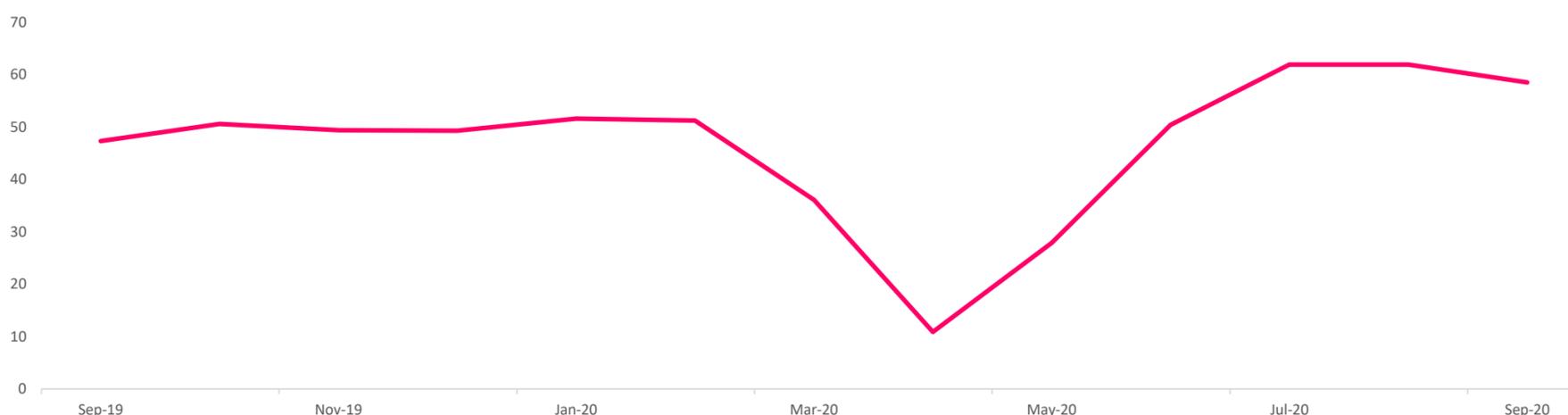
Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Percentage of Registered Deaths That Are Covid-19	0%	2.5%	38.6%	28.0%	9.6%	3.0%	1.4%	2.3%	WMCA – 3 rd Highest CA UK: 1.4% GMCA: 4.9% (1 st) West of England & Tees Valley: 0.4% (9 th) (All of Sep.)	Monthly analysis shows after months of decline in the proportion of deaths that are COVID-19 there has been a small increase from 1.4% in August to 2.3% in September. The latest weekly analysis for the second week in a row the proportion of COVID-19 deaths have increased (2.1% 18 th Sep. to 4.3% 25 th Sep.)



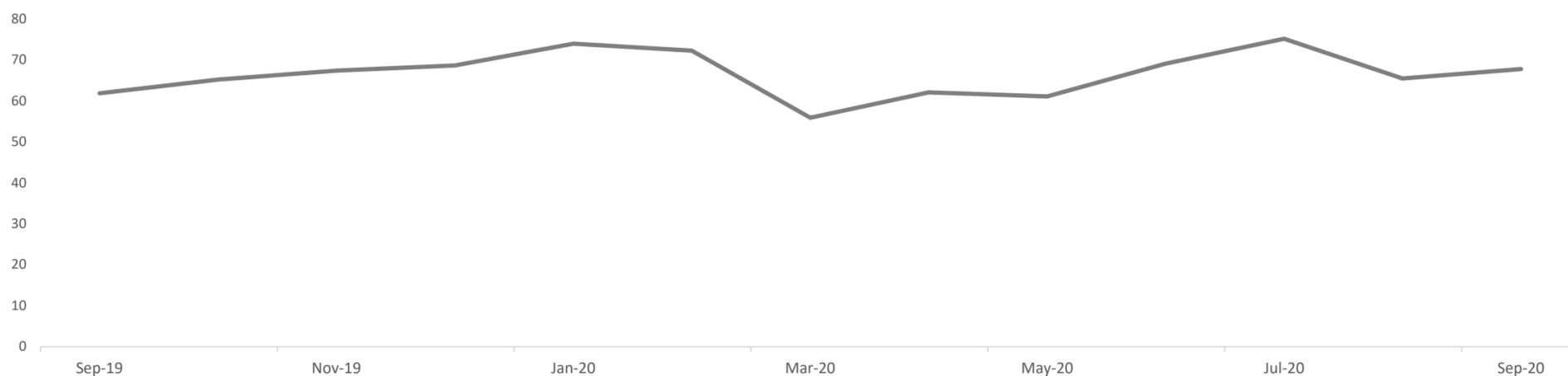
Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Youth Claimants (Aged 16-24)	22,140 (4.5% of 16-24 years old pop.)	22,835 (4.6% of 16-24 years old pop.)	32,450 (6.6% of 16-24 years old pop.)	41,100 (8.3% of 16-24 years old pop.)	41,935 (8.5% of 16-24 years old pop.)	42,740 (8.7% of 16-24 years old pop.)	43,015 (8.7% of 16-24 years old pop.)	43,985 (8.9% of 16-24 years old pop.)	WMCA – Joint 5 th Highest CA UK: 7.6% Tees Valley: 10.8% (1 st) West of England: 5.1% (10 th)	There were 43,985 youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2020. The number of youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area has increased by 970 between August 2020 and September 2020. Since March 2020, this has increased by 21,150 claimants.



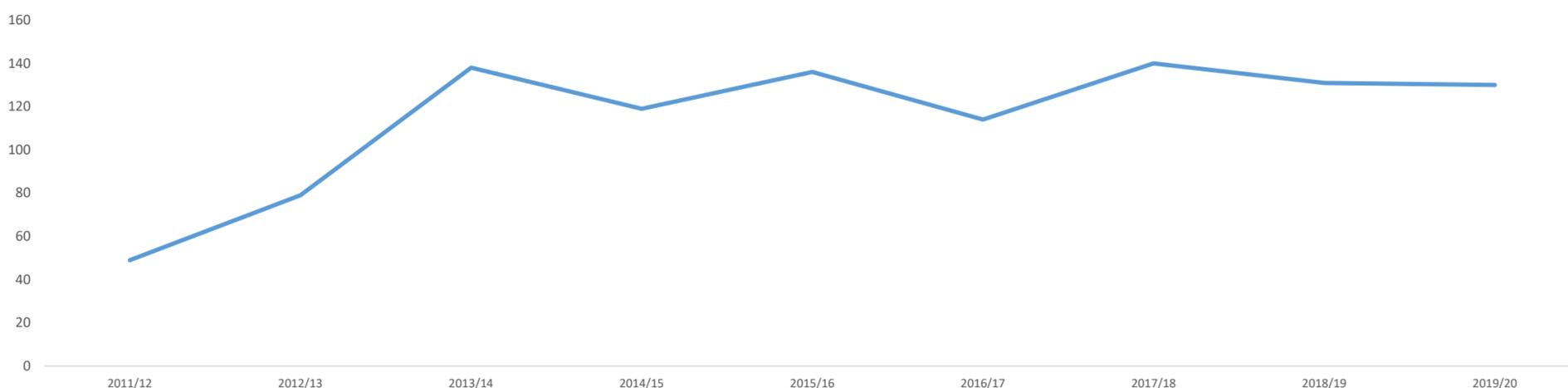
Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Claimants (Aged 16+)	115,060 (3.5% of the pop. aged 16+)	117,590 (3.5% of the pop. aged 16+)	171,245 (5.1% of the pop. aged 16+)	206,870 (6.2% of the pop. aged 16+)	204,365 (6.1% of the pop. aged 16+)	207,655 (6.2% of the pop. aged 16+)	211,680 (6.4% of the pop. aged 16+)	214,680 (6.4% of the pop. aged 16+)	WMCA – Highest CA alongside GMCA UK: 5.0% C & P CA: 4.0% (10 th)	There were 214,680 claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2020. The number of claimants aged 16 years and over has increased between August 2020 and September 2020 in the WMCA (3 LEP) area by 3,000. Compared to March 2020 there are 97,090 more claimants.



Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Business Activity Index	51.2	36.1	10.9	27.9	50.4	61.9	61.9	58.5	WM – 4 th Highest Region UK: 56.5 North East: 60.3 (1 st) Scotland: 51.2 (12 th)	The headline NatWest West Midlands Business Activity Index – a seasonally adjusted index that measures the month-on-month change in the combined output of the region’s manufacturing and service sectors – posted 58.5 in September, thereby signalling growth for the fourth consecutive month. The index was down from 61.9 in August, but was still consistent with a marked rate of expansion.



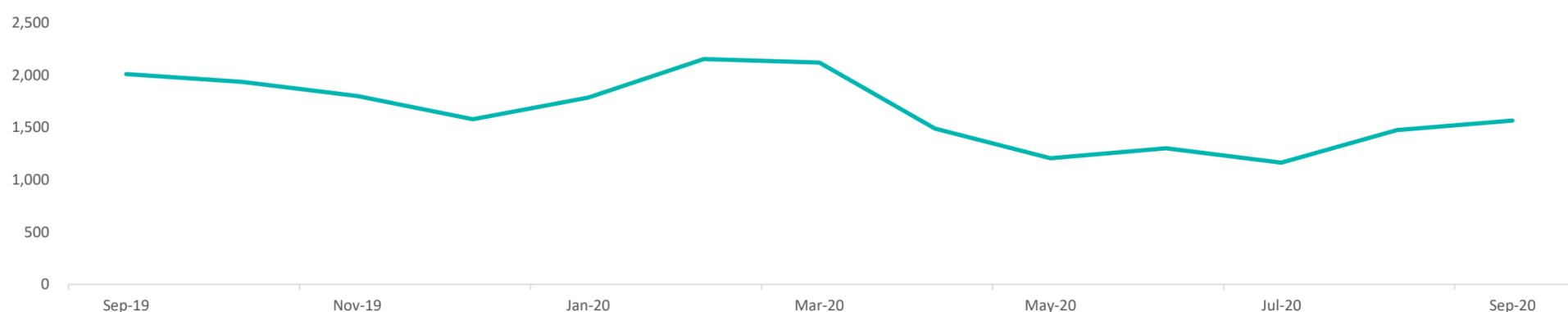
Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Future Business Activity Index	72.3	55.9	62.1	61.1	69.1	75.2	65.5	67.8	WM: 6 th Highest Region Yorkshire & The Humber: 74.6 (1 st) Northern Ireland: 49.1 (12 th)	Private sector companies in the West Midlands were strongly confident of a rise in business activity over the course of the coming 12 months. Moreover, the level of positive sentiment rose from August and was slightly above the UK-wide average. Anecdotal evidence suggested that hopes that a vaccine for COVID-19 will be rolled out underpinned confidence. Optimism was signalled by goods producers and service providers.



Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
FDI Projects					130 (2019/20)				The West Midlands Region accounts for 8.5% of all UK FDI projects – which is the highest region outside of London and the South East. (London 1 st with 34.4% and the South East 2 nd with 11.4%).	Compared to 2018/19 the number of projects has decreased in the WMCA by 1 which equates to a decline of 0.8% while the UK increased by 3.9%.

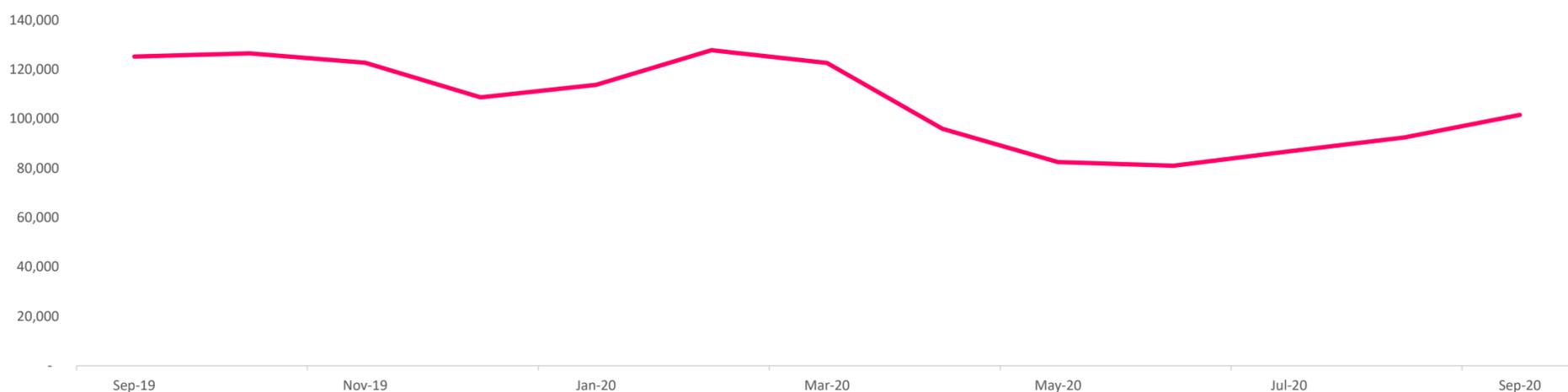


Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
New FDI Jobs					3,558 (2019/20)				The West Midlands accounts for 6.0% of new jobs from FDI projects – this is the 4 th Highest region. Although notably, WM is the highest region for safeguarded jobs at 30.3% and 2 nd highest for total jobs.	Following the UK trend of decline in the number of new jobs created by FDI projects – compared to 2018/19 there has been a decrease by 23.7% (-1.108 new jobs)- the UK decreased by 2.6%.

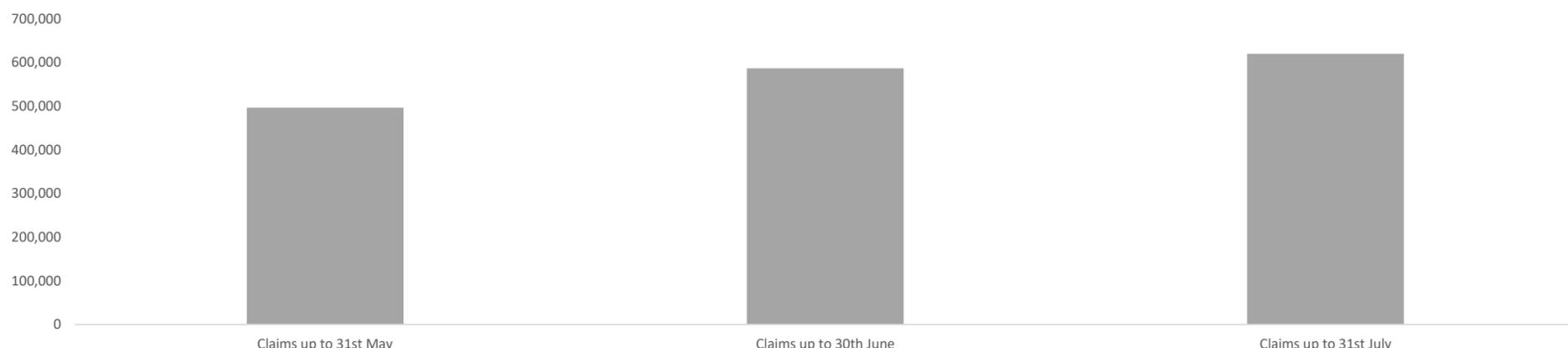


Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Apprenticeship Vacancies	2,153	2,119	1,489	1,205	1,301	1,162	1,474	1,565	WMCA – Highest CA GMCA: 1,259 (2 nd) Tees Valley: 223 (10 th)	The latest data shows that apprenticeship vacancies stood at over 1,500, this has increased for the second month in a row and is the highest figures seen since April 2020.

¹ Please note when new data is released each month the previous month will be revised.



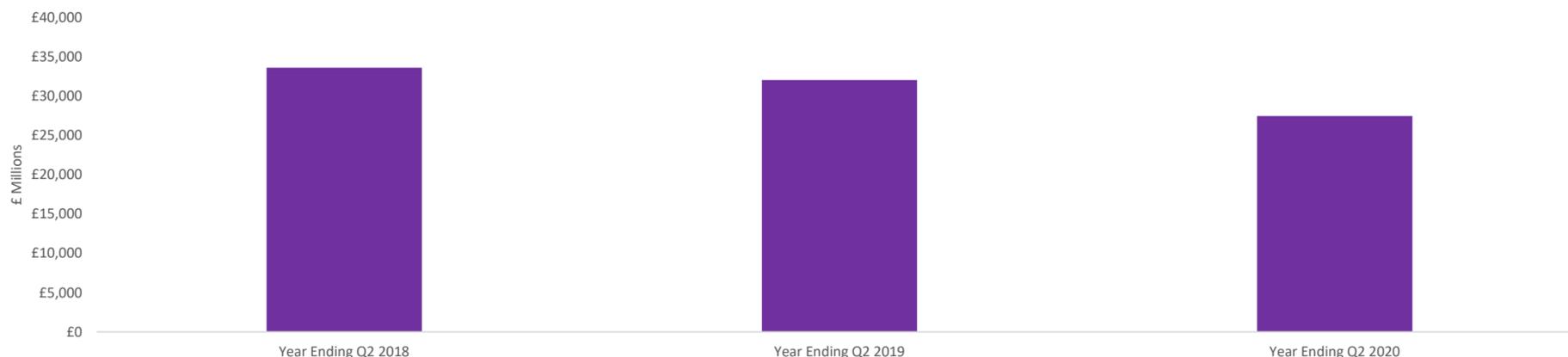
Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Unique Job Postings ⁷	127,866	122,734	95,989	82,503	81,081	86,861	92,474	101,601	WMCA – Highest CA GMCA: 84,675 (2 nd) Tees Valley: 10,659 (10 th)	The latest data shows that the number of unique jobs postings stood at just over 101,600 in September 2020. This has increased for the third consecutive month and was above figures seen in April 2020 (95,989).



Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Total Number of Staff Furloughed				496,200 Claims received up to 31 st May	586,800 Claims received up to 30 th June	619,800 Claims received up to 31 st July			WMCA – Highest CA GMCA: 407,800 (2 nd) Tees Valley: 83,300 (10 th)	Of the 1,819,100 eligible workers in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 619,800 of these workers have been furloughed which is a take up rate of 34% and above the UK average of 32%.



Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Quarterly Regional GDP ³	-1.7% (2019 Q2)			+0.2% (2019 Q3)		-0.6% (2019 Q4)			WM – 2 nd Lowest With 2 Other Regions (EM & SE) England: -0.1% South West: +0.8% (1 st) North East: -1.3% (9 th)	There was negative growth in 2019 Q4 in the West Midlands by -0.6% after growth seen in 2019 Q3 of 0.2%, however the negative growth was smaller than that seen in 2019 Q2 at -1.7%.



Indicator	February 2020	March 2020 ³	April 2020 ³	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group	Commentary/ Context
Quarterly Regional Exports ³		£31.6 bn (9.1% of UK) Full Year: 2019			£30.6 bn (9.1% of UK) Year to: Q1 2020			£27.5bn (8.7% of UK) Year to: Q2 2020	WM – 4 th Highest Region South East: £47.2bn (1 st) Northern Ireland: £9.2bn (12 th)	Regional exports fell by nearly £4.6bn (-14.1%) over the year of 2020 Q2 to £27.5bn - the UK decreased by 9.0%. The West Midlands region imports decreased by 18.0% to £31.3bn - leading to a trade deficit of £3.8bn

Please note, the figures stated each quarter are not comparable as they are based on to the quarter yearly figures.

Indicators that are in hatched marked boxes represent regional level analysis.

Sources: ONS, Number of provisional; weekly deaths involving coronavirus, October 2020, Department for Work and Pensions, Claimant count, October 2020, IHS Market/NatWest, PMI Survey, October 2020, EMSI, September 2020, HMRC: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Statistics, August 2020, ONS, GDP -UK regions and Countries, July 2020, HM Revenue & Customs August 2020, UK Regional Trade in Goods Statistics, September 2020

For the last two indicators, data is only available on a quarterly basis and will be placed in the month the data was released along with the time period the data corresponds to.

Unless otherwise stated all data relates to the WM 3 LEP Geography (BCLEP, CWLEP & GSBLEP) – the data by LEP level is also available.

The green shading illustrates indicators which have moved in a positive direction compared to the UK or England average (where UK averages are not available).

The red shading indicates the reverse and orange indicates a growth rate in the right direction but less than the UK or national average.

The peer group selected varies by indicator – regional is based on all the regions in the UK – showing a range from highest to lowest to understand how where the West Midlands compares and where available the WMCA (3 LEP) has been used and compared to other combined authorities on a highest to lowest bases. The 10 combined Authority used: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (C & P CA), Greater Manchester (GMCA), Liverpool City Region, North East, North of Tyne, Sheffield City Region, Tees Valley, West Midlands (3 LEP), West Yorkshire and West of England.

Infection rates

Rebecca Riley WMREDI

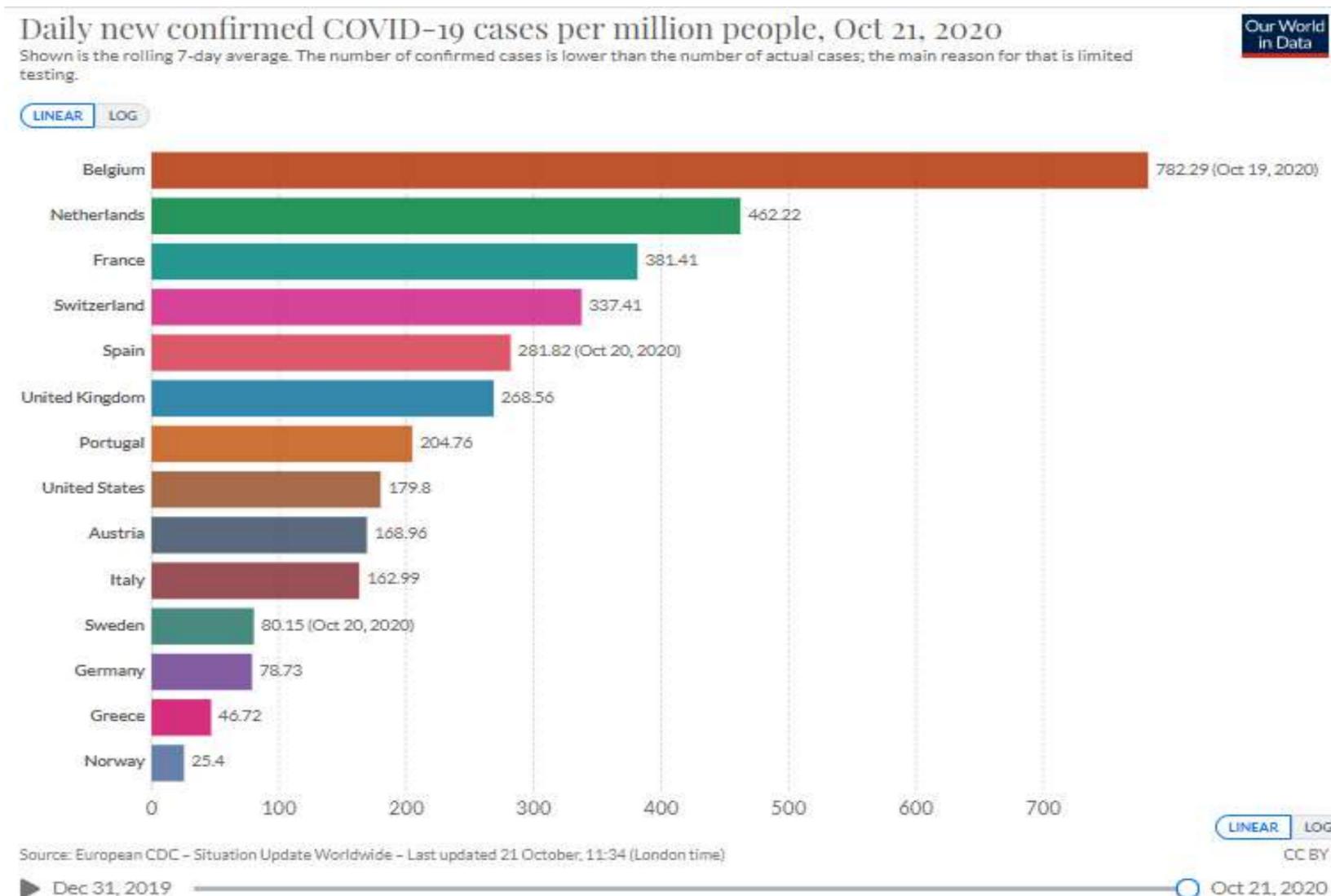
Europe has seen a [resurgence in infection rates](#) which is continuing (see graph below). Since [31 December 2019](#) and as of 21 October 2020, **40 856 197 cases** of COVID-19 (in accordance with the applied case definitions and testing strategies in the affected countries) have been reported, including **1 125 756 deaths**. In Europe: there are 6 365 049 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are Russia (1 326 178), Spain (896 086), France (756 472), **United Kingdom (634 920)** and Italy (365 467). The distributions of global infections and deaths are below.

Latest [ONS infection survey data](#) (16th October) states

- An estimated 336,500 people (95% credible interval: 312,200 to 362,000) within the community population in England had the coronavirus (COVID-19) during the most recent week, from 2 to 8 October 2020, equating to around 1 in 160 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 170 to 1 in 150).
- The estimate shows the number of infections has continued to increase rapidly in recent weeks.
- In recent weeks, there has been clear evidence of an increase in the number of people testing positive for COVID-19, with the current rates highest in older teenagers and young adults; smaller increases are also

apparent across all of the other age groups, apart from individuals aged 70 years and over.

- There is clear evidence of variation in COVID-19 infection rates across the regions of England, with highest rates seen in the North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, and the North East, which have all seen steep increases in recent weeks.
- During the most recent week (2 to 8 October 2020), we estimate there were around 5.11 new COVID-19 infections for every 10,000 people per day (95% credible interval: 4.15 to 6.99) in the community population in England, equating to around 27,900 new cases per day (95% credible interval: 22,700 to 38,200).
- The incidence rate has continued to increase in recent weeks.
- During the most recent week (2 to 8 October 2020), we estimate that 7,900 people in Wales had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 2,400 to 18,200), equating to 1 in 390 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 1,250 to 1 in 170).
- For Wales, the estimate shows there is some evidence that positivity rates may now have levelled off, although uncertainty is high.
- During the most recent two weeks (25 September to 8 October 2020), we estimate that 0.41% of people in Northern Ireland had COVID-19 (95% confidence interval: 0.19% to 0.78%), which is around 1 in 250 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 540 to 1 in 130)



Transport Data
Anne Shaw TFWM

Levels of use – 19th October 2020 (data 2 days behind)

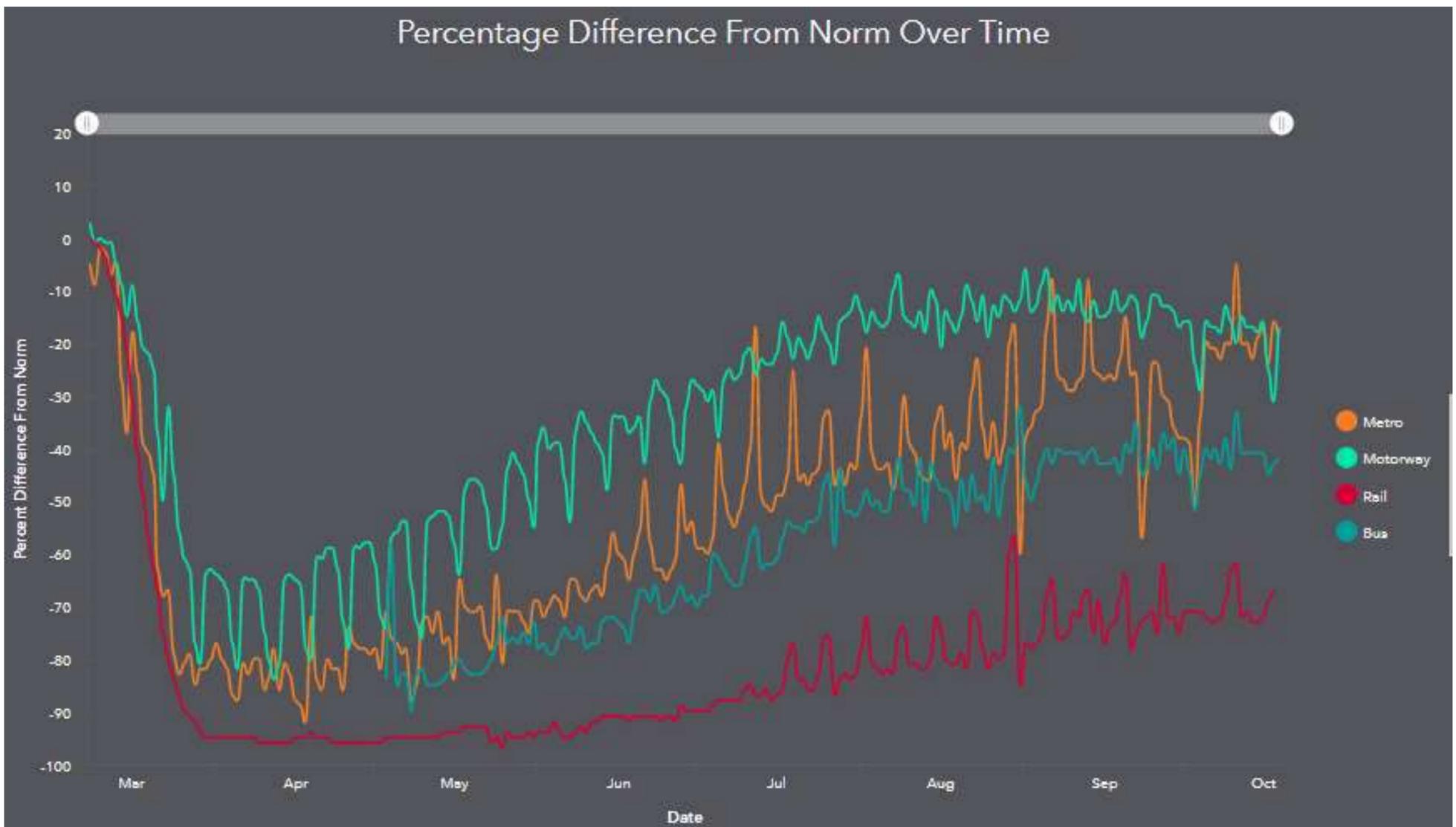
The Graph below shows the level of use on all modes
The table provides intelligence in terms of the levels of services and the use of the network per mode compared to this time last year.

Following the introduction of further Covid measures, transport services remain at their

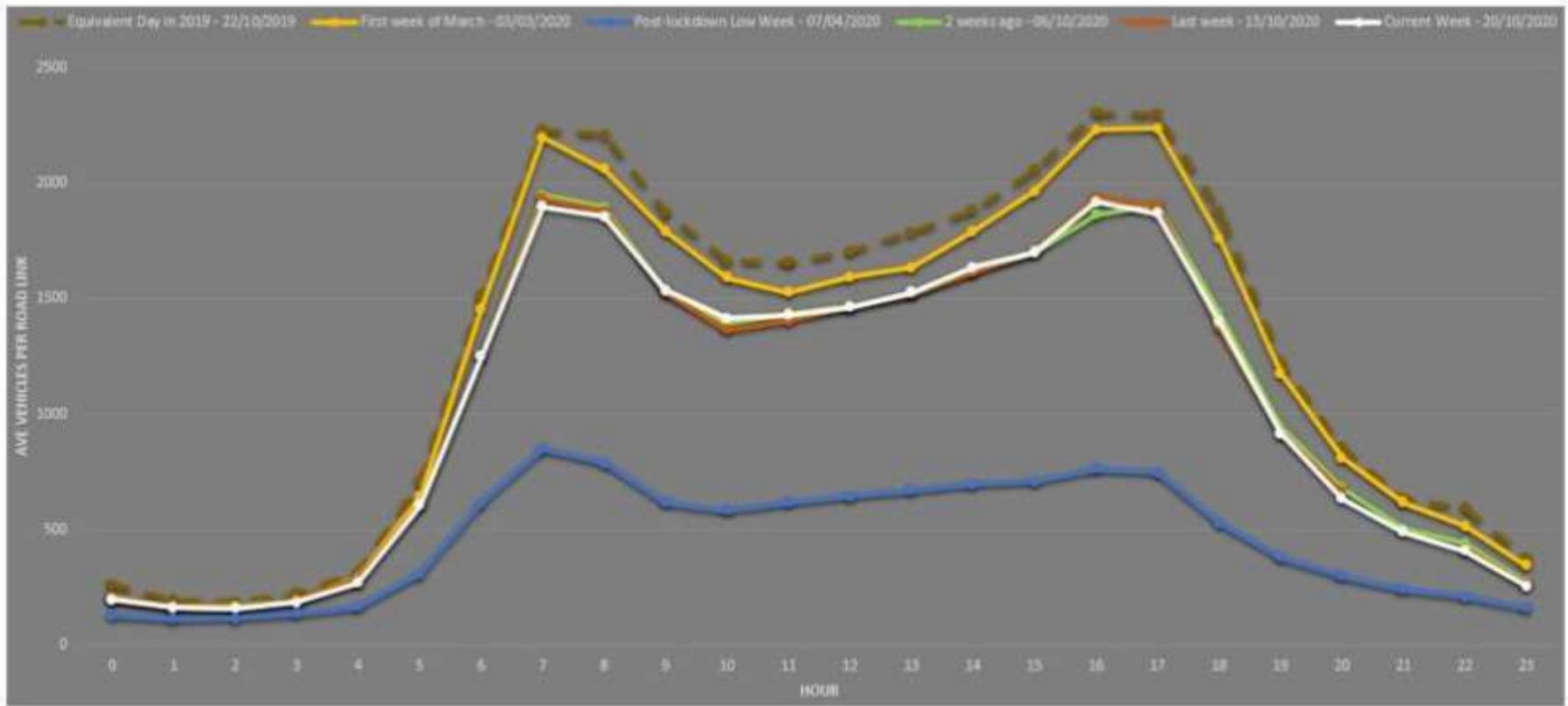
current levels with social distancing measures in place. Advice in the areas in the High category is to reduce travel, walk and cycle where possible.

We continue to monitor the network and carry out relevant actions to assist with managing capacity to ensure compliance with social distancing. In addition, we are also continuing to encourage and enforce on the network the wearing of face coverings.

Mode	% service compared to this time last year	% patronage compared to this time last year (12 th October 2020)
Roads	N/A	83% (down from last week by 2%)
Bus	>100%	58% (down from last week by 1%)
Train	95%	33% (down from last week by 5%)
Tram	>100%	81% (up 1% from last week)



Tuesday 20th October



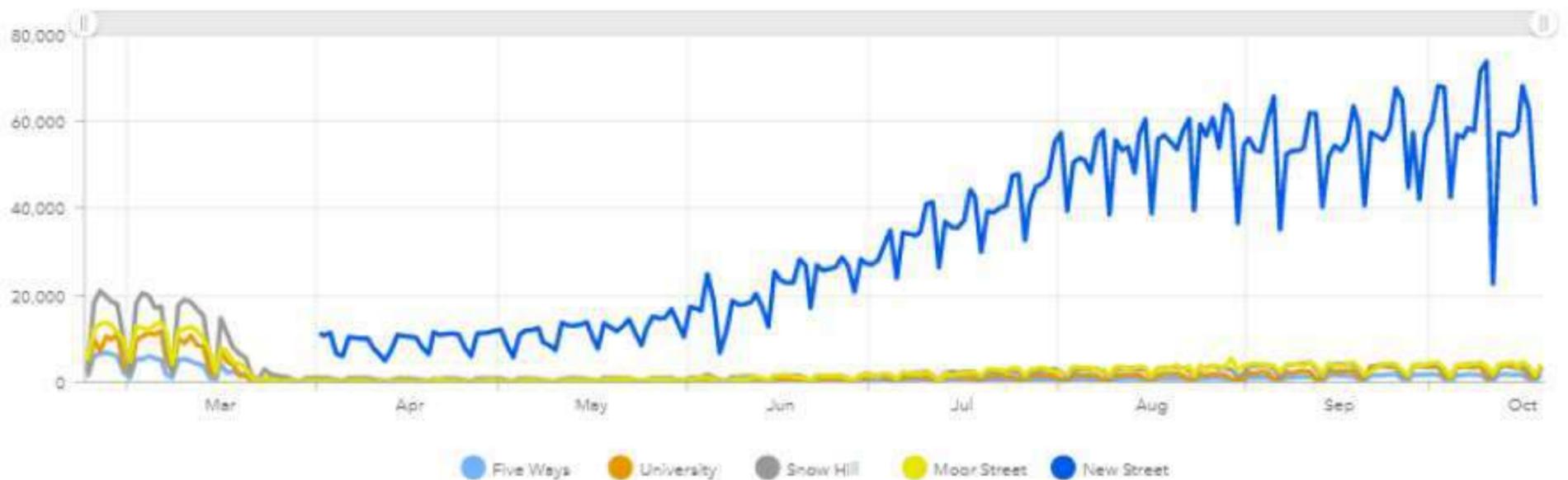
Traffic **remained the same (0% change)** as the previous Tuesday.

Traffic on Tuesday was 18% lower than it was this time last year and 13% below where it was during the first week of March.

Key:

- Brown dotted line – this time last year
- Yellow line – 1st week March
- Blue line – post lockdown, lowest weekly figures, showing the best compliance
- Green line – 2x weeks ago
- Bronze line – 1x week ago
- White line – the days figures

Daily Footfall - Birmingham Rail Stations



TfWM Future Travel Survey

Phase 3 saw a significant increase in people travelling. Leisure trips saw the biggest increase followed by social visits to friends/relatives and work trips.

While car continued to be the main way to travel, there was an increase in the proportion travelling by public transport. There was a decrease in the proportion walking/cycling. The increase in public transport use was noted for all journey purposes, particularly work trips and was noted amongst car owners and non car owners.

Although 53% felt extremely/moderately concerned about using public transport, the proportion feeling extremely concerned continues to fall (26%).

Younger respondents had lowest levels of concern, those from BAME groups had the highest.

There was a high level of support for the provision of hand sanitiser and wearing of face coverings on public transport. Support for these measures was highest amongst females, younger respondents and those from BAME groups, it was lowest amongst males – particularly with regards to the wearing of face coverings.

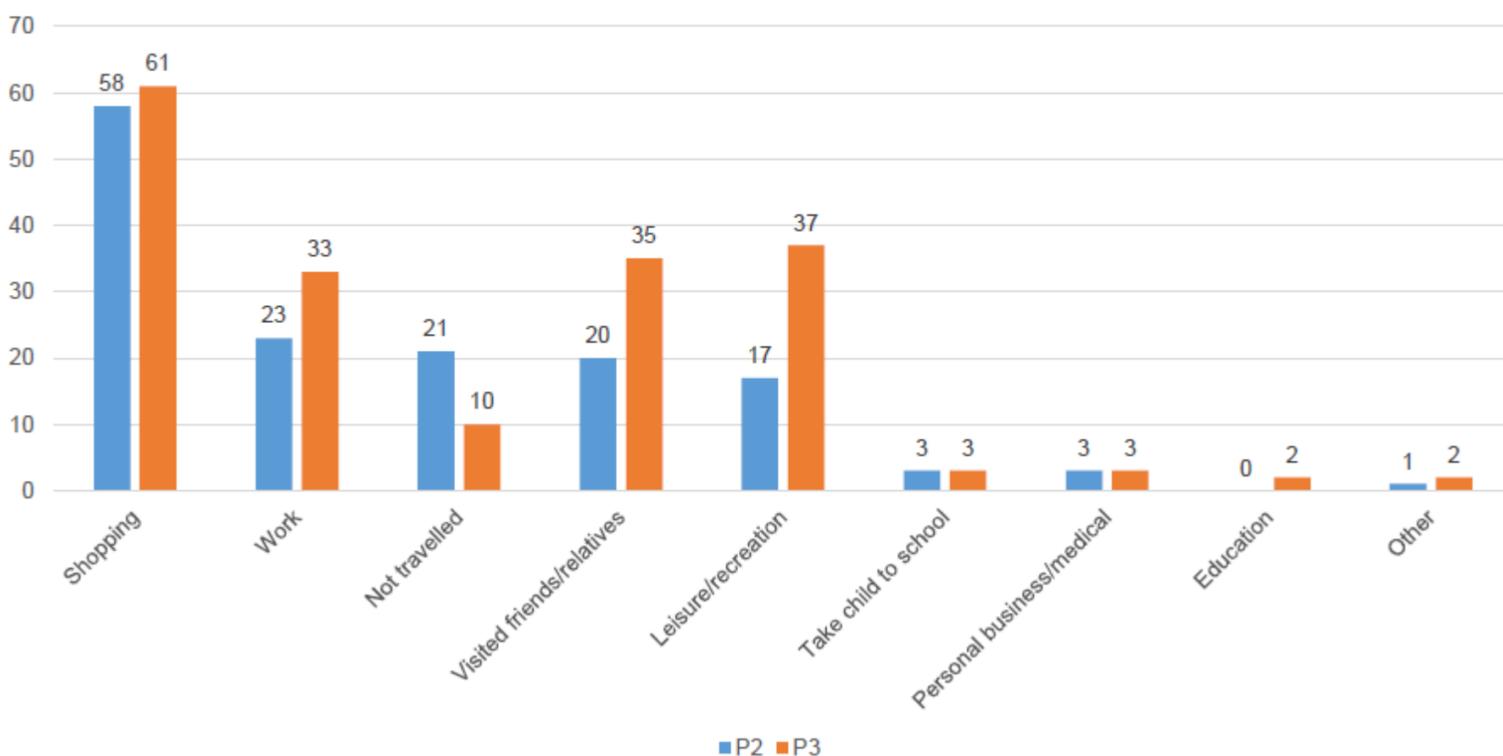
There was a general decline in satisfaction with bus travel compared to P2, particularly with the behaviour/ attitudes of passengers to social distancing measures. The main reason for dissatisfaction was passenger failing to wear face coverings.

Satisfaction with rail travel remained similar to P2, albeit the proportion of respondents feeling 'very' satisfied had declined in all areas. The behaviour/attitudes of passengers to social distancing measures continued to be lowest rated, as with bus travel the main reason for dissatisfaction was passengers not wearing face coverings.

There were improvements in the proportion of respondents satisfied with the overall response of tram operator and in tram information available .

However satisfaction with the behaviour/ attitudes of tram passengers to social distancing declined from P2 figures. As with other modes the failure of passengers to wear face coverings was the main reason for dissatisfaction. 36% of Metro passengers were aware of the mymetro app and the ability to log intention to travel. Nearly half thought they were likely to use it in future.

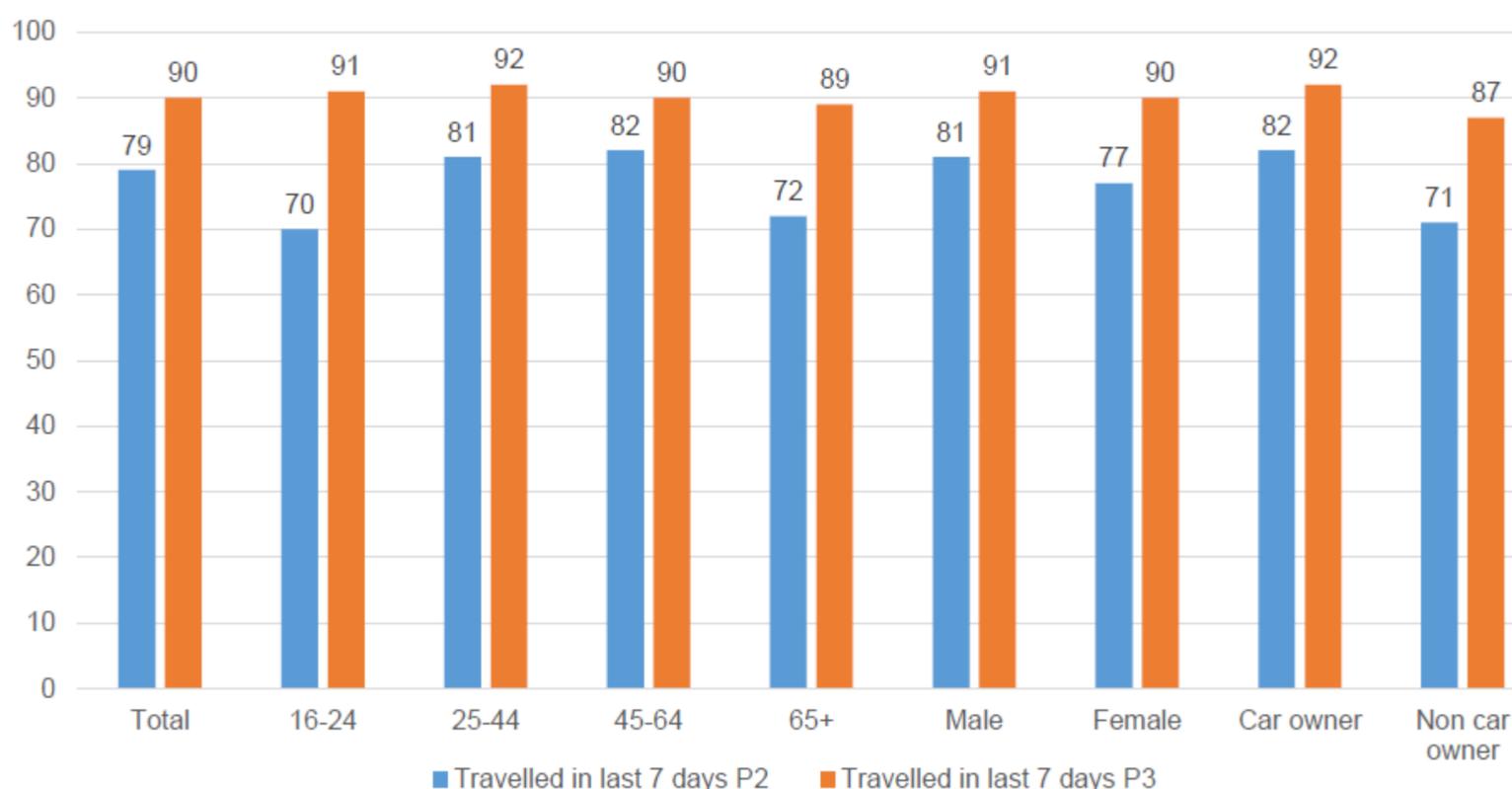
Purpose of travel in last 7 days



There was a general increase in travel for all reasons.

Leisure trips (37% v 17%) saw some of the biggest increases, followed by trips to see friends and relatives (35% v 20%) and work trips (23% to 33%).

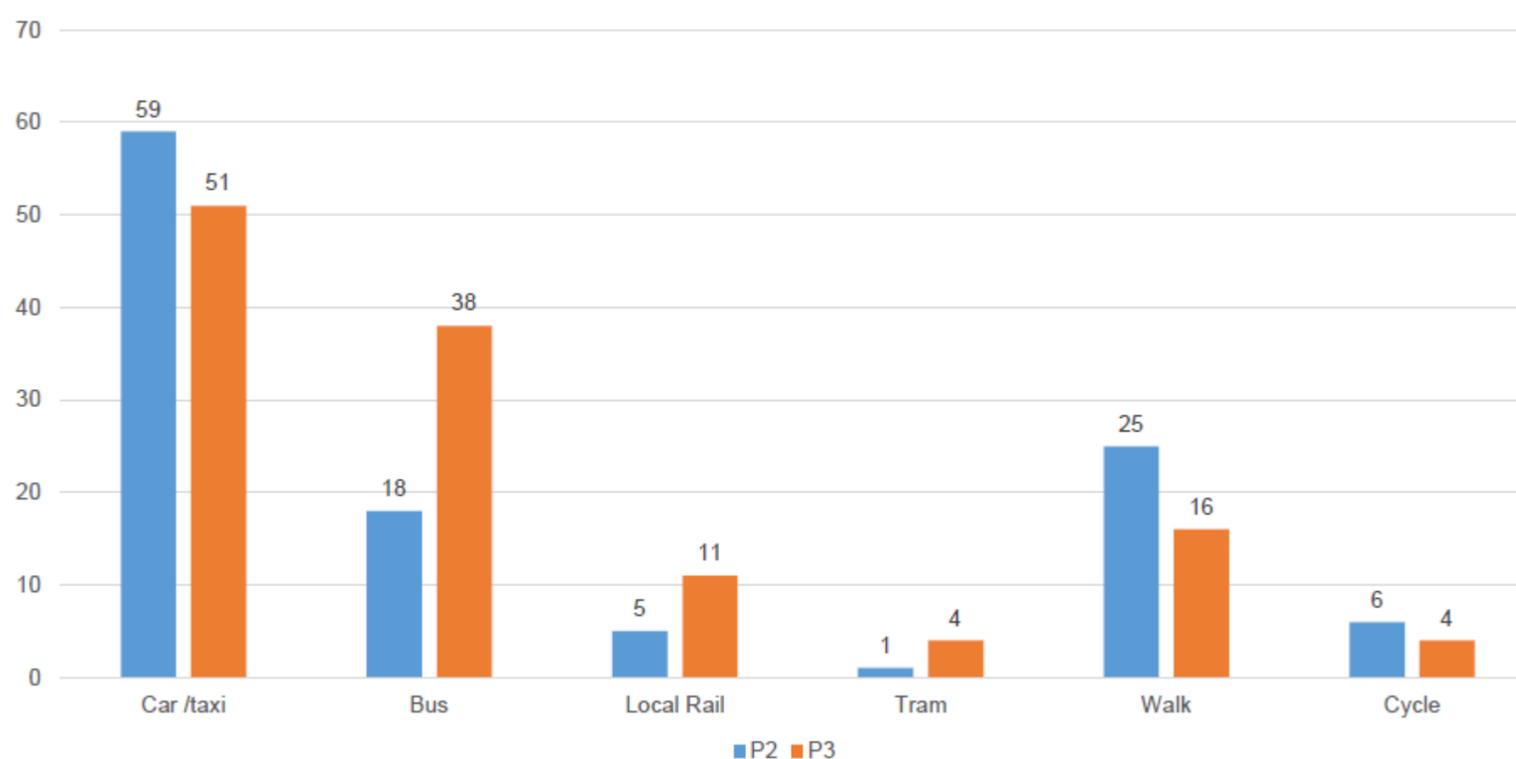
Travel in last 7 days



There was an increase in the proportion of respondents who had made a journey in the last 7 days (79% to 90%), this increase was noted across all respondents particularly those aged 16-24 and 65+.

Question: Thinking about the last 7 days, have you travelled for any of the following reasons? Base 2623 respondents

Mode of travel in last 7 days



Car continues to have been the main way to travel over the last 7 days, however there was a decrease in the proportion travelling this way.

At the same time there was an increase in the proportion of trips by public transport, particularly bus (38%).

Question: How did you travel? Base 2295 respondents travelling in last 7 days only. % exceed 100 due to multiple modes utilised
NB education/escorting child to school low base

ONS Weekly Indicators BCCEIU

On the 15th October 2020 the ONS released the weekly publication containing data about the condition of the UK society and economy from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The statistics are experimental and have been devised to provide timely information. The following summary contains footfall data, Value Added Tax (VAT) returns, initial results from Wave 15 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey (BICS), experimental online job advert indices and results from Wave 28 of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

National Footfall

Customer activity figures are provided by Springboard. The volume of footfall has been compared to the same day the previous year (i.e. Tuesday 14th July 2020 will be compared to Tuesday 16th July 2019).

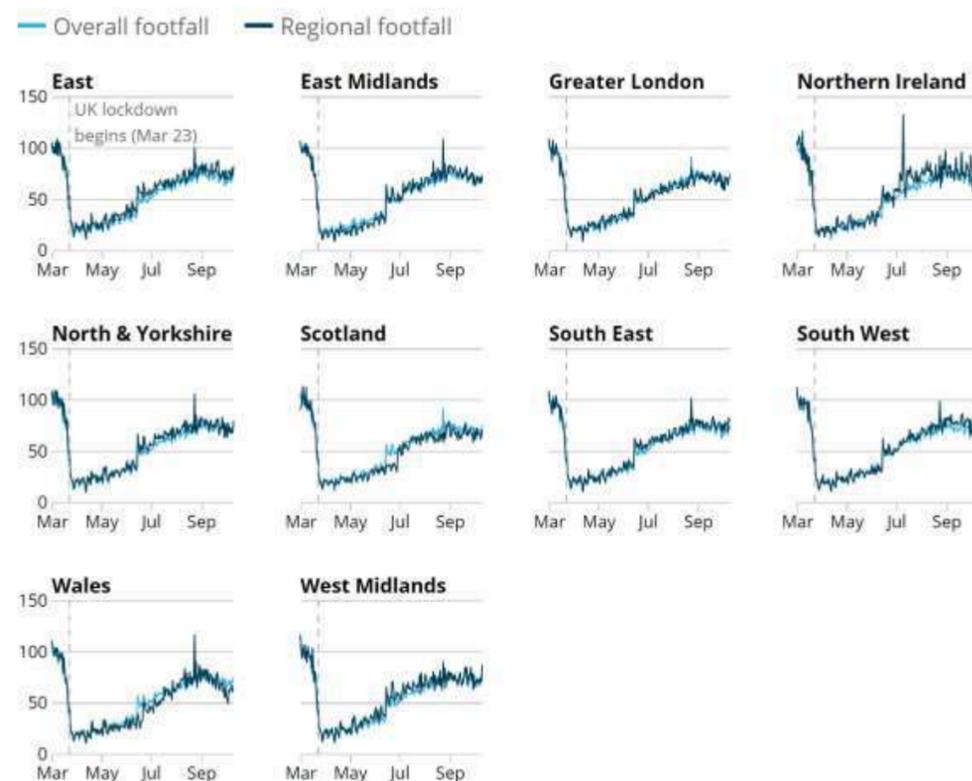
Overall national footfall for the week ending 11th October 2020 increased to around 70% of its level in the same period in 2019.

At a regional level, the latest weekly data when compared to the previous week shows the largest increase was in South West while there was a moderate decrease in Northern Ireland. The South West also has the highest level of footfall when compared to the same period in 2019, while the lowest levels were seen in Wales, Scotland and Greater London.

National Company Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolution

There were 18,420 incorporations in the week ending 9th October 2020, this is above the incorporations recorded in the same week as 2019 which was 13,259.

Also, for the week ending 9th October, there were 4,993 voluntary dissolution applications. This is also lower than the same week as the previous year at 5,697.



Source: Springboard and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Value Added Tax (VAT) Returns

Turnover diffusion indices track the proportion of firms reporting an increase or decrease in their turnover in their Value Added Tax (VAT) returns. When comparing Quarter 3 (July to September) to Quarter 2, the all-industry index was 3.9 standard deviations above the historical mean from 2008 to 2019, with a diffusion index of 0.09. Out of 260,030 firms, approximately 23,000 more firms saw their turnover increase than firms who saw their turnover decrease. However, Quarter 3 2020 business turnover when compared with Quarter 3 2019 is 3.6 standard deviations below its historical average, which indicates far more firms across all major industries are seeing decreasing turnover rather than increasing turnover when compared with the same period a year ago.

The new reporters index measures the number of firms sending VAT returns for the first time (relates to number of firm births). In September 2020, the number of new VAT reporters was 18,130 which is continuing the pick-up in the months of Quarter 3, following a drop in Quarter 2.

ONS Weekly Indicators

Business Impact of the Coronavirus

The initial results from Wave 15 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey (BICS) show that of the 24,353 businesses surveyed across the UK, 21% had responded. Unless stated, the following data is based on the period between 21st September to 4th October 2020 and is based on weighted estimates.

Trading Status

Weighted by count of UK businesses, 83% of responding businesses across the UK have been trading for more than the last 2 weeks. 2% of responding businesses who had temporarily paused trading reported to have started trading in the last 2 weeks. 2% of businesses that have temporarily paused trading but intend to restart trading in the next two weeks. While 11% of businesses that have temporarily paused trading that do not intend to restart trading in the next two weeks and 3% of businesses have permanently ceased trading.

Cash Reserves

4% of businesses that have not permanently stopped trading have no cash reserves, this rises to 35% that have more than six months' worth of cash reserves and to 41% that have less than six months' cash reserves.

Financial Performance

Weighted by turnover, just under 11% of businesses that have continued trading reported turnover had increased by at least 20%. While 36% reported that turnover had not been affected. However, 48% of businesses reported turnover had decreased by at least 20% and 6% of businesses were not sure.

Online Jobs Adverts

These estimates are experimental figures are taken from jobs adverts provided by Adzuna. Each value in the series measures the number of jobs adverts at a point in time, indexed for the average for 2019 (average = 100). The Adzuna categories do not correspond to SIC categories and therefore not comparable with the ONS Vacancy Survey.

Nationally, total online job adverts have increased from 61.2% (of the 2019 average) in the week of the 2nd October to 62.8% (of the 2019 average) in the week of the 9th October 2020. 21 of the 28 categories (excluding unknown) increased from the previous week with the transport/logistics/warehouse category increasing the highest at 12.7 percentage points (pp) to 169.4% of its 2019 average. The largest decrease was in the catering and hospitality category, decreasing by 4.7pp to 32.3% of its 2019 level.

For the West Midlands, the total online jobs adverts have increased from 70.6% (2nd October) to 73.6% (9th October) of its 2019 average. Ten of the twelve regions experienced an increase between the 2nd October and the 9th October with the West Midlands and East Midlands the joint highest at 3.0pp to 73.6% and 82.8% respectively of its 2019 level. Northern Ireland decreased by 2.1pp over the same period to 66.5% of the 2019 level and Wales decreased by 1.0% to 75.5% of the 2019 level.



ONS Weekly Indicators

Social Impacts of the Coronavirus

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) is to help understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain. The data relates to the final results for Wave 28, covering the period 7th - 11th October 2020. In this wave there were 1,663 (76%) responding adults. Please note this week refers to 7th – 11th October and last week refers to 30th September - 4th October.

Socialising and Social Distancing

64% of adults tend to or strongly support the “rule of six” measures.

82% of adults who had socialised with people outside their household or support bubble reported they often or maintained social distancing, which is the same proportion as last week. 77% of people in a local lockdown area reported to always or often social distancing compared to 83% of people not in a local lockdown area.

While 17% of adults said they never maintained, not very often or sometimes social distanced this week, which is a same proportion as last week.

Face Coverings

98% of adults have worn a face covering outside their home in the past week.

99% of adults in the past week have worn a protective face covering while shopping with 87% of adults reporting that while they were shopping, they saw everyone or almost everyone wearing a protective face covering.

38% of adults reported they found it easy or very easy to talk to someone where a protective face covering.

Work

49% of working adults reported the pandemic was affecting their work a slight decrease from 50% last week. 65% of working adults reported to either travelling to work exclusively or in combination with working from home this week compared to 62% last week. 54% of people travelled to work this

week, an increase from 48% from last week. This was met with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of people who are not in work for reasons such as temporary closure of their business or workplace, being on annual leave, or being unable to work because of caring responsibilities, or being furloughed which was 12% this week, down from 17% last week. 23% worked from home exclusively, a small change from 22% last week. 59% of people working from home did so due to the employer asking them to do so, 50% were following government advice and 24% normally worked from home.

Impact on Life and Well-Being

74% of adults this week reported were very or somewhat worried about the effect of the pandemic on their life right now. The main concerns reported by adults were a lack of freedom and independence at 58% and personal travel plans being affected at 55%.

76% of adults in local lockdown areas reported that they are very or somewhat worried about the effect of the coronavirus on their life right now, compared with 75% not in local lockdown. The two main concerns varied at 67% of those in local lockdown reported lack of freedom and independence compared to 56% and 54% in a local lockdown with well-being being affected compared to 45% for those not in a local lockdown. Of those who said their well-being has been affected by the coronavirus, 57% said they felt stressed or anxious, and 60% said they felt worried about the future.

Weekly Deaths

The following analysis compares the latest time period (week of the 9th October 2020) to the previous week period (week of the 2nd October 2020) for the number of deaths registered and the number of deaths related to the Coronavirus.

Across England and Wales, the overall registered death figures increased from 9,945 in the week of 2nd October to 9,954 in the week of 9th October. The number of deaths registered that state Coronavirus on the death certificate increased from 321 people to 438 people over the same period.

Regional level analysis shows that the West Midlands the overall registered death figures increased from 1,045 in the week of 2nd October to 1,053 in the week of 9th October. The number of registered deaths related to Coronavirus increased from 31 to 43 over the same period.

There was a total of 686 deaths registered across the WMCA (3 LEP) area in the week of the 9th October. There were 30 deaths registered that were related to Coronavirus over the same period – this accounts for 4.4% of total deaths. The WMCA (3 LEP) area accounts for 69.8% of the Coronavirus related deaths registered in the West Midlands Region.

In comparison to the week of the 2nd October, the overall registered death figures across the WMCA (3 LEP) area decreased by 38 people and the number of registered Coronavirus deaths increased by 7.

At local authority level, there were nine that recorded a Coronavirus related death. Twelve Coronavirus related deaths were in Birmingham. Four Coronavirus related deaths were in Wolverhampton. Three Coronavirus related deaths were in each of the following local authorities; Wyre Forest, Sandwell and Solihull. Two Coronavirus related deaths were in Stratford-on-Avon. There were also one in each of the following local authorities; Tamworth, North Warwickshire and Warwick.

Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, of the deaths involving Coronavirus registered in the week of 9th October, 26 of the deaths were in hospital, 2 in a care home, 1 classed as elsewhere and 1 at home.

Source: ONS, Deaths registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board, 20th October 2020

HEADLINES	
SECTOR	KEY CONCERNS
Cross Sector	<p>Access to Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies looking to access Wider Economy grant to purchase IT equipment in order to diversify services. • Many of those who accessed the BBLs & CBILs have almost used up the funds. • More funds needed to provide grants to vulnerable businesses. <p>Jobs & Furlough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General concern that the Job Support Scheme does not go far enough to support those businesses most affected by declining sales. • The feeling is that businesses that are intending to make redundancies will put this process into action at the beginning of November <p>EU Exit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General concern at timing of Business Secretary's plea/reminder last week for businesses to prepare for end of Transition on same day as new Covid restrictions were also announced. • Some businesses still under illusion that a FTA agreement with the EU will preserve the status quo, therefore little in way of appropriate preparations have been undertaken. • Concern expressed at lack of clarity on some issues, such as trade with Northern Ireland, the UK shared prosperity fund, rules of origin etc. <p>New Restrictions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern amongst businesses who are now experiencing the new Tier 2 restrictions. • With further restrictions, businesses are very concerned around sustainability. <p>New Business Models inc Diversification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses continue to look at diversification, primarily exploring activities associated to their current sector although there is an increasing number of companies looking at new products and services and are looking at additional training and grant funding support.
SMEs	<p>Cross Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMEs concerned about the future. • Feel professional expertise will be essential to help restore normality. • Support and guidance on how to market themselves better and bring out their brand awareness would be seen as beneficial. <p>Access to Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding and finance are the most often quoted concern of SMEs at present.
Visitor Economy	<p>Cross Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Leaders have called for a clear Action Plans for the hospitality and events sectors. <p>Sales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over generally declining sales due to additional local lockdown restrictions, especially from hospitality and events sectors. Huge concern over looming job losses.
Advanced Manufacturing	<p>Jobs & Furlough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large portion of manufacturing firms still have staff on furlough, and are unsure what will happen at the end of the month. • Redundancies expected in this sector.
Sports	<p>Sales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some health & fitness businesses have lost clients due to the pandemic, and at the same time have faced increased costs due to having to invest in PPE, sanitation products and other equipment to fit in with the guidelines.
Retail	<p>Sales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales in many retail businesses are down due to fall in footfall and limited capacity they are able to hold in stores.

NEW ECONOMIC SHOCKS			
COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	SOURCE/DETAIL
Marston	Black Country	Hospitality	Pub group Marston's has announced it is to axe about 2,000 jobs as a result of new Covid-19 restrictions.
John Lewis	Black Country and Wider regions	Retails	The John Lewis Partnership warned it will continue to cut costs as it outlined a new growth strategy aimed at reviving profits.
Pret A Manger	Black Country and Wider regions	Retail	Pret A Manger is to close six more shops and cut about 400 jobs after its recovery slowed in the face of recently tightened restrictions and rising Covid-19 case numbers.
NEC Group	Birmingham	Events	NEC Group is set to make around 450 people redundant after announcing a major restructure. The events giant will axe 55% of its permanent roles after being hit hard by the Covid-19 crisis which has let it unable to host any large-scale event since March.
Mitchells and Butlers	Birmingham and nationwide	Hospitality	Staff at Birmingham-based bar and pub chain Mitchells & Butlers have been put under consultation. The company, which owns and manages household names such as Toby Carvery, Harvester and All Bar One, has begun a redundancy process, according to reports. Listed M&B owns around 1,700 pubs and restaurants and has 44,000 employees but has not yet said how many jobs are at risk of being axed.
Hospitality sector	West Midlands	Hospitality	Pubs and other entertainment businesses in the West Midlands are going to be forced out of business thanks to lockdown restrictions, Ministers have been told. Warnings came from both Conservative and Labour MPs, who called on the Treasury to offer more support for struggling businesses.

NEW INVESTMENT, DEALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
HS2	National	Rail	Ministers say an extra £800 million will be added to the bill for first phase of the controversial line.
Dunelm mill	National	Retail	Homewares chain Dunelm is to hand back £14.5 million it claimed under the Government's furlough scheme.
Greggs	Walsall	Retail	A new Greggs store and warehouse facilities will help create dozens of new jobs at an Aldridge industrial park.
Stourside Hospital	Stourbridge	Health	A new £7.5 million-day surgery hospital has been officially opened in the Black Country by Lord David Prior, the chairman of NHS England.
Delta Financial Systems	Birmingham	BPFS	Bravura Services (Australia) acquisition of Delta Financial Systems
Space Station	Birmingham	Warehousing	SunSuper (Australia) acquired Space Station storage company
Collins Aerospace	Solihull	Aerospace	Collins Aerospace, parent of UTC aerospace, is expanding its facility on Birmingham Business Park with a 23,700 sqft extension.
Colas Rail	Solihull	Rail	Bouygues of France-owned Colas Rail is expanding into Birmingham Business Park. See Page 13 –
University of Birmingham / Bruntwood Sci Tech.	Birmingham	Life sciences	10,000 jobs to be created through Midlands healthtech campus. A new healthcare technologies campus is to be established in Birmingham with an aim of creating thousands of jobs and bolstering the UK's position in life sciences. Birmingham Health Innovation Campus will support health and life science businesses throughout their growth and provide a focal point for inward investment in the region's healthcare cluster. The campus is being developed through a partnership between the University of Birmingham and life sciences property provider, Bruntwood SciTech.
UK Flooring Direct	Coventry	Retail	UK Flooring Direct has opened a new warehouse and offices in the city and says it is looking to hire an additional 50 staff over the next six months.

Disclaimer: The contents of this document are based on the latest data available and the contribution of regional partners in a fast paced environment, therefore we urge caution in its use and application

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