

West Midlands

Weekly Economic Impact Monitor



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This monitor aims to pull together information across regional partners to understand the impacts of Covid-19 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 there is continuing unrest across the world, as political and social changes are affecting world politics. Make UK highlights that manufacturing is still suffering since exiting the EU and there are key issues with barriers to trade. The World Economic Forum states this week that while no nation has emerged unscathed from the pandemic, countries with advanced digital economies and digital skills, robust social safety nets and previous experience in dealing with epidemics [have better managed the impact of the pandemic](#) on their economies and citizens.

Economy

- Despite unprecedented levels of business support from Government during the pandemic, regional business leaders are stressing that the support is not enough to help businesses to stay afloat and are calling for further, urgent aid from Government in order to avoid further job losses.
- [Birmingham Crane Survey 2021](#). A key finding is that development activity continues across Birmingham city centre with great anticipation as we all look forward to hosting the Commonwealth Games in July next year. Beyond that, the arrival of HS2 and the first brand new intercity terminus station built in Britain for over 100 years, means Birmingham is continuing to attract national and international interest.
- [NPI's new report](#) on economic justice was published this week by the [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#). The report highlights that over the last decade, economic disparities between the stronger and weaker parts of the WMCA have grown rather than shrunk. Even though the WMCA is doing well does not necessarily mean that all parts of it are. The Black Country needs special attention
- The West Midlands economy had the largest contraction of all the UK regions in 2020 Q2, registering a GDP decline of 21.0%. For the UK the decline was 18.8% in 2020 Q2. Quarter on Quarter a year earlier (2019 Q2 to 2020 Q2) GDP analysis shows for the West Midlands region there was contraction of 24.7% - the highest decline seen across all twelve regions. Over the same period, for the UK there was decline of 20.7%. Overall, there was a fall in GDP for all four sectors in 2020 Q2, when compared with the previous quarter for the West Midlands region, with agriculture falling by 1.9%, services by 19.0%, production by 24.3% and construction by 38.8%.
- Youth claimants have improved slightly in December but WMCA remains the 3rd highest combined authority on youth claimant measures, with 42,220 or 8.6% of the young population claiming, nearly double the amount in March 2020.
- For all claimants the WMCA has the highest proportion at 6.3% of the population and 209k above the UK average at 4.8%.
- The region continues to have positive business activity with a number rising to 54.2 in December (a positive index number is over 50, under 50 and the economy is contracting). The upturn is linked to the end of the second lockdown and more companies reopening. The region also continues to have a positive future business activity index at 73.6. In the West Midlands, 63.1% of businesses responding to the ONS survey had high confidence in surviving over the next three months. 26.3% had moderate confidence of survival, 3.6% had low confidence.
- Apprenticeship vacancies rose in December to 2,290, with the WMCA area having the highest number of any combined authority, demonstrating the opportunities still available in the region. Job postings are also highest and rising at 179k.
- Furloughed workers rose in November and December to 221k. There are slightly more men than women furloughed, and those aged 25 to 34 years still account for the highest proportion of the total (23%) but the distribution by age has become more even, with the 35-44 year olds at 19% and 45 to 54 at 18%. Larger companies have the highest value of furlough claims at £1.6bn and a third of claims are in the accommodation and food services followed by just under a 5th in wholesale and retail.

- 17.3% of West Midlands businesses expected redundancies to occur between the next two weeks and one month and 69.2% expected redundancies in the next one to three months.
- The parliamentary constituencies in the WMCA (3 LEP) area with the highest furlough rate on 31st December was Birmingham, Ladywood at 15.2% (8,100 furloughed of 53,300 eligible). This was followed by Stratford-on-Avon at 14.8% (6,400 furloughed of the 43,300 eligible) and also Birmingham Hodge Hill at 14.3% (6,100 furloughed of the 42,800 eligible).
- Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 171,900 people were eligible for Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) 3. There were 103,500 claims made to 31st December, with a total value of nearly £275m with an average claim value of £2,800. The take-up rate was 60.2%, above the UK average of 57.1%. The industry with the highest take-up rate was transportation and storage at 75.1% (23,700 eligible, 17,800 claims).
- Overall footfall in the UK was at 34% when compared to the same week in 2020. Overall footfall in the UK decreased by 1 percentage from the previous week and the city centre data locally still remains very low.
- 12.2% of West Midlands businesses had applied for the Local Restrictions Support Grant – England and 81.5% have received). 1.1% of West Midlands businesses had applied for a grant from the Lockdown Business Fund – Wales (6.0% have received). 3.6% of West Midlands businesses have received a grant from the Strategic Framework
- 76.4% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they had more staff working from home due to COVID-19. 9.7% of responding West Midlands businesses reported homeworking had increased productivity, 53.5% reported productivity had stayed the same and 19.4% reported productivity had decreased. 25.3% of responding businesses in the West Midlands intended to use increased homeworking as a permanent business model going forward.
- This week has seen a healthy number of referrals to support businesses proactively rather than just supporting Covid survival. Start-Ups have featured highly along with grant referrals for Green Business initiatives and Capital and Tech Investment projects. Assistance has also been sought for property searches, training and recruitment.
- Quarantining Policy – Urgent clarity is required on new quarantine rules for airports, stressed by [Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce](#).
- [Tech start-ups](#) and scaleups in the West Midlands raised a record £390m in funding in 2020, almost three times more than 2019's previous record of £132m. Gymshark, the Solihull-based fitness e-commerce platform which raised £200m in growth equity funding to become the region's second-ever unicorn – defined as a private company valued at \$1bn or more
- The number of investment deals completed in the Midlands last year fell to its lowest level since 2014, according to new figures, while their values slumped by almost 60 per cent. Experian has said transaction numbers dropped from 989 to 825 in 2020, a fall of 17 per cent. The value of the deals dropped by 57 per cent from £15.3bn to £6.6bn, the lowest level over the last decade.

Health and wellbeing

- There was a total of 1,352 deaths registered across the WMCA (3 LEP) area in the week of the 22nd January. There were 612 deaths registered that were related to Coronavirus over the same period – accounting for 45.3% of total deaths. The WMCA (3 LEP) area accounted for 72.5% of the 844 Coronavirus related deaths registered in the West Midlands Region.
- In the West Midlands 75% of adults reported they were very or somewhat worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their life, slightly below the Great Britain average of 76%.
- Average personal well-being scores for life satisfaction was 6.4 in the West Midlands (6.5 GB), 'worthwhile' was 6.9 in the West Midlands (7.0 GB), 'happiness' was 6.4 for West Midlands adults (matching GB) and 'anxious' was recorded at 4.6 for West Midlands adults (4.3 GB). 42% of adults in the West Midlands reported high levels of anxiety (37% for GB).
- As we near a second month of renewed lockdown measures, a number of business across the region have raised the subject of mental health among their workforce, particularly with those families trying to undertake home learning to children, often whilst they are suffering with positive COVID tests. A number of businesses are offering free COVID testing and in some cases are discussing counselling and other services to their staff, with one example of this involving dealing with the loss of colleagues due to the disease.

Brexit and Trade Impacts

- [MakeUK](#) highlights key issues of even those companies deeming themselves ready for changes to trade, still having faced disruption. Supply chain disruption was felt immediately. New rules for products including rules of origin, conformity and product markings are a whole new world for many. The Northern Ireland protocol brings

new checks but not all companies have taken the necessary steps. Manufacturers are regularly sending employees to the EU for business, but again these rules will change.

- 39.6% of West Midlands businesses reported that the main reason for the difference in stock levels was due to COVID-19. 26.4% of West Midlands businesses reported the main reason to be COVID-19 and the end of the EU transition period. 23.3% of West Midlands businesses reported just the end of the EU transition period as the main reason and 5.8% of West Midlands businesses reported the main reason as other.
- 5.0% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they were stockpiling goods or material from UK suppliers, 9.2% were stockpiling from EU Suppliers and 3.2% were stockpiling from non-EU suppliers. 77.8% of West Midlands businesses reported not stockpiling any goods or materials. Of the West Midlands businesses that reported they had stockpiled goods or material the highest percentage were in manufacturing parts at 32.7%.
- Rolling data on trading shows 90.3% of responding West Midlands businesses were trading between 11th to 24th January. 9.2% of businesses had temporarily closed or temporarily paused trading and less than 1% of businesses had permanently ceased trading.
- 56.6% of West Midlands businesses reported prices did not change any more than normal, 13.1% reported prices increased more than normal and 6.6% of West Midlands businesses reported some prices increased and some prices decreased.

Ongoing issues are being reported by some businesses in the West Midlands. Key points include:

- Additional costs associated with freight. Freight agencies continue to be employed by those with little knowledge or resource to conduct this activity themselves.
- Port Stacking. Businesses predicting, or certainly posing the question, that the real impact of port stacking will not be felt until the economy returns to normal levels.
- DIT queries remain around the movement of people and with the current travel restrictions, particularly within the service sector. Other issues and concerns are around the sourcing of international skills and delays with issuing visas for prospective new employees.
- There is confusion over duties payable.
- There are instances of EU firms cancelling orders from the UK due to the extra bureaucracy and looking to source products from the EU instead.
- Costs of having to set up a subsidiary in the EU affecting profitability.
- Delays in transport times for exports and increase in transit time for inbound goods.
- Large increases in related admin and disruption.
- Many enquiries from companies asking about European carnets (taking goods out temporarily).
- Confusion over rules origin, particularly businesses confused about whether Certificate of Origin covers goods of EU origin.

Global, National and Regional Outlook

Alice Pugh, WMREDI; Rebecca Riley WMCA/WMREDI

Global

This week [Amazon founder Jeff Bezos](#) is to step down as chief executive of the e-commerce giant after 30 years, but he will become executive chairman. The firm now employs 1.3 million people globally and has its hand in everything from package delivery and streaming video to cloud services and advertising. Amazon saw its already explosive growth skyrocket last year, as the pandemic prompted a surge in online shopping. The firm reported \$386bn (£283bn) in sales in 2020, up 38% from 2019. Profits almost doubled, rising to \$21.3bn. Amazon also faces increasing scrutiny from regulators, who have questioned its monopoly power. And its dominance in cloud computing is being increasingly challenged by other tech firms, such as Microsoft and Alphabet, parent company of Google and YouTube. Investors also appear unfazed by Bezos' exit, with little change in the firm's share price in after-hours trade. As executive chair and founder he will still exercise huge power over the company. However, stepping back will inevitably mean less influence. His replacement - Andy Jassy - has been running Amazon Web Services, Amazon's booming cloud business division.

This week [Myanmar](#) has again seen the arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi, following a military coup, signalling the continuing political unrest globally. The coup, has seen the installation of an 11-member junta which is ruling under a year-long state of emergency. The military sought to justify its action by alleging fraud in last November's elections, which Ms Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) won decisively. For 32 years the generals have tried, and failed, to neutralise the threat posed by Aung San Suu Kyi's enduring popularity. She has won every election she has been allowed to contest by a wide margin. Protests broke out over the country on Tuesday, and many hospital medics are either stopping work or continuing but wearing symbols of defiance in anger over the suppression of Myanmar's short-lived democracy. The G7 said it was "deeply concerned" about the coup and called for the return of democracy. However, efforts at the United Nations Security Council to reach a common position came to nought as China failed to agree. China has been warning since the coup that sanctions or international pressure would only make things worse in Myanmar. Beijing has long played a role of protecting the country from international scrutiny. It sees the country as economically important and is one of Myanmar's closest allies. Alongside Russia, it has repeatedly protected Myanmar from criticism at the UN over the military crackdown on the Muslim minority Rohingya population.

There have also been political disruptions in Russia, as the Russian opposition leader [Alexei Navalny](#), was jailed last week, leading to [protests](#) breaking out all over the country on Tuesday. Alexei Navalny was arrested in Russia in January, following being treated in Germany for a near-fatal nerve agent attack in August 2020. The Kremlin however denies the allegation and rejects the conclusion by Western experts that Novichok - a Russian chemical weapon - was used. There has been international condemnation of the arrest and more than [3,000 people](#) were arrested at protests in at least 109 cities, signalling widespread fatigue with the corruption-plagued political order presided over by President Vladimir V. Putin. Other countries are considering increasing sanctions on Russia, Germany has stated there were talks amongst the EU members following the jailing of Alexei Navalny.

A [November report](#) from McKinsey & Company showed that 62% of employees globally consider mental health issues to be a top challenge during the COVID-19 crisis, with higher reporting among diverse groups. The same report paints a picture of employers that are scrambling to meet the moment: 96% of companies globally provided additional mental health resources to employees, but only one in six employees reported feeling supported.

National

This week MakeUK released a paper on '[The impact of the EU-UK agreement on manufacturers](#)'. The paper outlines the latest position across the manufacturing sector since exiting the EU. It highlights the key issues creating barriers to trade, and makes recommendations for Government that will help manufacturing remain a critical driver of economic growth for the UK economy. The key takeaways and requests to government include:

1. **Even those companies deeming themselves “ready” have still faced disruption:** Since the conclusion of the UK-EU Trade & Cooperation Agreement (TCA) manufacturers overall may have felt “ready” but in reality, they are also facing many challenges. Indeed 61% of companies said their business was ‘ready’ for the new trading relationship but were nonetheless still facing disruption. In comparison less than a quarter (24%) said they were ready, and their business has not experienced any disruption.
2. **Supply chain disruption has been felt immediately:** The impact of the new rules and trading relationship is already being felt. Some 61% of businesses are enduring supply chain disruption either importing or exporting to and from the EU and 32% are having their supply chains impacted in both directions.
3. **New rules for products including rules of origin, conformity and product markings are a whole new world for many:** The agreement includes product specific Rules of Origin, yet not all companies have experience of certificates of origin. A quarter of companies (25%) have not had experience but are aware of the process and a further 8% have not had experience and not aware of what the process entails. For those companies that have not had such experience, this will be a major challenge.
4. **The Northern Ireland protocol brings new checks but not all companies have taken the necessary steps:** The Northern Ireland protocol means that there will be additional checks on goods and declaration between Great Britain (GB) and Northern Ireland (NI). While a number of companies seem to be aware of these new checks, not all companies have put the necessary plans and practices in place. One in five companies say they are aware and have registered for the Trader Support Service in Northern Ireland.
5. **Manufacturers are regularly sending employees to the EU for business but again these rules will change:** Almost two-thirds (61%) of manufacturers are regularly sending employees to the EU for business purposes. This is unsurprising as many manufacturers provide a service as part of the manufacture of a good, undertaking activities such as servicing and maintenance as well as for training or attending business meetings. Despite this being a common and indeed frequent activity among manufacturers, three in ten companies are unaware of the new rules and requirements they need to conform with to send workers to the EU to undertake business.

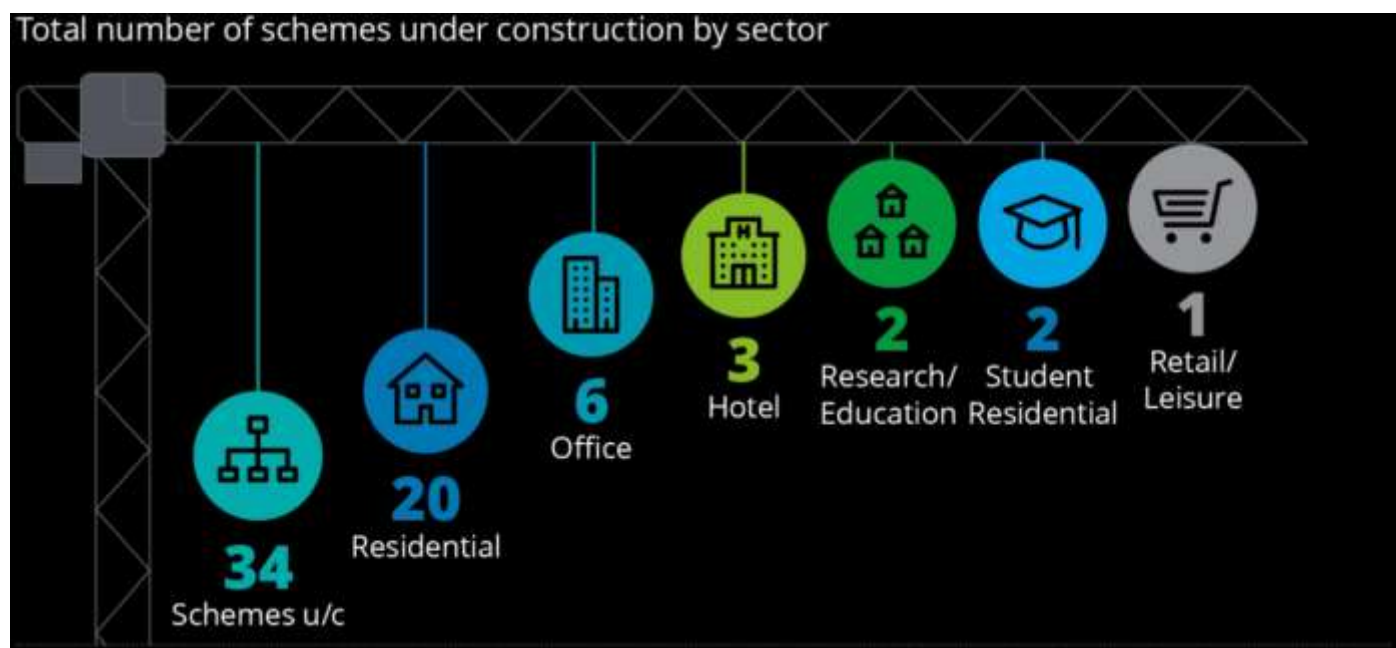
The paper also set out five actions Governments should take to ease the burden on business now and mitigate future impacts:

1. Fast-tracking the training of good quality customs agents to smooth the flow at borders
2. Government action to help coordinate the activities of hauliers and logistics firms and exporters
3. Vouchers for advice and support relating to exporting processes and customs training support
4. Tax cuts or rebates for three years to help firms cope with the additional costs of EU export paperwork
5. A mechanism for EU Regulatory Tracking, Monitoring and Support

Regional

This week Deloitte released the [Birmingham Crane Survey 2021](#). Finding that development activity continues across Birmingham city centre with great anticipation as we all look forward to hosting the Commonwealth Games in July 2022. Beyond that, the arrival of HS2 and the first brand new intercity terminus station built in Britain for over 100 years means Birmingham is continuing to attract national and international interest. Developers are continuing to push forward with new schemes and the pipeline is strong despite the pandemic. The key findings of the report were:

1. Pre-letting of offices remains strong with 51% of space currently under construction pre-let.
2. Residential development continues to thrive with a record 2,072 units completed. 20 schemes currently under construction, including four new starts.
3. A record year for student accommodation with 1,458 beds completed - the highest recorded since the Birmingham Crane Survey started.
4. 2020 saw 34 schemes under construction compared to 41 the previous year.
5. The amount of office space under construction fell for the fifth consecutive year. Completion of just over 210,000 sq ft in 2020.
6. One new hotel was started in 2020 and 224 rooms completed.



Generating £27.8 billion gross value added annually, and employing more than 360,000 people, the West Midlands is the [UK's largest centre for business, professional and financial services](#) (BPFS) outside London. Now business leaders from Shoosmiths, Wesleyan, Bruntwood, CBRE and Birmingham Law Society, and others, are working with the region's just under 12,500 leading tech and digital companies to see how they can integrate AI and advanced technology into their everyday activities. [SuperTech](#) – the first professional services technology (ProfTech) supercluster in the UK – is a cross-sector partnership designed to showcase the talent, innovation, and investment potential of the West Midlands' rapidly emerging professional services technology (ProfTech) cluster.

[City centre footfall data](#) from locomizer shows that levels in the city centre remain low.



The [Guardian](#) highlights that the West Midlands was the hardest hit part of the UK during the record-breaking collapse in the economy during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic according to official figures. The detailed information is further on in this week's briefing. In a [separate release](#), the ONS said that in part this was due to tougher restrictions being in place for longer and the share of consumption – curtailed by the lockdown – being larger in the UK than in other countries.

Best from the Web

Keziah Watson WMCA

- [The Institute for Government](#) argues that reforms are needed at the centre of government to enable a strong core to drive cross cutting agendas such as Net Zero. They recommend creating a clear sense of direction for all aspects of government at the start of each government which is reviewed as necessary and creating an implementation unit to make sure it gets done.
- [The Tony Blair Institute for Global Change](#) and the [COVID Actuaries Response Group](#) have both published roadmaps outlining when they believe the end of lockdown may be. The Institute say that with the current rate of vaccine roll out, the earliest we can expect anything resembling normality is September, and COVID ARG argue that we won't see any impact of the vaccine on the number of deaths till April.
- [The Children's Commissioner](#) reports on the state of children's mental health services from March 2019 - March 2020, which begins to show the effects of the pandemic on these services. There continues to be a lack of provisions and long wait times, made worse by an increased number of children with mental health issues.
- [The Institute for Government](#) has published the Whitehall Monitor for 2021, which highlights the unnecessary number of U-turns, a quick turnover of junior ministers, and a decreased level of transparency in government contracts. Cabinet ministers have been steady despite worries about the behaviour and programs of some, which contributes to the areas of concern raised.
- [The Citizens Advice Service](#) reports that one in six people are struggling to afford broadband, which impacts their access to essential services. Broadband makes up a larger percentage of household bills for those on lower incomes, leading to calls for companies to create cheaper tariffs

Bloomberg CityLab – Why we don't believe the big city obituary

An article in the [CityLab](#) series point to the problem of fatalistic gloomy predictions on the future of cities.

A [new survey](#) by The Harris Poll and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs offers evidence for a different narrative. Surveying 1,200 residents of the nation's six largest metropolitan areas on their attitudes about urban and suburban life in late autumn, the answers provide a window into how metropolitan Americans feel about the places they live during the pandemic.

It presents an image not of cities teetering on the edge, but of urban strength in crisis. Rather than decamping for the suburbs, as has been widely (and anecdotally) reported, city residents remain committed to cities. But beyond the immediate challenges, they want longstanding problems of urban life addressed, and are willing to embrace changes in policy and personal behaviour to do so.

Additionally, the internet survey results also offer no evidence of a long-term urban exodus. The bulk of residents across community type — big city, inner suburb and outer suburb — are happy with where they live, and say they want to live in the type of community in which they currently reside.

When asked specifically how their pandemic experience has affected their preferences, half of city residents say it has not changed where they prefer to live. Another 25% say the pandemic actually makes them more likely to move to another urban area. Surprisingly, the survey found similar responses across income, race, education level and family status. Even those from households with children.

Nevertheless, urban residents have serious concerns about local problems — coronavirus, taxes and the economy chief among them. More urbanites rate the affordability of housing as “extremely important” (41%) than those inner or outer suburbanites (29% and 26%, respectively), and 70% of city dwellers say they are concerned about “social unrest” in their neighbourhoods after looting in some big city downtowns. As the vanguard in embracing truly radical change — lockdowns, masks, social distancing, remote schooling — city people seem to view biking to work and affordable housing a comparatively modest task. Overall, the data offers indications of an enlarged window of possibility in post-pandemic urban life.

World Economic Forum – Davos Agenda

Rebecca Riley WMCA/WMREDI

The [World Economic Forum \(WEF\)](#), as part of its Davos agenda, has released research on building resilient countries. the pandemic – devastating in itself – also exacerbated some challenges while distracting from others. In the short-term, [COVID-19](#) deepens some clear and present dangers: livelihood crises, eroding social cohesion and diminishing global trust. Longer-term, existential challenges persist, including adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change, reining in geopolitical conflicts, and managing both digital divides as well as the effects of accelerated technology advancement. Segments of society that were already at risk of being left behind before the pandemic are now most likely to miss out on the recovery.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that no institution or individual alone can address the economic, environmental, social and technological challenges of our complex, interdependent world. The pandemic has accelerated systemic changes that were apparent before its inception. The fault lines that emerged in 2020 now appear as critical crossroads in 2021. The time to rebuild trust and to make crucial choices is fast approaching as the need to reset priorities and the urgency to reform systems grow stronger around the world.

COVID-19 is far from the only health challenge we are facing – and recovery goes beyond the immediate response to the virus itself. Ensuring good health and well-being for all are essential for economies and societies to be resilient in the face of future health, economic and environmental challenges. Important lessons for healthy futures include:

- Getting control of COVID-19 and vaccinating people should be top priorities in recovery plans.
- A sustainable recovery is also dependent upon improving access to healthcare, preventing the next pandemic and tackling climate change.
- The Davos Agenda will highlight solutions to ensure healthy futures for all.

According to the World Economic Forum's latest [Global Risks Report 2021](#), a survey of more than 650 experts, policymakers, and industry leaders, "infectious diseases" tops the list of short-term critical threats to the world, followed by "livelihood crises." As the pandemic's shockwaves continue to reverberate through workforces and businesses and markets adapt to a shifting economy, new inequalities will arise. Alarming, the global recession is expected to force as many as [150 million](#) more people into extreme poverty. Managing these risks must be at the top of leaders' agendas.

Issues highlighted include:

- youth face exceptional risks with new barriers to education and social mobility, as well as mental health strain. Indeed, [51%](#) of youth from 112 countries believe their education progress has been delayed due to the pandemic.
- Women, too, have been hard-hit by COVID-19's impacts, with [70%](#) of working women across nine of the world's largest economies believe their careers will be slowed by the pandemic's disruption.
- Inequalities will only deepen if digital gaps are not addressed in the near-term.
- Environmental risks including "extreme weather" and "climate action failure" topped the list of risks in terms of likelihood and impact over the next ten years.
- While no nation has emerged unscathed from the pandemic, countries with advanced digital economies and digital skills, robust social safety nets and previous experience dealing with epidemics [have better managed the impact of the pandemic](#) on their economies and citizens.
- Societal, technological and environmental challenges arising from the pandemic risk further eroding cohesion and trust. Governments and business have a role to play in helping to mend these social fractures and earn back trust in institutions. Lessons learned from the pandemic response can help inform solutions to 2021's greatest challenges.

The world's biggest risks are identified as follows:

Global Risks Landscape 2021



Top Global Risks by Likelihood



Top Global Risks by Impact



Legend: Economic (blue), Environmental (green), Geopolitical (orange), Societal (red), Technological (purple)

Source: World Economic Forum Global Risks Report 2021

The WEF also released in this series work on the [priorities for workplaces](#), which points out that The COVID-19 pandemic has made it painfully clear that the wellbeing of the workforce is in jeopardy:

- Businesses should treat wellbeing as a tangible skill, a critical business input and a measurable outcome.
- Forward-thinking companies will embrace wellbeing as an index of learnable actions and daily behaviour.
- By talking about wellbeing and backing it with action, leaders can eliminate a work culture that implies work should come before personal needs.
- To truly build a more resilient workforce and rebuild the economy in 2021 and beyond, employers should prioritize wellbeing, which is the state of being comfortable, healthy and happy
- Wellbeing as a skill is a daily intention that can be enhanced by elements including meditation, sleep, exercise, nutrition, community belonging, a spiritual connection and more. Forward-thinking companies will embrace wellbeing not as a vague concept, but as an index of learnable actions and daily behaviour.
- We improve our ability to problem solve, present, communicate, resolve conflict and lead at work through the coaching of colleagues and formal learning opportunities. In the same way, wellbeing should be treated as a business-critical skill that can be improved through training and development programmes.

[Further work](#) has looked at how the pandemic has shaped the workplace:

- The changes the COVID-19 pandemic has brought into our everyday working lives are unlikely to disappear anytime soon.
- Virtual commutes, Zoom fatigue and overworking are just some of the trends that developed in 2020.
- Anthropologist Dave Cook says it's vital we shape a more comfortable and better work-life balance in 2021.
- COVID-19 instantly proved remote work was possible for many people. Workplace institutions and norms toppled like dominos. The office, in-person meetings and the daily commute fell first. Then the nine to five schedule, vacations and private home lives were threatened. Countries even started issuing [remote work visas](#) to encourage people to spend lockdown working in their territory.

- COVID-19 created the [biggest remote work experiment in human history](#).
- Silicon Valley companies [Google](#), [Apple](#) and [Twitter](#) were among the first to announce employees could work from home. Ahead of the curve, they were well practised. Predictably, they already had a fancy term for it: [distributed working](#). In 2021 concepts such as distributed and hybrid working will proliferate.
- Necessity dictated we up our Zoom game – even if they were [draining](#). Zoom simultaneously saved and ruined working from home, and it's not going [away](#) anytime soon.
- Remote workers, grateful to still have jobs, also reported a gnawing sense of survivors' guilt. [Overwork](#) was one way of expressing this guilt. Many felt working extra hours might secure their job.
- Pre-pandemic warnings about an encroaching [24/7 work culture](#) were intensifying. Social scientists argued that contemporary workers were being turned into [worker-smartphone hybrids](#). In 2016, French workers were even given the legal [right to disconnect](#) from work emails outside working hours.
- The late activist [David Graeber](#) described the failure to achieve Keynes's 15-hour work week as a missed opportunity, "[a scar across our collective soul](#)". COVID-19 may have started conversations about alternative futures where work and leisure are better balanced.

State of Economic Justice in Birmingham and the Black Country 2021

Peter Kenway NPI

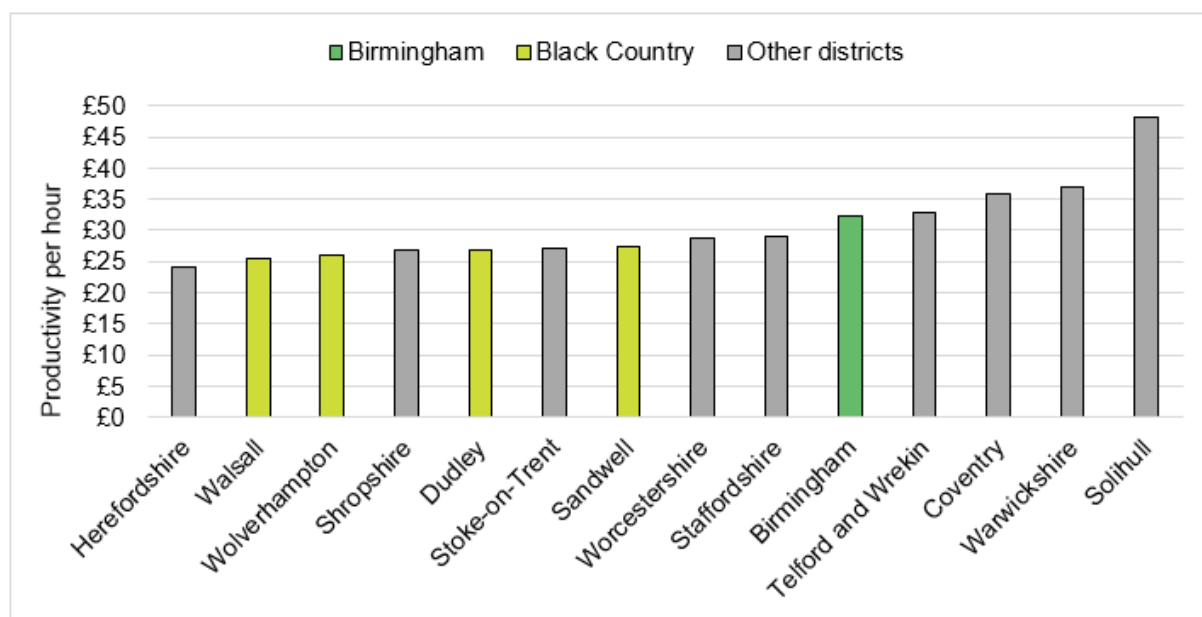
Economic justice in Birmingham and the Black Country (B&BC) shows that levelling up needs to focus on people not areas

[NPI's new report](#) on economic justice, published by the [Barrow Cadbury Trust](#), assembles the statistics to tell a story that people who live in B&BC know all too well, about poverty and deprivation and one of the weakest local economies – in the Black Country – that 50 years ago was England's economic heartland. If this story is known, why tell it again in this way? There are three reasons.

First, the report underlines the point that Britain's problems cannot be reduced, even roughly, to a North-South divide. England's second city and its four Black Country neighbours, home to more than two million people, have the unhappy distinction of having a bigger share of its population experiencing poverty and deprivation than anywhere else this large. Locally elected representatives, whether serving at the local, regional or national level, need be in no doubt that policies directed at relieving poverty, exclusion, inequality and ill-health are every bit as important here as anywhere. Nor is this social security spending just "welfare". When look at through an economic lens, as this report does, money going into pockets and purses is money going into the economy, its local shops and services, etc.

Second, the report demonstrates that 'levelling up' is not just a national requirement from south to north or the midlands but within each of these areas too. This is well-illustrated by the Black Country – economically the weakest of England's 38 Local Enterprise Partnership areas. Yet the West Midlands Combined Authority, of which it is a part, has had the fastest growth of combined authorities.

Productivity per hour in the single-tier authority areas in the West Midlands region, 2018



What is driving the WMCA is the eastern part – Coventry and Solihull – which are both economically strong in themselves and also part of a wider centre of growth across Warwickshire and beyond. The 14 metropolitan and unitary districts and counties shown in the graph are actually arranged according to the average level of productivity per hour. But the graph would look little different if they were arranged west to east. Over the last decade, these economic disparities between the stronger and weaker parts of the WMCA have grown rather than shrunk. Just because the WMCA is doing well does not necessarily mean that all parts of it are. The Black Country needs special attention.

Third, the report is trying to extend attention beyond the normal focus on the 'economy' of a place, to the economic contributions made by, and the economic rewards returning to, the people who live and work in the place. For Birmingham, which draws more than a third of its workforce from outside the city, that means recognising that what is good for the economy does not benefit its residents to the same extent. For the Black Country, it means

recognising that its economy, which is heavily dependent on local residents for its workforce, is limited to an unusual extent by their level of skills.

Gross Domestic Product

(GDP) –UK Regions and Countries: April to June 2020 (Q2)¹

BCCEIU

In Summary:

- The West Midlands had the largest negative growth of all the UK regions in 2020 Q2, registering a GDP decline of 21.0%. For the UK there was negative growth of 18.8% in 2020 Q2.
- Quarter on Quarter a year earlier (2019 Q2 to 2020 Q2) GDP analysis shows for the West Midlands region there was negative growth of 24.7% - the highest negative growth seen across all twelve regions. Over the same period, for the UK there was negative growth of 20.7%.
- Overall, there was a fall in GDP for all four sectors in 2020 Q2 from the previous quarter for the West Midlands region, with agriculture falling by 1.9%, services by 19.0%, production by 24.3% and construction by 38.8%.

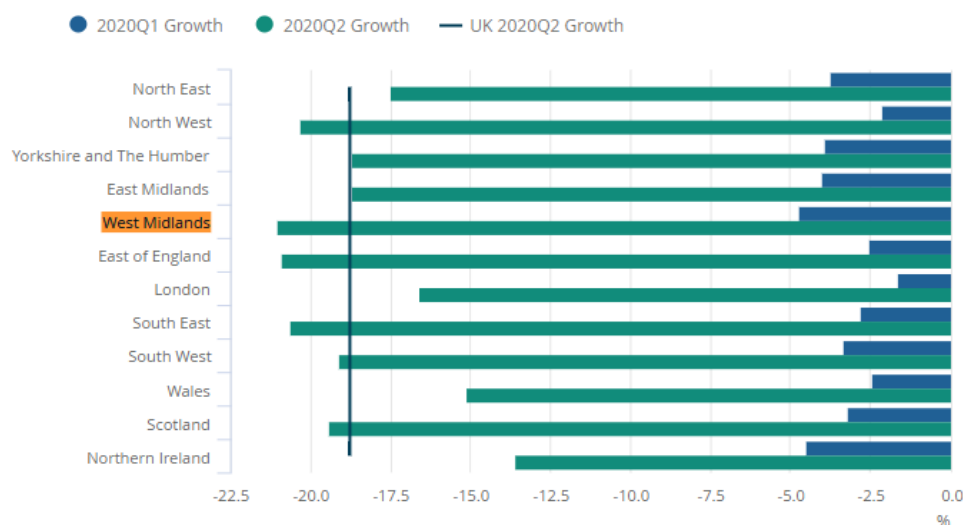
Full Briefing:

Quarter on Quarter GDP analysis shows for the West Midlands region there was negative growth of 4.7% in 2020 Q1, compared to the UK negative growth of 2.8%.

The West Midlands had the largest negative growth of 21.0% in 2020 Q2 of all UK regions. For the UK there was negative growth of 18.8% in 2020 Q2.

There was negative growth in GDP across all twelve UK regions. In 2020 Q2, after the West Midlands, the East of England had negative growth of 20.9%. The smallest declines were in Northern Ireland (-13.6%) and Wales (-15.1%).

The following chart shows quarter on quarter GDP change across the UK regions for 2020 Q1 and 2020 Q2:



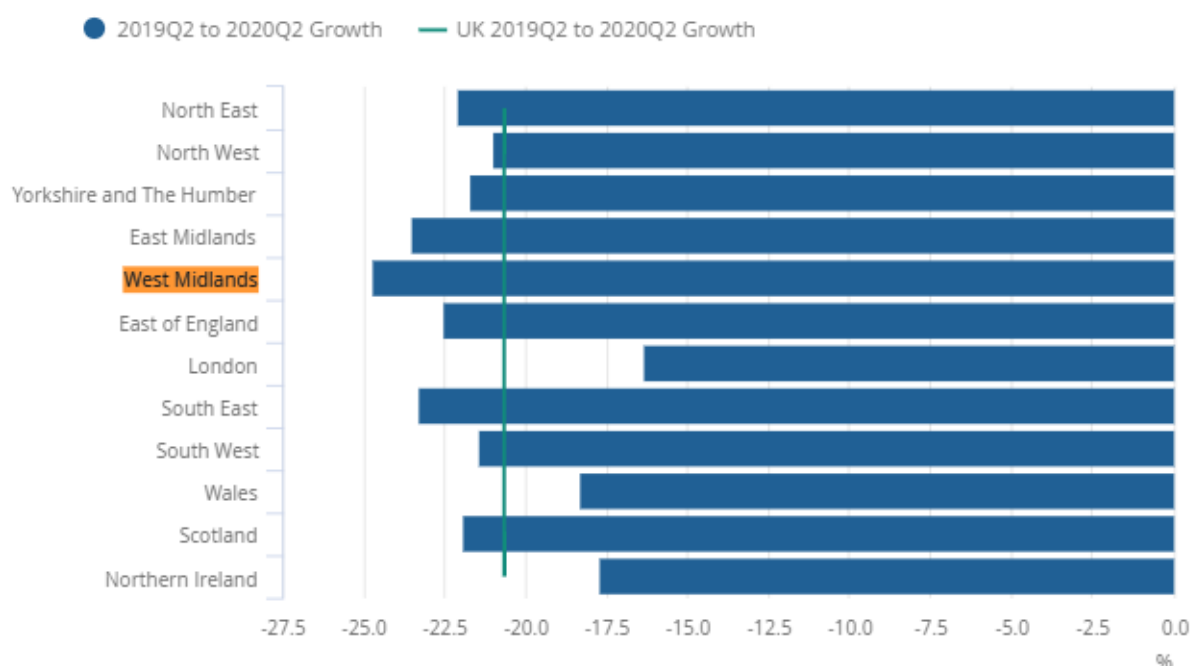
Source: Office for National Statistics – Regional GDP estimate

Quarter on Quarter a year earlier (2019 Q2 to 2020 Q2) GDP analysis shows for the West Midlands region there was negative growth of 24.7% - the highest negative growth seen across all twelve regions. Over the same period, for the UK there was negative growth of 20.7%.

¹ Please note, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates are designed as experimental statistics and should be interpreted with some caution. GDP measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK. It estimates the size of, and growth in, the economy. The main data for GDP estimates is based on turnover data from approximately 1.9 million Value Added Tax (VAT) returns. The information from the Inter-Departmental Business register on workplace employment allows ONS to apportion the VAT turnover for each business based on their employment share within a region.

Across the UK regions, Quarter on Quarter a year earlier analysis shows that the East Midlands had second highest negative growth of 23.5%. The smallest declines were in London (-16.3%) and Northern Ireland (-17.7%).

The following chart shows quarter on quarter a year earlier (2019 Q2 to 2020 Q2) GDP change across the UK



regions: Source: Office for National Statistics – Regional GDP estimate

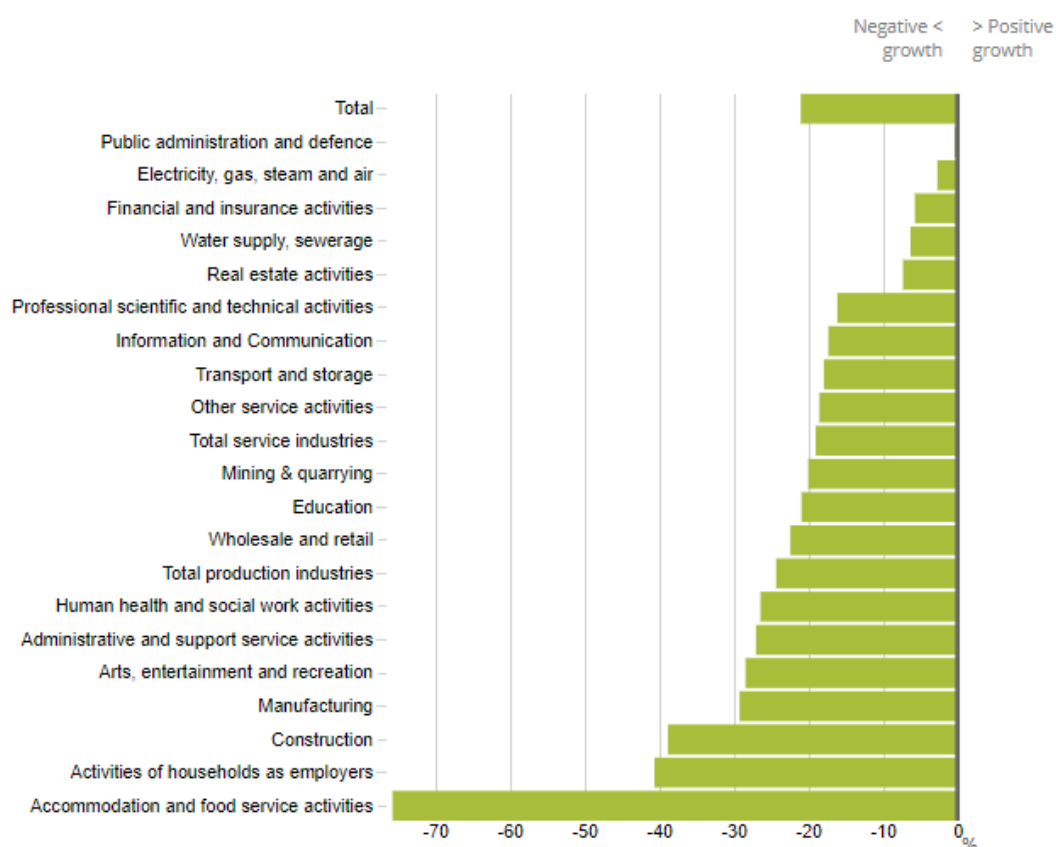
Industries – Quarter on Quarter Analysis

Overall, there was a fall in GDP for all four sectors in 2020 Q2 from the previous quarter for the West Midlands region, with agriculture falling by 1.9%, services by 19.0%, production by 24.3% and construction by 38.8%.

There was a fall in GDP in all of the smaller 18 “industries”, with the smallest declines in public administration and defence (-0.4%), electricity, gas steam and air (-2.7%) and then financial and insurance activities (-5.7%).

The highest declines for industries within the West Midlands was in the accommodation and food service activities (-75.7%), activities of households as employers, undifferentiated goods and services (-40.6%) and then manufacturing (-29.2%).

The following chart shows Quarter on Quarter GDP change for the West Midlands, 2020 Q2:



Source: ONS – Regional GDP estimate

Source: [ONS](#), GDP, UK regions and Countries: April to June 2020 – released 1st February 2021

Minding the Gap: Why has UK GDP fallen so sharply in the pandemic?

Rob Kent Smith ONS

ONS published a [new article](#), as part of the regular ONS Economic Review, which looks at why UK GDP has fallen further than many other developed countries.

One reason, which ONS have discussed previously, is how we measure the output of public services. For the private sector, we can measure output simply by looking at turnover of a business. But this doesn't work in the public sector where money often doesn't directly change hands. Instead, ONS use a wide range of detailed data from government such as how many people have seen a GP, how many operations have taken place and the number of pupils receiving education. With schools closed and many non-urgent procedures delayed, this means we recorded a big fall in the output of UK public services during the early stages of the pandemic.

However, in other countries these data are not necessarily readily available, and so they simply estimate the output of their public services by looking at how much money was spent on them, or the hours worked by those providing them. As spending has been relatively unchanged, these countries have not recorded the same large falls in the output of their public services. When looking at our cash estimates of GDP, where the public services element is based on the money spent, the fall in UK GDP is broadly comparable to other G7 countries and smaller than falls seen in Canada, Italy and Germany. However, the 'real' estimates better reflect changes in the services being delivered.

With countries taking different approaches it is hard to make comparisons during this time, but one helpful approach is to look at GDP of the UK and other major countries, excluding public services. While this made little difference to

the fall in UK GDP – as the fall in the output of our public services was very similar to the overall contraction in the economy – for other countries it made the falls in their GDP look substantially larger. In Germany, for example, their GDP fell by an additional two percentage points through the crisis, once their public services were removed from the calculation. However, in this approach the fall in UK GDP is still one of the largest in the G7. Working with international organisations and with other statistical offices across the world we hope over time to be able to make even more sophisticated comparisons.

Another reason for the larger fall in UK GDP is that although the UK's lockdown restrictions were imposed later than in many other countries, they have generally been tighter and imposed for longer, as shown by Oxford University's 'Stringency Index', details of which we have included in today's work.

In addition, consumer spending makes up a larger share of GDP than in many other comparable countries, and a higher share of that consumer spending is on services such as hotels, restaurant and leisure that have been particularly hit by the lockdown restrictions. Taken together, these impacts are another major reason why the fall in UK GDP has been larger.

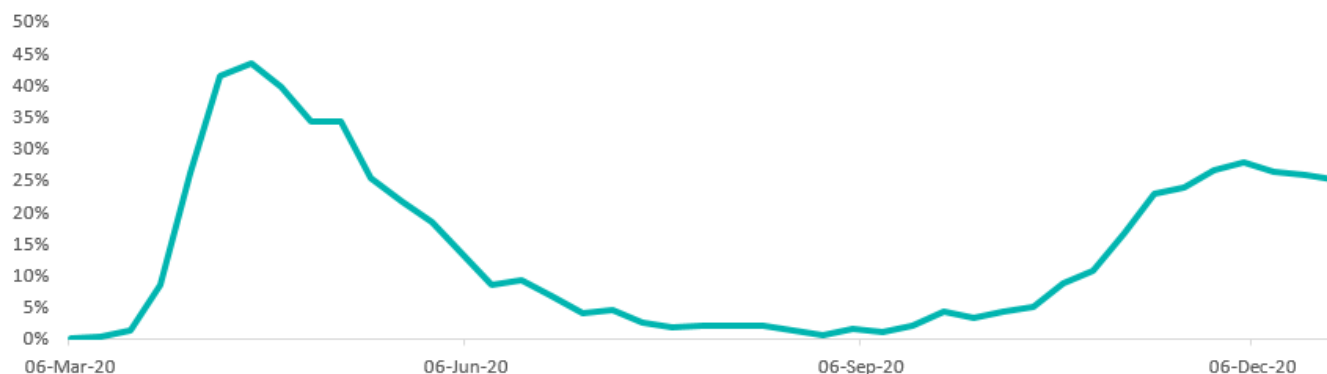
SED Board Economic Dashboard

BCCEIU

Indicators: **RED** getting worse and above UK average, **Amber** stable or heading in the right direction; **Green** getting better and better than the UK average

Percentage of Registered Deaths That Are COVID-19

Trend:

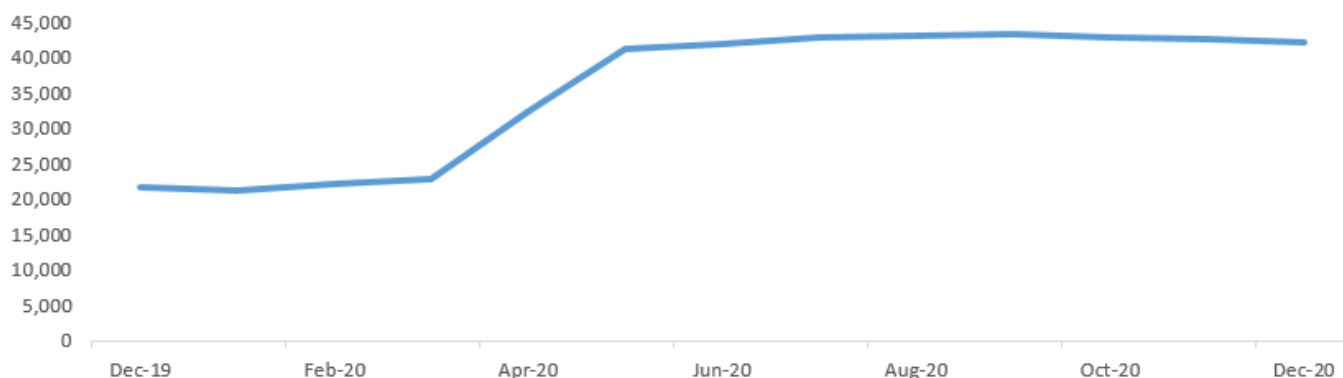


February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group ⁵
0%	2.5%	38.6%	28.0%	9.6%	3.0%	1.4%	2.3%	6.4%	22.7%	26.3%	WMCA – 4 th Highest CA UK: 23.4% SCR: 32.2% (1 st) C & P CA: 12.5% (10 th)

Monthly analysis shows there has been an increase for the proportion of deaths related to COVID-19 for the last four months from 2.3% in September, 6.4% in October to 22.7% in November to 26.3% in December.

Youth Claimants (Aged 16-24)

Trend:

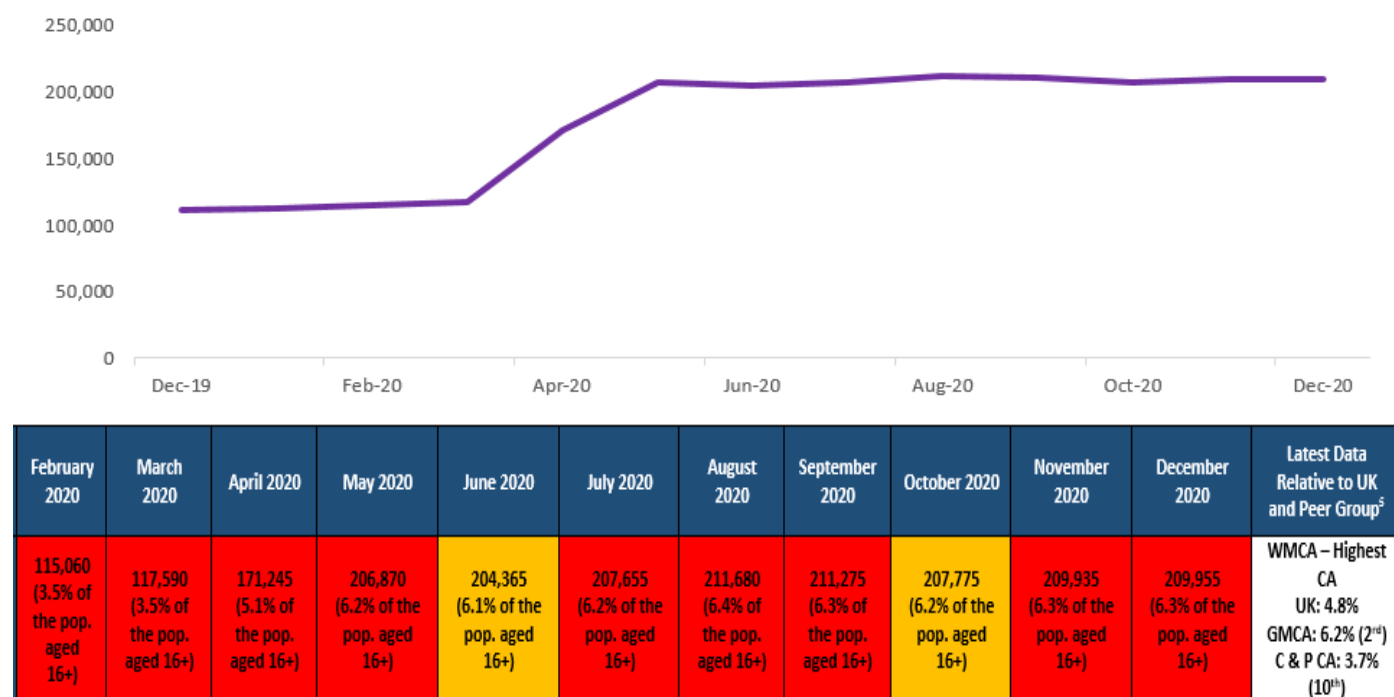


February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group ⁵
22,140 (4.5% of 16-24 years old pop.)	22,835 (4.6% of 16-24 years old pop.)	32,450 (6.6% of 16-24 years old pop.)	41,100 (8.3% 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.)	43,190 (8.8% of 16-24 years old pop.)	42,835 (8.7% of 16-24 years old pop.)	42,505 (8.6% of 16-24 years old pop.)	42,220 (8.6% of 16-24 years old pop.)	WMCA – 3 rd Highest CA UK: 7.1% Tees Valley: 10% (1 st) West of England: 4.6% (10 th)

There were 42,220 youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in December 2020. When compared to March 2020 (22,835), the number of youth claimants has increased by 19,385.

Claimants (Aged 16+)

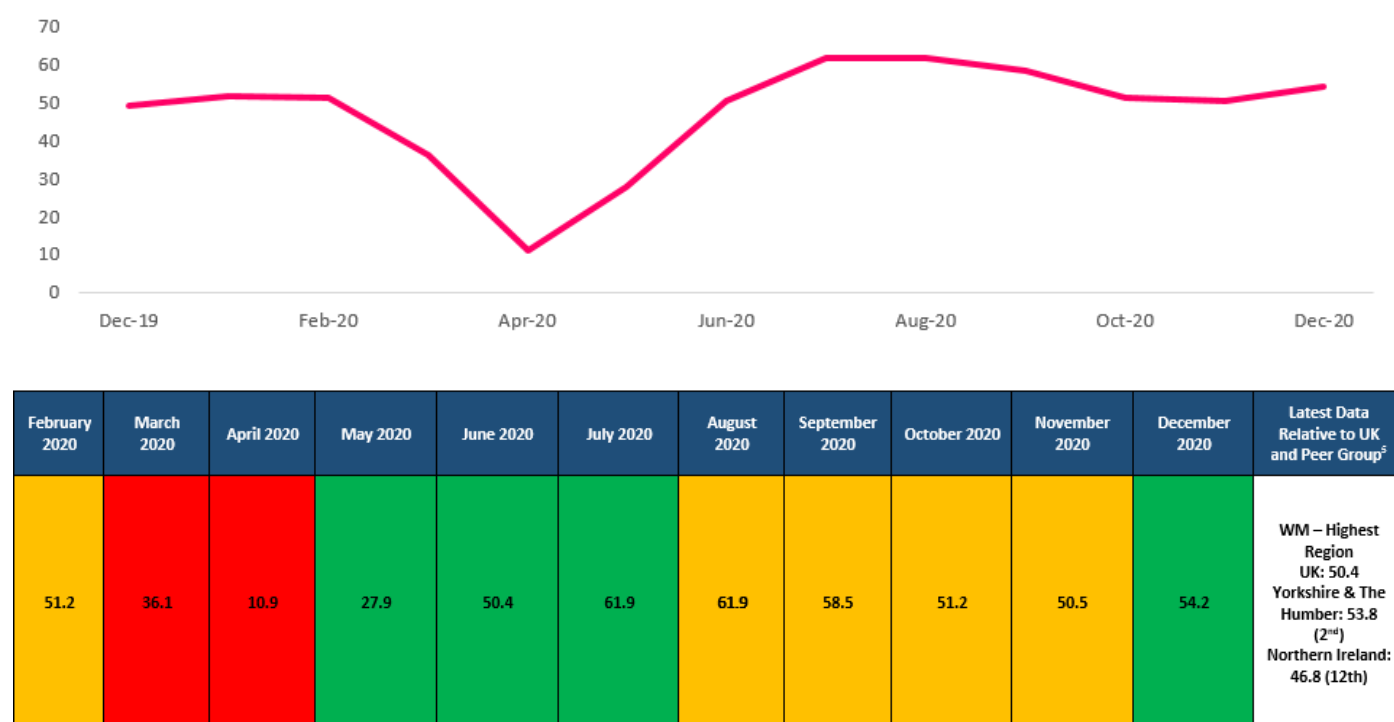
Trend:



There were 209,955 claimants aged 16 years and over in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in December 2020. When compared to March 2020 (117,590) the number of claimants has increased by 92,365.

Business Activity Index

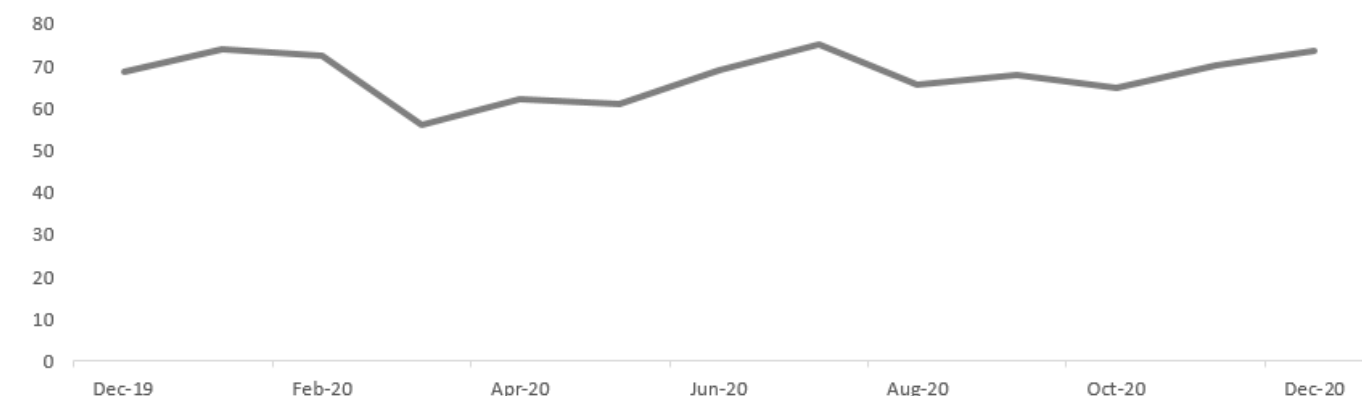
Trend:



The headline NatWest West Midlands Business Activity Index – seasonally adjusted index, measures the month-on-month change in the combined output of the region’s manufacturing and service sectors – posted 54.2 in December. The upturn was linked to the end of the second lockdown allowing more companies to reopen and clients stockpiling in preparation for Brexit.

Future Business Activity Index

Trend:

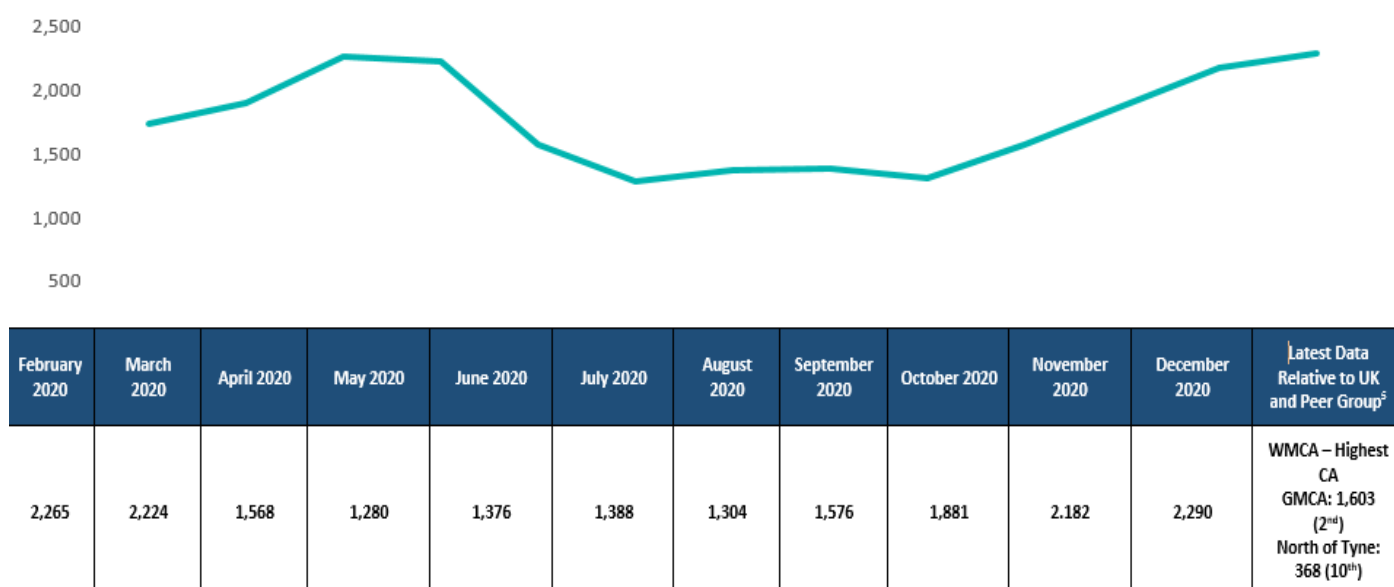


February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group ⁵
72.3	55.9	62.1	61.1	69.1	75.2	65.5	67.8	64.8	70.3	73.6	WM: 5 th Highest Region London: 78.3 (1 st) Northern Ireland: 52.8 (12 th)

Companies in the West Midlands remain confident for a rise in output in the next 12 months with the Future Activity Index at 73.6 in December, a five-month Optimism from businesses stems from news of an approved COVID-19 vaccine and also predictions of new contract wins.

Apprenticeship Vacancies

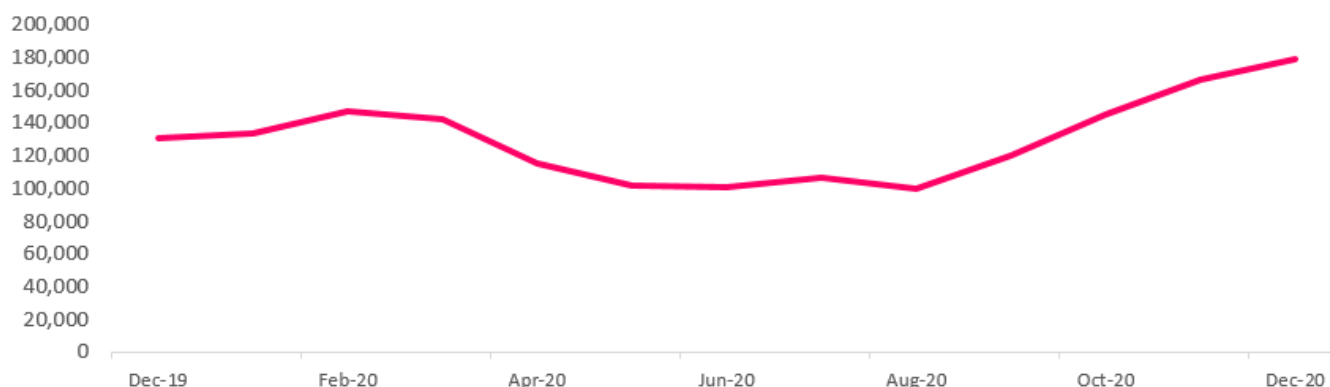
Trend:



The latest data shows that apprenticeship vacancies stood at nearly 2,300 in December 2020. This is an increase of 108 apprenticeships vacancies since November 2020 and 553 higher than December 2019.

Unique Job Postings

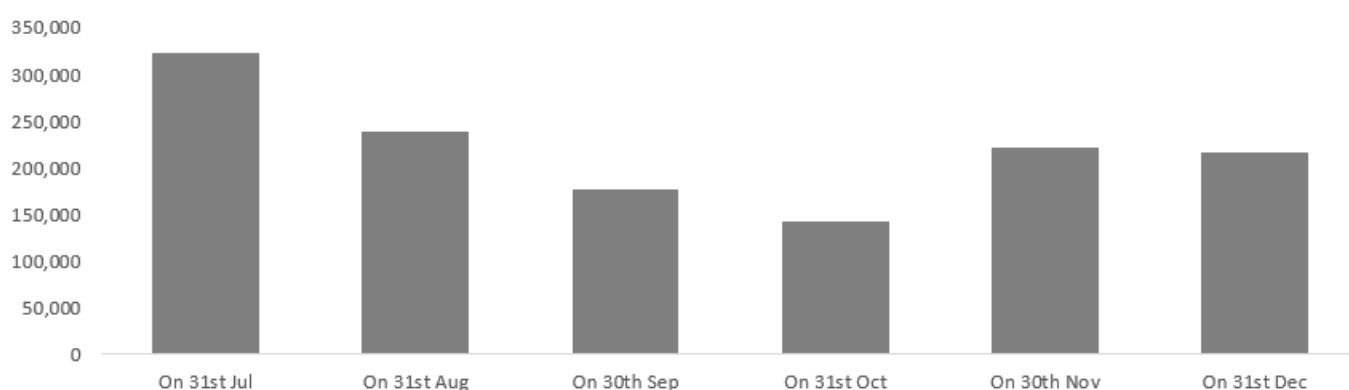
Trend:



February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group ⁵
147,611	142,757	115,507	102,075	100,758	106,499	99,688	120,182	145,650	166,371	179,230	WMCA – Highest CA GMCA: 143,218 (2 nd) Tees Valley: 18,171 (10 th)

The latest data shows that the number of unique jobs postings stood at just over 179,200 in December 2020. This has increased by 12,859 since November 2020 and by 48,387 since December 2019.

Total Number of Staff Furloughed



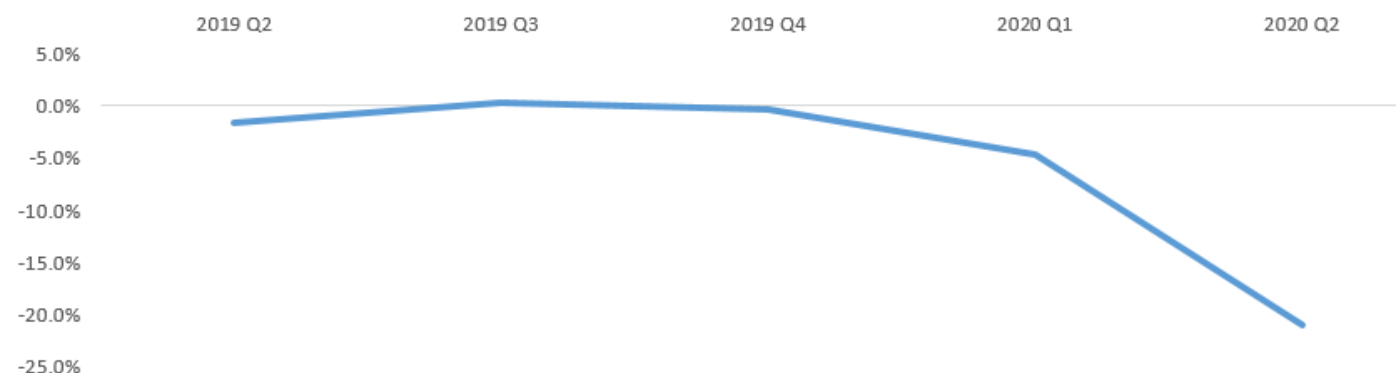
Trend:

February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020
			496,200 Claims received up to 31 st May (cumulative)	586,800 Claims received up to 30 th June (cumulative)	619,800 Claims received up to 31 st July (cumulative)	237,900 Furloughed Workers On 31 st Aug.	176,000 Furloughed Workers on 30 th Sep.	141,700 Furloughed Workers on 31 st Oct.	221,200 Furloughed Workers on 30 th Nov.	216,100 Furloughed Workers on 31 st Dec. (Provisional)

619,800 individuals in the WMCA 3 LEP area have been furloughed at some point. Provisional data shows that 216,100 workers were furloughed in the WMCA (3 LEP area) as of 31st December 2020. On 31st December 2020, there were 11.9% of eligible employments for the scheme, compared to 12.6% for the UK.

Quarterly Regional GDP

Trend:

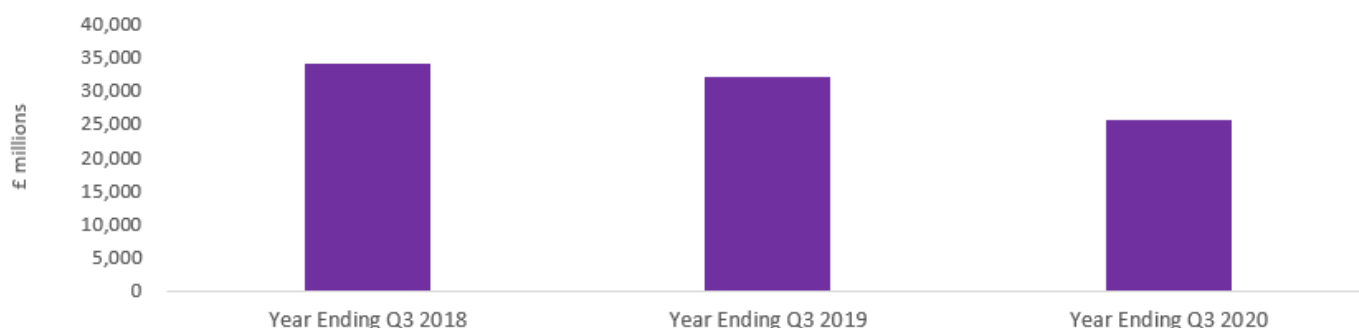


February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group ⁵
	-4.7% (2020 Q1)			-21.0% (2020 Q2)							WM- Highest Negative Growth UK: -18.8% East of England: -20.9% (2 nd) Northern Ireland: -13.6% (12 th)

Percentage change quarter on quarter shows for the West Midlands region there was negative GDP growth of 4.7% in Q1 2020, this was followed by 21.0% negative growth in Q2 2020. The UK recorded negative growth of 2.8% in Q1 2020 followed by negative growth of 18.8% in Q2 2020.

Quarterly Regional Exports

Trend:



February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	Latest Data Relative to UK and Peer Group ⁵
	£30.6bn (9.1% of UK) Full Year to: Q1 2020			£27.5bn (8.7% of UK) Full Year to: Q2 2020			£25.5bn (8.5% of UK) Full Year to: Q3 2020				WM – 5 th Highest Region South East & London: 12.8% (1 st) Northern Ireland: 2.7% (12 th)

West Midlands regional exports fell by nearly £6.5bn (-20.3%) since the year ending Q3 2019 to £25.5bn in the year ending Q3 2020 - the UK decreased by 13.8%. The West Midlands regional imports decreased by £8.1bn to £29.6bn - leading to a trade deficit of £4.1bn.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) Statistics: January 2021²

BCCEIU

Summary

- In total, the WMCA 3 LEP area had 216,100 employments furloughed at 31st December 2020³. This reflects 11.9% take-up of eligible employments for the scheme, compared to the UK average of 12.6%.
- There was a slightly higher percentage of males furloughed, 12.2% (111,200), compared to females, 11.6% (104,900).
- The West Midlands region had 298,600 employments furloughed at 31st December 2020. Compared to the previous month, this has decreased by 3.3% (-10,200), while the UK decreased by 1.1%. Compared to 31st August, the West Midlands region has decreased 7.1% (-22,800 workers furloughed), while the UK increased by 0.4%.
- Figures show on the 31st December 2020 for the UK, those aged 25-34 years old accounted for the highest proportion of the total number of employments furloughed at 22.6% (862,700), followed by those aged 35-44 years old at 19.3% (738,800) and then those aged 45-54 years old at 18.3% (700,200).
- Across the UK, businesses with over 250 employees have made the highest value of claims for periods to 31st December 2020 with £1.6bn (27% of the total value of claims). This is followed by businesses with employer size 20-49 with £902m, and then 2-4 with £869m.
- Figures show that, as of 31st December 2020 accommodation and food services accounted for the highest proportion of UK employments furloughed at 27.1% (1,036,600). This was followed by wholesale and retail at 18.0% (689,500) and then administrative and support services at 8.2% (312,000).

Full Briefing

Introduction

- This is the eighth release of Official Statistics on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). This release provides analysis of claims for periods up to 31st December 2020. The data used includes claims submitted to HMRC by 14th January 2021.
- The December 2020 figures should be considered as provisional and will be revised in a future release.

Furloughed Employments per day – UK & West Midlands Region

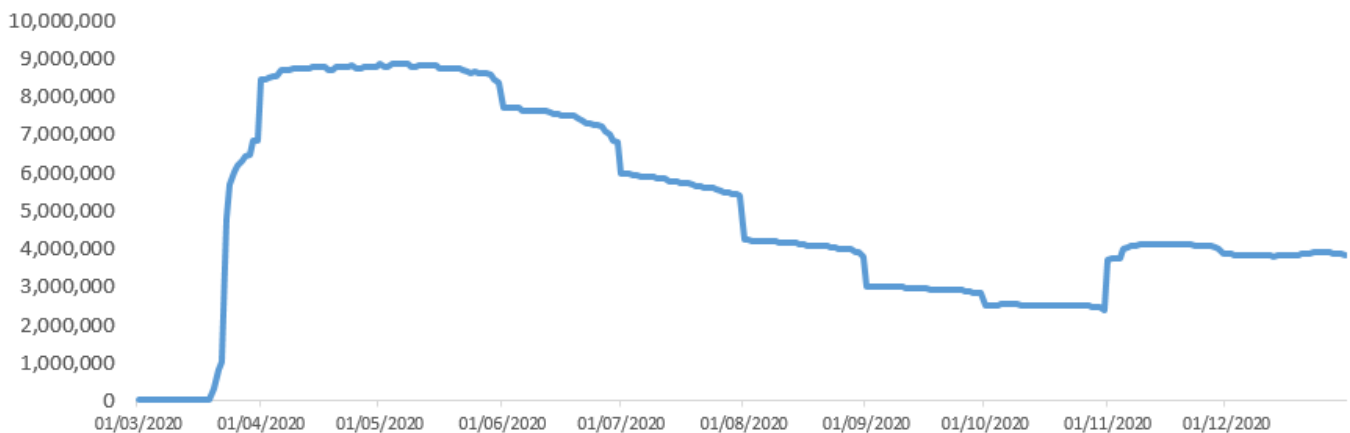
- Since the peak of 8.9 million employments furloughed on 8th May in the UK, the number of employments furloughed steadily dropped to 6.8 million on the 30th June. The number of employments furloughed continued to fall to 5.4 million at 31st July and 3.8 million on 31st August.

² Source: HMRC, Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: January 2021. December values are provisional

³ 619,800 individuals in the WMCA 3 LEP area have been furloughed at some point, but 216,100 remain furloughed as of 31st October

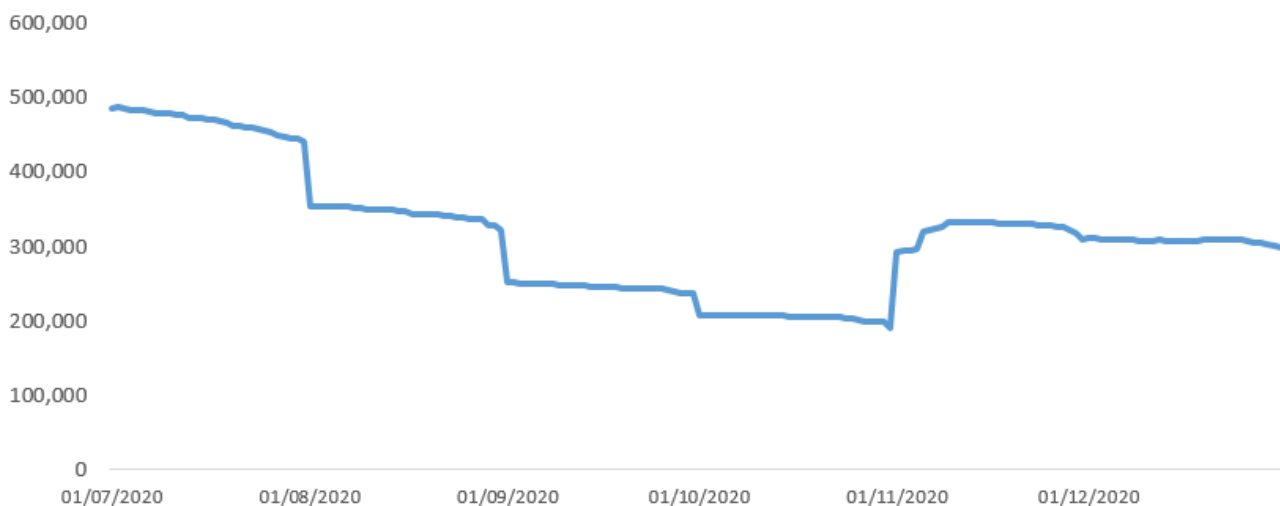
- The number of employments furloughed continued to reduce during September falling further to 2.8 million at 30th September and then to 2.4 million on the 31st October. The latest figures show that employments furloughed increased throughout November, reaching 3.9 million on 30th November, then reduced slightly throughout December to reach 3.8 million on 31st December.

The following chart shows the UK employments furloughed between 1st March to 31st December:



- The West Midlands region had 298,600 employments furloughed as of 31st December 2020.
- Compared to the previous month, the West Midlands decreased by 3.3% (-10,200 employments furloughed), while the UK decreased by 1.1%.

The following chart shows for the West Midlands Region the number of employments furloughed between 1st July to 31st December:



- Of the 298,600 employments furloughed in the West Midlands region on the 31st December, 188,100 were fully furloughed and 110,500 were partially furloughed

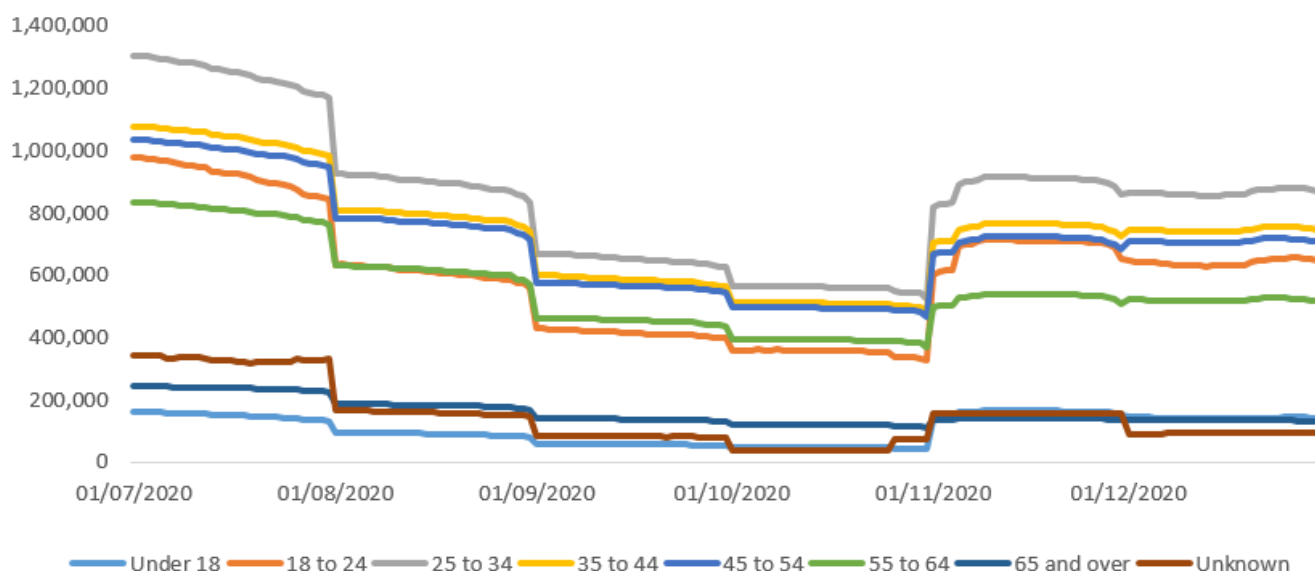
Age - UK

- For employees aged 25 to 34, the number of furloughed employments was 1.17 million on 31st July and fell to 833,600 at 31st August. This continued to fall throughout September to 627,900 employments furloughed at 30th

September and by 31st October it was 526,000. Following this, employments furloughed began to increase again and reached 859,600 on 30th November and 862,700 on 31st December.

- The number of employments furloughed with employees in the 18 to 24 age band was 844,500 on 31st July. Figures show this decreased to 558,600 employments furloughed at 31st August, 398,400 at 31st September and 325,300 at 31st October. Employments furloughed began to increase again and reached 650,800 on 30th November but decreased slightly to 643,600 on 31st December.
- Where the employee was 65 or over, the number of employments furloughed was 225,800 on 31st July. Figures for this age band show the number of employments furloughed decreased to 168,300 at 31st August, 132,500 at 30th September and 111,900 at 31st October. Employments furloughed began to increase again and reached 134,400 on 30th November, decreasing to 130,300 on 31st December.
- Figures show that, on the 31st December, those aged 25-34 years old accounted for the highest proportion of the total number of employments furloughed at 22.6% (862,700), followed by those aged 35-44 years old at 19.3% (738,800) and then those aged 45-54 years old at 18.3% (700,200).

The following chart shows the number of employments furloughed per day by employee age (inc. unknown) between 1st July to 31st December 2020 for the UK:



Gender – WMCA (3 LEP)

- In total, the WMCA 3 LEP area had 216,100 employments furloughed as of 31st December 2020. This was 11.9% of eligible workers for the scheme, while for the UK the take-up rate was 12.6%.
- There was a slightly higher percentage of males furloughed, 12.2% (11,200) compared to females, 11.6% (104,900).
- Overall, the local authorities with the highest percentage of workers furloughed were Stratford-on-Avon at 13.9% (8,400 employments furloughed of the 60,500 eligible), Birmingham at 12.8% (57,500 employments furloughed of the 448,400 eligible), and Lichfield at 12.5% (5,900 employments furloughed of the 47,300 eligible).
- The local authority with the highest percentage of males furloughed was Birmingham at 13.8% (31,500 furloughed of the 228,000 eligible).

- The local authority with the highest percentage of female employments furloughed was Stratford-on-Avon at 14.7% (4,500 furloughed of 30,700 eligible).

The following table shows employments furloughed, eligible employments and the take-up rate for the WMCA (3 LEP) area by gender on the 31st December:

	Female			Male			Total		
	Female employment s furloughed	Female eligible employment s	Femal e take up-rate	Male employment s furloughed	Male eligible employment s	Male take up-rate	Total employment s furloughed	Total eligible employment s	Total take up-rate
Birmingham	26,000	220,400	11.8%	31,500	228,000	13.8%	57,500	448,400	12.8%
Bromsgrove	2,600	23,200	11.2%	2,500	21,800	11.5%	5,100	45,000	11.3%
Cannock Chase	2,900	23,400	12.4%	2,700	23,000	11.7%	5,600	46,400	12.1%
Coventry	7,700	77,200	10.0%	8,800	80,200	11.0%	16,500	157,400	10.5%
Dudley	7,700	70,200	11.0%	8,700	69,100	12.6%	16,400	139,200	11.8%
East Staffordshire	3,500	28,500	12.3%	3,200	29,900	10.7%	6,700	58,400	11.5%
Lichfield	3,100	23,900	13.0%	2,800	23,400	12.0%	5,900	47,300	12.5%
North Warwickshire	1,900	15,600	12.2%	1,700	15,100	11.3%	3,600	30,700	11.7%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	3,300	31,600	10.4%	3,200	31,600	10.1%	6,500	63,200	10.3%
Redditch	2,300	21,600	10.6%	2,300	21,200	10.8%	4,600	42,800	10.7%
Rugby	2,700	27,000	10.0%	2,500	28,700	8.7%	5,100	55,600	9.2%
Sandwell	8,300	70,300	11.8%	9,400	71,600	13.1%	17,700	142,000	12.5%
Solihull	6,500	50,000	13.0%	5,700	48,400	11.8%	12,200	98,400	12.4%
Stratford-on-Avon	4,500	30,700	14.7%	3,900	29,800	13.1%	8,400	60,500	13.9%
Tamworth	2,500	19,000	13.2%	2,200	19,400	11.3%	4,700	38,400	12.2%
Walsall	6,900	58,200	11.9%	7,400	59,100	12.5%	14,300	117,300	12.2%
Warwick	4,100	34,200	12.0%	3,900	35,600	11.0%	8,000	69,800	11.5%
Wolverhampton	5,900	57,500	10.3%	6,300	57,300	11.0%	12,300	114,700	10.7%
Wyre Forest	2,500	22,400	11.2%	2,500	21,200	11.8%	5,000	43,600	11.5%
BC LEP	28,800	256,200	11.2%	31,800	257,100	12.4 %	60,700	513,200	11.8 %
CW LEP	24,200	216,300	11.2%	24,000	221,000	10.9 %	48,100	437,200	11.0 %
GBS LEP	51,900	432,400	12.0%	55,400	436,300	12.7 %	107,300	868,700	12.4 %
7 Met.	69,000	603,800	11.4%	77,800	613,700	12.7 %	146,900	1,217,400	12.1 %
WMCA (3 LEP)	104,900	904,900	11.6%	111,200	914,400	12.2 %	216,100	1,819,100	11.9 %
West Midlands	148,000	1,290,500	11.5%	150,600	1,289,900	12%	298,600	2,580,400	12%
United Kingdom	1,883,500	15,354,300	12.3%	1,847,600	14,998,800	12.3 %	3,824,400	30,353,200	12.6 %

- The parliamentary constituencies in the WMCA (3 LEP) area with the highest furlough rate on 31st December was Birmingham, Ladywood at 15.2% (8,100 furloughed of 53,300 eligible). This was followed by Stratford-on-Avon at 14.8% (6,400 furloughed of the 43,300 eligible) and also Birmingham Hodge Hill at 14.3% (6,100 furloughed of the 42,800 eligible).

- Birmingham, Ladywood was also the parliamentary constituency with the highest male take-up rate at 15.9% (4,600 furloughed of 28,900 eligible), followed by Birmingham, Hodge Hill at 15.7% (3,700 furloughed of the 23,500 eligible) and Birmingham, Hall Green at 15.5% (3,700 furloughed of 23,800 eligible).
- The parliamentary constituency with the highest female take-up rate with 15.4% (3,400 furloughed of the 22,100 eligible) was Stratford-on-Avon, followed by Birmingham, Ladywood at 14.0% (3,400 furloughed of the 24,300 eligible) and Tamworth at 13.4% (3,100 furloughed of the 23,100 eligible).

The following table shows by parliamentary constituencies within the WMCA (3 LEP) area the employments furloughed, eligible employments and take-up rate on the 31st December:

	Female			Male			Total		
	Female employment s furloughed	Female eligible employment s	Femal e take up- rate	Male employment s furloughed	Male eligible employment s	Male take up- rate	Total employment s furloughed	Total eligible employment s	Total take up- rate
Aldridge-Brownhills	2,200	17,600	12.5%	2,100	16,900	12.4%	4,300	34,500	12.5%
Birmingham, Edgbaston	2,300	21,000	11.0%	2,500	20,300	12.3%	4,700	41,300	11.4%
Birmingham, Erdington	2,700	22,700	11.9%	2,800	21,900	12.8%	5,400	44,600	12.1%
Birmingham, Hall Green	2,400	19,800	12.1%	3,700	23,800	15.5%	6,100	43,600	14.0%
Birmingham, Hodge Hill	2,400	19,300	12.4%	3,700	23,500	15.7%	6,100	42,800	14.3%
Birmingham, Ladywood	3,400	24,300	14.0%	4,600	28,900	15.9%	8,100	53,300	15.2%
Birmingham, Northfield	2,400	23,700	10.1%	2,500	21,200	11.8%	4,800	44,900	10.7%
Birmingham, Perry Barr	2,500	22,500	11.1%	3,200	23,100	13.9%	5,700	45,600	12.5%
Birmingham, Selly Oak	2,200	22,000	10.0%	2,500	20,400	12.3%	4,700	42,400	11.1%
Birmingham, Yardley	2,900	22,200	13.1%	3,500	23,300	15.0%	6,400	45,500	14.1%
Bromsgrove	2,600	23,200	11.2%	2,500	21,800	11.5%	5,100	45,000	11.3%
Burton	3,100	25,900	12.0%	2,900	27,500	10.5%	6,000	53,400	11.2%
Cannock Chase	2,900	23,400	12.4%	2,700	23,000	11.7%	5,600	46,400	12.1%
Coventry North East	2,700	29,000	9.3%	3,200	30,200	10.6%	5,900	59,200	10.0%
Coventry North West	2,700	25,600	10.5%	2,900	25,700	11.3%	5,600	51,300	10.9%
Coventry South	2,300	22,600	10.2%	2,600	24,300	10.7%	4,900	46,900	10.4%
Dudley North	1,900	18,400	10.3%	2,200	18,100	12.2%	4,100	36,600	11.2%
Dudley South	2,000	17,800	11.2%	2,200	17,500	12.6%	4,300	35,300	12.2%
Halesowen and Rowley Regis	2,200	19,800	11.1%	2,600	19,700	13.2%	4,800	39,500	12.2%
Kenilworth and Southam	2,500	20,000	12.5%	2,200	20,000	11.0%	4,800	40,000	12.0%
Lichfield	2,800	22,300	12.6%	2,500	21,700	11.5%	5,300	44,000	12.0%
Meriden	3,500	26,400	13.3%	3,000	25,200	11.9%	6,600	51,500	12.8%
North Warwickshire	2,600	22,400	11.6%	2,500	21,900	11.4%	5,100	44,300	11.5%
Nuneaton	2,400	23,500	10.2%	2,300	23,600	9.7%	4,700	47,000	10.0%
Redditch	2,500	22,900	10.9%	2,400	22,500	10.7%	4,900	45,400	10.8%
Rugby	2,500	25,800	9.7%	2,400	27,600	8.7%	4,900	53,400	9.2%
Solihull	2,900	23,600	12.3%	2,700	23,300	11.6%	5,600	46,900	11.9%
Stourbridge	2,300	19,700	11.7%	2,500	19,500	12.8%	4,800	39,200	12.2%

	Female			Male			Total		
	Female employment s furloughed	Female eligible employment s	Female take up-rate	Male employment s furloughed	Male eligible employment s	Male take up-rate	Total employment s furloughed	Total eligible employment s	Total take up-rate
Stratford-on-Avon	3,400	22,100	15.4%	3,000	21,300	14.1%	6,400	43,300	14.8%
Sutton Coldfield	2,800	22,900	12.2%	2,600	21,600	12.0%	5,400	44,500	12.1%
Tamworth	3,100	23,100	13.4%	2,800	23,500	11.9%	5,900	46,700	12.6%
Walsall North	2,300	20,400	11.3%	2,500	20,500	12.2%	4,800	40,900	11.7%
Walsall South	2,400	20,100	11.9%	2,800	21,700	12.9%	5,200	41,800	12.4%
Warley	2,600	21,200	12.3%	3,000	21,700	13.8%	5,600	43,000	13.0%
Warwick and Leamington	3,000	25,200	11.9%	2,800	26,500	10.6%	5,800	51,700	11.2%
West Bromwich East	2,300	20,000	11.5%	2,600	20,100	12.9%	4,900	40,100	12.2%
West Bromwich West	2,400	20,800	11.5%	2,600	21,300	12.2%	5,000	42,100	11.9%
Wolverhampton North East	2,100	20,900	10.0%	2,100	20,000	10.5%	4,200	40,900	10.3%
Wolverhampton South East	2,200	19,900	11.1%	2,500	20,500	12.2%	4,600	40,400	11.4%
Wolverhampton South West	2,000	19,400	10.3%	2,100	19,600	10.7%	4,100	39,000	10.5%
Wyre Forest	2,500	22,400	11.2%	2,500	21,200	11.8%	5,000	43,600	11.5%
WMCA	104,900	904,900	11.6%	111,200	914,400	12.2%	216,100	1,819,100	11.9%
United Kingdom	1,883,500	15,354,300	12.3%	1,847,600	14,998,800	12.3%	3,824,400	30,353,200	12.6%

Employment Size – UK

- Across the UK, businesses with over 250 employees have made the highest value of claims for periods to 31st December with £1.6 billion. This is followed by businesses with employer size 20-49 with £902 million, and then 2-4 with £869 million.
- On the 31st December 2020, businesses with 20-49 employees have had the highest take up rate at 51% (44,700 employers furloughing staff of the 88,000 eligible employers). This was followed by businesses with employer size 5-9 at 48% (115,800 employers furloughing staff of the 242,700 eligible).
- Those businesses with an employer size of 2-4 furloughed the highest percentage of eligible employments at 32% (539,800 employments furloughed of the 1,682,900 eligible). This was followed by 5-9 at 29% (454,000 employments furloughed of the 1,547,800 eligible).

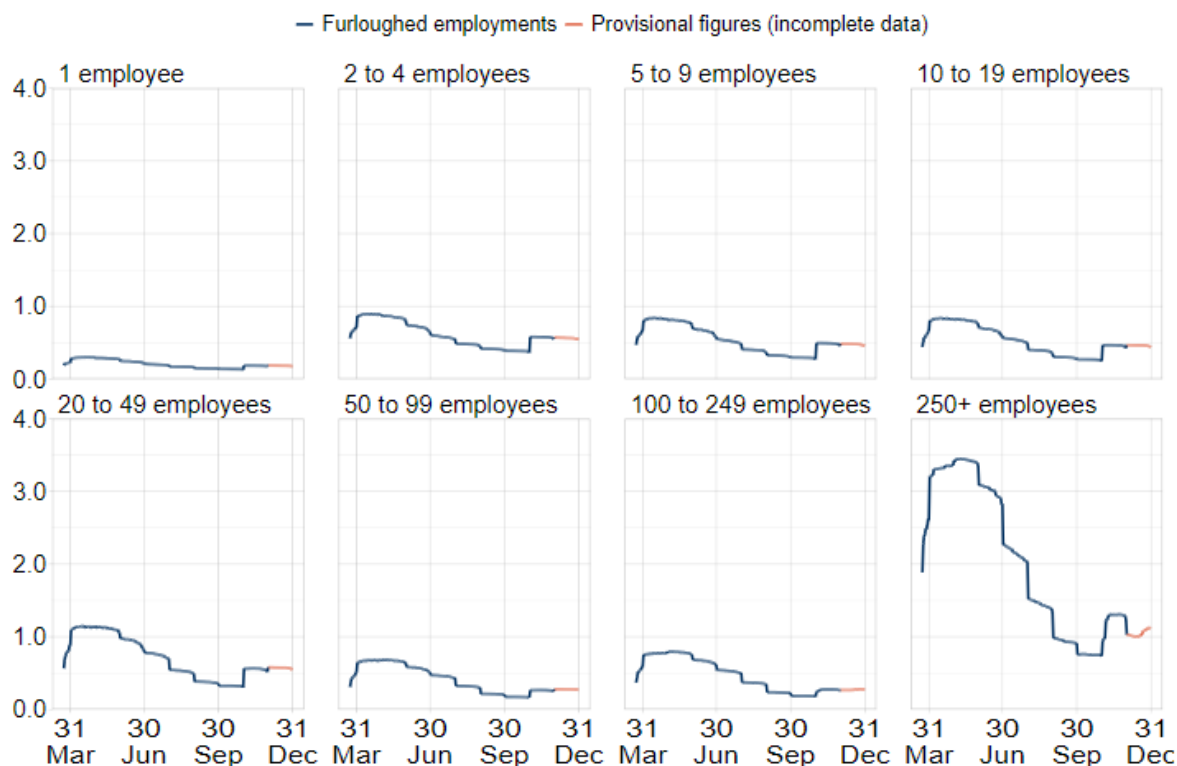
The following table shows by employers and employments the number furloughed, eligible and the take up rate by employer size for the UK on 31st December:

Employer size	Employers			Employments			Value of claims made for periods to at 31 December (£m)
	Employers furloughing staff at 31 December	Eligible employers	Take-up rate at 31 December	Employments furloughed at 31 December	Eligible employments	Take-up rate at 31 December	
1	173,900	727,600	24%	173,900	727,600	24%	265
2 to 4	276,900	667,500	41%	539,800	1,682,900	32%	869
5 to 9	115,800	242,700	48%	454,000	1,547,800	29%	765
10 to 19	63,500	136,000	47%	438,500	1,792,700	24%	726
20 to 49	44,700	88,000	51%	550,800	2,615,200	21%	902
50 to 99	12,400	29,100	43%	269,000	1,977,600	14%	424
100 to 249	7,400	17,300	43%	275,100	2,606,900	11%	411

Employer size	Employers			Employments			Value of claims made for periods to at 31 December (£m)
	Employers furloughing staff at 31 December	Eligible employers	Take-up rate at 31 December	Employments furloughed at 31 December	Eligible employments	Take-up rate at 31 December	
250+	5,300	11,700	45%	1,119,300	17,402,300	6%	1,606
Unknown	200	-	-	4,100	-	-	3
Total	700,000	1,919,800	36%	3,824,400	30,353,200	13%	5,970

- 3.45 million employments were furloughed by large employers with 250 or more employments on 5th May (the peak for this category). This reduced to a low of 737,000 employments furloughed by 31st October, before increasing again and reaching 1.12 million by 31st December.
- Employers with 20 to 49 workers had a peak of 1.15 million employments furloughed on 16th April, compared with a peak of 795,400 for employers with 100 to 249 employments on 1st May.
- Sole trader employers had a peak of 295,700 employments furloughed on 20th April, which then decreased to a low of 127,900 by 31st October, then increased again to 173,900 by 31st December.

The following charts show the total employments furloughed (millions) by employer size for the UK between 23rd March to 31st December 2020:



Source: HMRC CJRS and PAYE Real Time Information data

Sectors – UK

- Furloughing of staff in the wholesale and retail sector peaked on 24th April at 1.85 million employments furloughed. This dropped to a low of 356,400 on 31st October, before increasing again to reach 689,500 on 31st December.
- Accommodation and food services peaked at 1.65 million employments furloughed on 10th April, and declined to a low of 601,400 on 31st October. By 31st December it had increased again, reaching 1.04 million.

- The manufacturing sector had a peak of 911,000 employments furloughed on 17th April. This reduced to a low of 188,200 on 31st October, before increasing again to reach 270,200 by 31st December.
- In construction, furloughing peaked on 14th April with 723,600 employments furloughed, with this falling to a low of 130,700 by 31st October. By 31st December, numbers had increased to 193,400.
- Furloughing in arts and entertainment sector peaked later than other sectors on 15th May 2020 with 455,100 employments furloughed falling to 159,600 on 31st October. Employments furloughed increased to reach 273,800 by 31st December.
- On the 31st December, accommodation and food services accounted for the highest proportion of employments furloughed at 27.1% (1,036,600). This was followed by wholesale and retail at 18.0% (689,500) and then administrative and support services at 8.2% (312,00).

Sectors – West Midlands Region

- Accommodation and food services had the highest number of employments furloughed in the West Midlands region as at 31st December, at 74,100 people. Water supply, sewerage and waste had the least employments furloughed at 1,100.
- The manufacturing sector saw the largest increase in employments furloughed between 31st November and 31st December, at 24.6% (+6,800).

The following table shows the total employments furloughed by sector for the West Midlands region and the change since the previous month as at 31st December:

Sector	November 2020	December 2020	Change	Change %
Accommodation and food services	73,400	74,100	700	1.0%
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles	65,000	54,000	-11,000	-16.9%
Manufacturing	27,600	34,400	6,800	24.6%
Administrative and support services	24,100	23,700	-400	-1.7%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	22,500	19,800	-2,700	-12.0%
Professional and scientific and technical	18,700	18,200	-500	-2.7%
Construction	13,100	14,500	1,400	10.7%
Other service activities	17,100	13,000	-4,100	-24.0%
Health and social work	11,400	11,100	-300	-2.6%
Transportation and storage	10,300	10,600	300	2.9%
Information and communication	7,000	7,200	200	2.9%
Education	6,600	7,200	600	9.1%
Real estate	3,700	3,500	-200	-5.4%
Unknown	3,500	2,500	-1,000	-28.6%
Financial and insurance	1,800	1,900	100	5.6%
Other	1,900	1,800	-100	-5.3%
Water supply, sewerage and waste	1,000	1,100	100	10.0%
Total	308,700	298,600	-10,100	-3.3%

Source: [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: January 2021](#)

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)

BCCEIU

Introduction

The figures are based on claims submitted for the third grant of SEISS to 31st December 2020.

On the 30 November 2020, applications for the third grant of SEISS opened and will close on 29 January 2021. This is a grant worth 80% of the recipient's average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering 3 months' worth of profits, and capped at £7,500 in total. To be eligible for SEISS 3 an individual must have been eligible for SEISS 1 and 2 and also declare that they intend to continue to trade.

Summary

- Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 171,900 people were eligible for SEISS 3. There were 103,500 claims made to 31st December, with a total value of nearly £275m with an average claim value of £2,800. The take-up rate was 60.2%, above the UK average of 57.1%.
- At a West Midlands regional level, 260,000 people were eligible for the third grant of the SEISS, which is a take up rate of 57.3% based on a total number of claims of 149,000. This can be split further by gender: there was a total potentially eligible male population of 185,000 for the third SEISS, which equates to a take-up rate of 60.0% at the end of December, based on the total number of claims of 111,000. There were 74,000 eligible females in the West Midlands region with a take-up rate of 52.7% based on the total number of claims of 39,000.
- For the West Midlands region, (excluding unknown and other) the industry with the highest take-up rate was transportation and storage at 75.1% (23,700 eligible, 17,800 claims).

In Depth

WMCA (3 LEP)

Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 171,900 people were eligible for SEISS 3. There were 103,500 claims made to 31st December, with a total value of nearly £275m with an average claim value of £2,800. The take-up rate for was 60.2%, above the UK average of 57.1%.

Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, there were 125,700 of the male population eligible. There were 78,500 claims with a total value of nearly £223m with an average claim at £3,100. The take-up rate was 62.5%. For the female population in the WMCA (3 LEP) area there were 43,000 eligible population. There were 24,900 claims, the total value was nearly £52m with an average claim at £2,100. The take-up rate was 53.8%.

The following table shows an overall breakdown of the third grant for SEISS by parliamentary constituencies for eligible population, claims and take-up rate up to 31st December 2020:

Parliamentary Constituency	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 31/12/20	Total value of claims made to 31/12/20	Average value of claims made to 31/12/20	Total Take-Up Rate
Aldridge-Brownhills	3,600	2,200	£6,700,000	£3,000	61.1%
Birmingham, Edgbaston	3,300	1,900	£5,300,000	£2,700	57.6%
Birmingham, Erdington	4,000	2,500	£6,600,000	£2,600	62.5%
Birmingham, Hall Green	5,700	3,600	£7,900,000	£2,200	63.2%
Birmingham, Hodge Hill	6,300	4,400	£8,400,000	£1,900	69.8%
Birmingham, Ladywood	5,000	3,200	£6,300,000	£2,000	64.0%
Birmingham, Northfield	3,700	2,300	£6,700,000	£2,900	62.2%
Birmingham, Perry Barr	4,900	3,100	£7,100,000	£2,300	63.3%
Birmingham, Selly Oak	3,900	2,300	£6,500,000	£2,800	59.0%
Birmingham, Yardley	5,100	3,400	£8,400,000	£2,500	66.7%
Bromsgrove	4,500	2,600	£7,700,000	£3,000	57.8%
Burton	4,600	2,700	£6,700,000	£2,500	58.7%
Cannock Chase	5,000	3,100	£9,300,000	£3,000	62.0%
Coventry North East	5,000	3,100	£7,800,000	£2,500	62.0%
Coventry North West	4,400	2,600	£7,100,000	£2,700	59.1%

Parliamentary Constituency	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 31/12/20	Total value of claims made to 31/12/20	Average value of claims made to 31/12/20	Total Take-Up Rate
Coventry South	3,500	2,100	£5,400,000	£2,600	60.0%
Dudley North	3,800	2,400	£6,600,000	£2,700	63.2%
Dudley South	3,400	2,000	£5,500,000	£2,700	58.8%
Halesowen and Rowley Regis	3,800	2,300	£6,400,000	£2,700	60.5%
Kenilworth and Southam	4,200	2,100	£6,300,000	£3,000	50.0%
Lichfield	4,400	2,500	£7,400,000	£3,000	56.8%
Meriden	4,100	2,400	£7,300,000	£3,100	58.5%
North Warwickshire	4,100	2,400	£6,900,000	£2,900	58.5%
Nuneaton	3,600	2,100	£5,800,000	£2,800	58.3%
Redditch	4,200	2,500	£7,100,000	£2,800	59.5%
Rugby	4,100	2,200	£6,200,000	£2,900	53.7%
Solihull	3,800	2,200	£6,600,000	£3,100	57.9%
Stourbridge	4,300	2,700	£7,100,000	£2,700	62.8%
Stratford-on-Avon	5,600	2,800	£8,500,000	£3,000	50.0%
Sutton Coldfield	3,700	2,100	£6,300,000	£3,100	56.8%
Tamworth	3,900	2,300	£6,600,000	£2,900	59.0%
Walsall North	4,100	2,600	£7,100,000	£2,700	63.4%
Walsall South	4,100	2,600	£6,200,000	£2,400	63.4%
Warley	4,000	2,600	£6,100,000	£2,300	65.0%
Warwick and Leamington	3,800	2,100	£5,800,000	£2,800	55.3%
West Bromwich East	3,500	2,200	£5,600,000	£2,600	62.9%
West Bromwich West	3,700	2,400	£5,900,000	£2,500	64.9%
Wolverhampton North East	3,200	1,900	£5,200,000	£2,800	59.4%
Wolverhampton South East	3,500	2,200	£5,600,000	£2,500	62.9%
Wolverhampton South West	3,700	2,100	£5,300,000	£2,500	56.8%
Wyre Forest	5,100	2,900	£7,700,000	£2,600	56.9%
WM 7 Met.	115,100	71,500	£183,200,000	£2,600	62.1%
BCLEP	48,800	30,200	£79,300,000	£2,625	61.9%
CWLEP	38,300	21,500	£59,900,000	£2,850	56.1%
GBSLEP	84,800	51,800	£135,300,000	£2,822	61.1%
WMCA (3 LEP)	171,900	103,500	£274,500,000	£2,789	60.2%

The following table shows the overall breakdown of the third grant for SEISS by local authority for eligible population, claims and take-up rate for the SEISS up to 31st December 2020. The take-up rate varies from 49.3% in Stratford-on-Avon to 63.6% in Sandwell.

Local Authority Area	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 31/12/20	Total value of claims made to 31/12/20	Average value of claims made to 31/12/20	Total Take-Up Rate
Cannock Chase	5,000	3,100	£9,300,000	£3,000	62.0%
East Staffordshire	5,200	2,900	£7,500,000	£2,600	55.8%
Lichfield	4,800	2,700	£8,300,000	£3,100	56.3%
Tamworth	3,000	1,800	£4,900,000	£2,800	60.0%
North Warwickshire	3,100	1,800	£5,200,000	£2,900	58.1%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	4,900	2,900	£8,000,000	£2,800	59.2%
Rugby	4,400	2,300	£6,500,000	£2,900	52.3%
Stratford-on-Avon	7,500	3,700	£11,300,000	£3,000	49.3%
Warwick	5,500	3,000	£8,500,000	£2,900	54.5%
Birmingham	45,500	28,900	£69,500,000	£2,400	63.5%
Coventry	12,900	7,800	£20,400,000	£2,600	60.5%
Dudley	14,300	8,800	£24,000,000	£2,700	61.5%
Sandwell	12,900	8,200	£20,400,000	£2,500	63.6%
Solihull	7,900	4,600	£14,000,000	£3,100	58.2%
Walsall	11,800	7,400	£20,000,000	£2,700	62.7%
Wolverhampton	9,800	5,800	£14,900,000	£2,600	59.2%
Bromsgrove	4,500	2,600	£7,700,000	£3,000	57.8%
Redditch	3,800	2,300	£6,400,000	£2,800	60.5%

Local Authority Area	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 31/12/20	Total value of claims made to 31/12/20	Average value of claims made to 31/12/20	Total Take-Up Rate
Wyre Forest	5,100	2,900	£7,700,000	£2,600	56.9%
WM 7 Met.	115,100	71,500	£183,200,000	£2,600	62.1%
BCLEP	48,800	30,200	£79,300,000	£2,600	61.9%
CWLEP	38,300	21,500	£59,900,000	£2,900	56.1%
GBSLEP	84,800	51,800	£135,300,000	£2,800	61.1%
WMCA (3 LEP)	171,900	103,500	£274,500,000	£2,800	60.2%
UK	3,370,000	1,924,000	£5,417,000,000	£2,800	57.1%

Regional Analysis

West Midlands Region: Claims by Age and Gender

At a West Midlands regional level, there were around 260,000 of the population eligible for the third grant of the SEISS, which is a take up rate of 57.3% based on the total number of claims of 149,000. This can be split further by gender and there was a total potentially eligible male population of 185,000 for the third grant of the SEISS, which equates to a take-up rate of 60.0% at the end of December which is based on the total number of claims of 111,000. There were 74,000 eligible female population for the West Midlands region with a take-up rate of 52.7% based on the total number of claims of 39,000.

Excluding missing data, the highest take-up rate in the West Midlands region for females were those aged 25-34 years old at 57.1% (12,600 eligible and 7,200 claims). For males in the West Midlands region, the highest take-up rate was those aged 35-44 years old at 65.6% (41,600 eligible, 27,300 claims).

The following table shows a breakdown by age and gender across the West Midlands Region:

Gender	Age bands	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 31/12/20	Total value of claims made to 31/12/20	Average value of claims made to date	Take-Up Rate
Male	16-24	7,700	4,300	£9,300,000	£2,200	55.8%
	25-34	34,900	22,200	£65,200,000	£2,900	63.6%
	35-44	41,600	27,300	£78,100,000	£2,900	65.6%
	45-54	47,600	29,100	£85,100,000	£2,900	61.1%
	55-64	39,200	21,600	£62,900,000	£2,900	55.1%
	65+	12,500	5,100	£16,400,000	£3,300	40.8%
	Missing	1,800	1,100	£2,800,000	£2,500	61.1%
	All	185,300	110,600	£319,900,000	£2,900	59.7%
Female	16-24	2,100	1,000	£1,700,000	£1,700	47.6%
	25-34	12,600	7,200	£14,300,000	£2,000	57.1%
	35-44	17,300	9,300	£18,700,000	£2,000	53.8%
	45-54	20,500	11,100	£24,000,000	£2,200	54.1%
	55-64	16,000	8,000	£17,900,000	£2,300	50.0%
	65+	5,000	1,600	£4,600,000	£2,800	32.0%
	Missing	700	400	£900,000	£2,400	57.1%
	All	74,300	38,700	£82,300,000	£2,100	52.1%
All	16-24	9,800	5,400	£11,100,000	£2,100	55.1%
	25-34	47,500	29,300	£79,600,000	£2,700	61.7%
	35-44	58,900	36,600	£96,800,000	£2,600	62.1%
	45-54	68,100	40,200	£109,200,000	£2,700	59.0%
	55-64	55,200	29,500	£80,900,000	£2,700	53.4%
	65+	17,500	6,700	£21,000,000	£3,100	38.3%
	Missing	2,500	1,500	£3,700,000	£2,500	60.0%
	All	260,000	149,000	£402,000,000	£2,700	57.3%

West Midlands Region: Claims by Broad Industry

Excluding entries categorised as “unknown” or “other”, the industries with the highest take-up rates were transportation and storage at 75.1% (23,700 eligible, 17,800 claims), followed by other service activities at 74.9% (17,900 eligible, 13,400 claims) and then education at 67.0% (8,800 eligible, 5,900 claims).

The following table shows a breakdown by broad industry for the West Midlands Region:

	Total potentially eligible pop.	Total no. of claims made to 31/12/20	Total value of claims made to 31/12/20	Average value of claims made to date	Take-Up Rate
Accommodation and food service activities	6,500	3,600	£9,200,000	£2,600	55.4%
Administrative and support service activities	19,300	9,000	£17,700,000	£2,000	46.6%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	8,700	2,000	£6,000,000	£3,000	23.0%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	5,400	3,300	£8,000,000	£2,400	61.1%
Construction	80,600	49,600	£168,300,000	£3,400	61.5%
Education	8,800	5,900	£13,500,000	£2,300	67.0%
Financial and insurance activities	1,500	800	£2,900,000	£3,800	53.3%
Human health and social work activities	11,500	4,600	£13,000,000	£2,800	40.0%
Information and communication	2,400	1,100	£3,200,000	£3,000	45.8%
Manufacturing	7,000	3,700	£10,700,000	£2,900	52.9%
Other service activities	17,900	13,400	£28,400,000	£2,100	74.9%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	11,800	5,500	£17,800,000	£3,200	46.6%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	500	200	£600,000	£2,500	40.0%
Real estate activities	1,100	500	£1,600,000	£3,100	45.5%
Transportation and storage	23,700	17,800	£33,800,000	£1,900	75.1%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	17,800	9,300	£23,600,000	£2,500	52.2%
Unknown and other	35,100	18,800	£44,100,000	£2,300	53.6%
All	260,000	149,000	£402,000,000	£2,700	57.3%

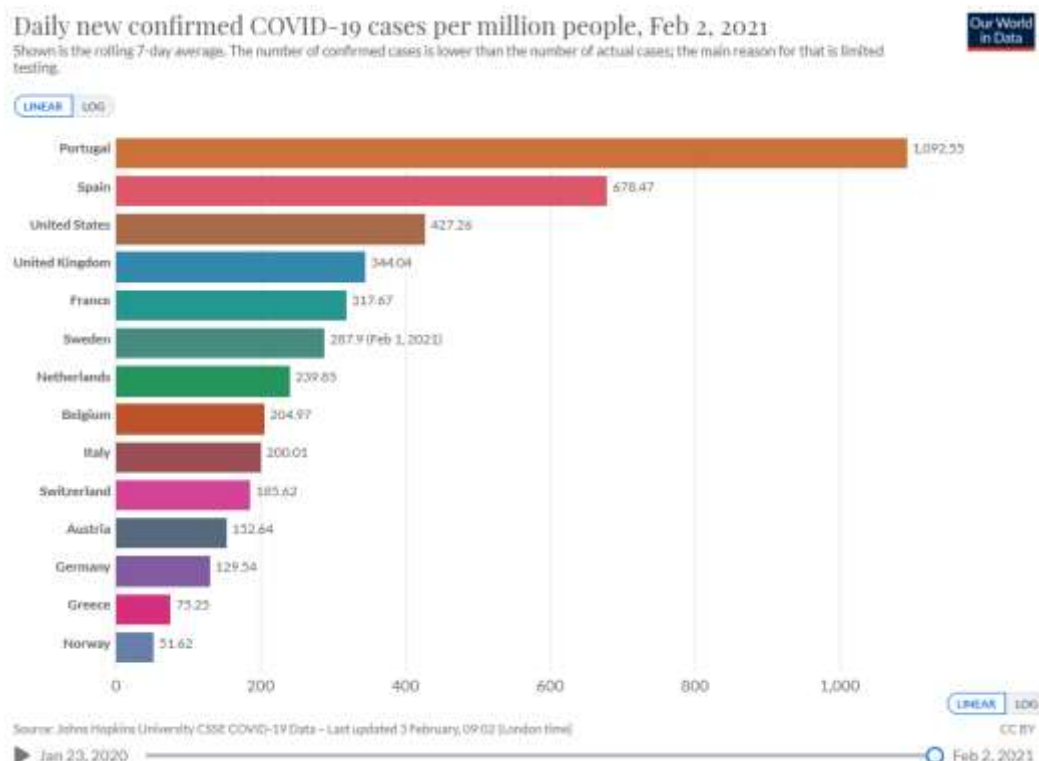
Source: HMRC, Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) Statistics: January 2021

Infection Rates

Alice Pugh WMREDI

Europe has seen a [resurgence in infection rates](#) which is continuing (see graph below).

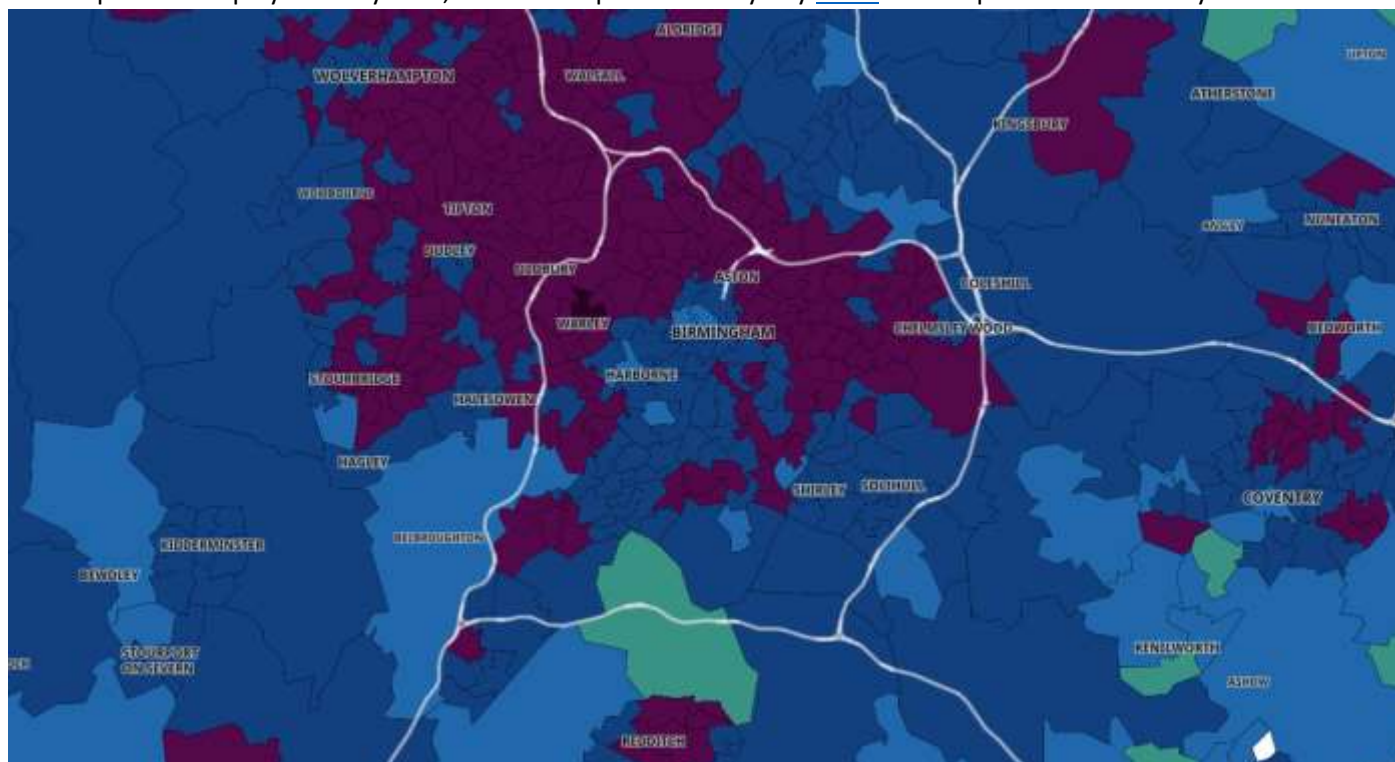
Since 31 December 2019 and as of week 2021-3, **99 727 853 cases** of COVID-19 (in accordance with the applied case definitions and testing strategies in the affected countries) have been reported, including **2 137 670 deaths**.



Latest [ONS infection survey data](#) (29th January – next release 5th Feb) states:

- In England, the percentage of people testing positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19) remains high in the week ending 23 January 2021; we estimate that 1,018,700 people (95% credible interval: 976,200 to 1,061,600) within the community population in England had COVID-19, equating to around 1 in 55 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 55 to 1 in 50).
- During the week ending 23 January 2021, London had the highest percentage of people testing positive; we estimate that 2.71% of people in London had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 2.52% to 2.91%), equating to around 1 in 35 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 40 to 1 in 35).
- In Wales, the percentage of people testing positive has remained level over the week ending 23 January 2021; we estimate that 43,600 people in Wales had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 36,100 to 51,600), equating to around 1 in 70 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 85 to 1 in 60).
- In Northern Ireland, the percentage of people testing positive has levelled off in the week ending 23 January 2021; we estimate that 36,800 people in Northern Ireland had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 30,500 to 43,900), equating to around 1 in 50 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 60 to 1 in 40).
- In Scotland, the percentage of people testing positive remained level in the week ending 23 January 2021; we estimate that 48,500 people in Scotland had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 41,900 to 55,700), equating to around 1 in 110 people (95% credible interval: 1 in 125 to 1 in 95).
- The percentage of cases that are compatible with the new variant increased in the East Midlands in the week ending 23 January 2021; rates were relatively stable or declining in all other regions.

The map below displays weekly data, which are up dated every day [here](#). This map is for 28th January 2021



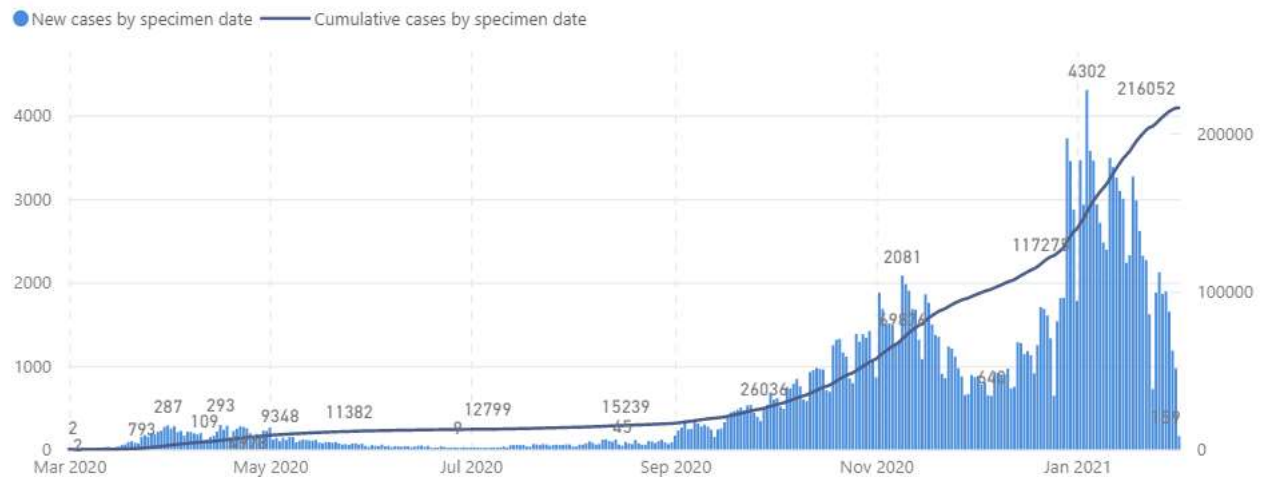
Regional Data

[The Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Epidemiology and Intelligence Cell](#) have created a dashboard which looks at covid data on a regional level. Data below:

Date	New cases by specimen date	New cases by publish date	Cumulative cases by specimen date	Cumulative cases per 100,000	Cases in the last 7 days	Rate per 100,000 in the last 7 days
01 February 2021	159	1238	216052	50,842.33	2	0.07
31 January 2021	970	1667	215893	50,799.97	2	0.07
30 January 2021	1183	1938	214923	50,569.63	2	0.07
29 January 2021	1650	2064	213740	50,292.31	11744	401.01
28 January 2021	1893	2145	212090	49,895.24	12361	422.08
27 January 2021	1862	1871	210197	49,456.06	12787	436.63
26 January 2021	2121	779	208335	49,022.51	13542	462.41
25 January 2021	1879	1570	206214	48,492.19	14403	491.81
24 January 2021	721	2366	204335	48,042.31	15791	539.20
23 January 2021	1618	2633	203614	47,859.90	17397	594.04
22 January 2021	2267	2534	201996	47,466.14	18014	615.11
21 January 2021	2319	2948	199729	46,922.52	18750	640.24

As can be seen from the charts below in the first lockdown infections were higher in the older age groups, whereas now younger people are being infected (nb there will be some effect from higher testing but symptomatic cases presenting for testing are also more prevalent now).

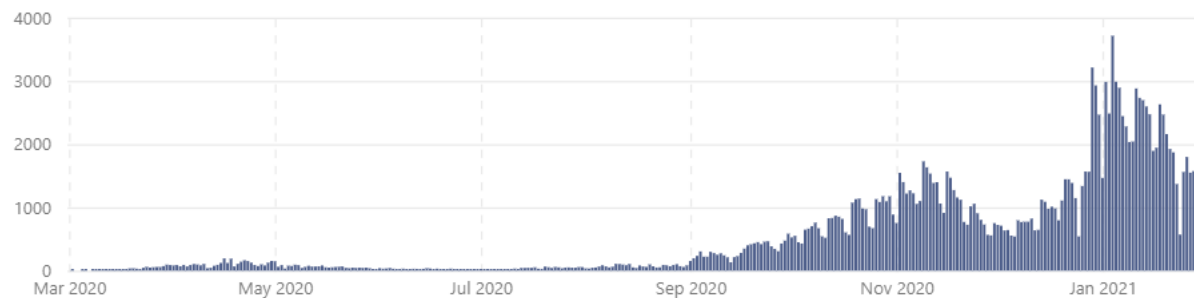
All ages



By age group

0 to 59

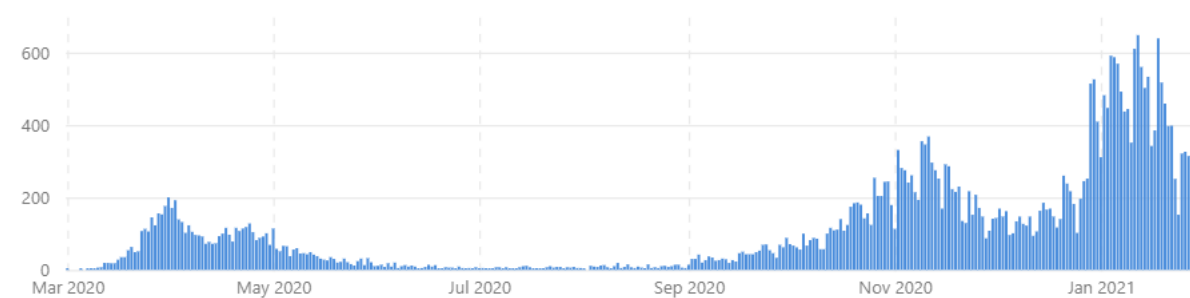
Age ● 0 to 59



By age group

60+

Age ● 60+



Covid 19 Hospital Activity

A number of [data collections](#) have been implemented to support incident management. The collections were activated at short notice and the content of the collections has evolved as the incident has developed. The data collected is classified as management information. It has been collected on a daily basis with a tight turn round time. No revisions have been made to the dataset. Any analysis of the data should be undertaken with this in mind.

Total reported admissions to hospital and diagnoses in hospital

The table below shows the latest daily rates

Name	17-Jan-21	18-Jan-21	19-Jan-21	20-Jan-21	21-Jan-21	22-Jan-21	23-Jan-21	24-Jan-21	25-Jan-21	26-Jan-21	27-Jan-21	28-Jan-21	29-Jan-21	30-Jan-21	31-Jan-21
ENGLAND	3,424	3,711	3,768	3,679	3,237	3,016	2,709	2,824	2,648	2,799	2,742	2,719	2,379	2,193	2,183
East of England	402	461	404	446	392	407	359	328	346	338	335	344	290	270	268
London	652	704	742	660	596	589	520	544	478	472	465	473	423	370	394
Midlands	738	824	835	777	659	592	540	549	537	595	574	592	468	406	494
North East and Yorkshire	445	462	492	472	431	364	360	416	345	380	360	355	354	312	266
North West	386	438	472	485	417	405	365	390	362	413	377	342	331	256	300
South East	520	526	528	558	501	397	453	385	372	394	400	390	307	249	315
South West	281	296	285	281	238	271	193	212	208	207	211	223	206	150	148

Mechanical Ventilation beds - occupied by confirmed COVID-19 patients

Name	19-Jan-21	20-Jan-21	21-Jan-21	22-Jan-21	23-Jan-21	24-Jan-21	25-Jan-21	26-Jan-21	27-Jan-21	28-Jan-21	29-Jan-21	30-Jan-21	31-Jan-21	01-Feb-21	02-Feb-21
ENGLAND	3,403	3,403	3,407	3,727	3,731	3,736	3,694	3,634	3,602	3,585	3,506	3,486	3,386	3,414	3,324
East of England	355	334	354	368	365	378	378	372	373	352	351	322	346	329	292
London	1,207	1,208	1,217	1,219	1,217	1,220	1,200	1,158	1,172	1,208	1,131	1,136	1,065	1,096	1,075
Midlands	602	615	627	650	671	655	664	672	673	658	654	664	638	647	622
North East and Yorkshire	316	328	322	325	340	339	336	336	319	309	314	317	319	317	319
North West	381	387	402	417	405	400	379	388	387	396	399	390	349	370	367
South East	531	519	478	532	523	525	522	495	477	466	458	458	455	470	455
South West	211	212	207	216	210	219	215	213	201	196	199	196	194	191	194

Total beds - occupied by confirmed COVID-19 patients (as at 08:00)

Name	19-Jan-21	20-Jan-21	21-Jan-21	22-Jan-21	23-Jan-21	24-Jan-21	25-Jan-21	26-Jan-21	27-Jan-21	28-Jan-21	29-Jan-21	30-Jan-21	31-Jan-21	01-Feb-21	02-Feb-21
ENGLAND	34,815	33,886	33,235	33,412	32,614	32,907	32,938	32,337	30,846	30,333	29,359	28,571	28,112	28,539	27,397
East of England	3,995	4,068	4,078	4,055	3,921	4,009	4,044	3,924	3,811	3,689	3,542	3,297	3,393	3,385	3,080
London	7,711	7,588	7,332	7,298	7,044	7,030	7,014	6,785	6,272	6,393	6,094	5,918	5,654	5,883	5,723
Midlands	6,325	6,350	6,380	6,341	6,245	6,338	6,338	6,165	5,940	5,810	5,664	5,590	5,586	5,503	5,383
North East and Yorkshire	3,830	3,818	3,814	3,793	3,732	3,732	3,891	3,841	3,654	3,593	3,521	3,484	3,506	3,496	3,402
North West	4,307	4,318	4,287	4,315	4,254	4,338	4,122	4,348	4,284	4,203	4,138	3,994	3,834	4,017	3,854
South East	5,509	5,397	5,033	5,337	5,208	5,207	5,237	5,040	4,811	4,614	4,443	4,347	4,213	4,344	4,143
South West	2,337	2,347	2,312	2,273	2,218	2,253	2,308	2,236	2,094	2,031	1,989	1,943	1,928	1,913	1,832

Weekly Deaths Registered 22nd January 2021

BCCEIU

The following analysis compares the latest available time period (the week of the 22nd January) to the previous week period (the week of the 15th January) 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 18,042 in the week of the 15th January to 18,676 in the week of 22nd January. The number of deaths registered that state Coronavirus on the death certificate experienced an increase from 7,245 people to 8,422 people over the same period.

Regional level analysis shows that the West Midlands' overall registered death figure increased from 1,820 people in the week 15th January to 1,925 in the week of 22nd January. The number of registered deaths related to Coronavirus has increased from 716 people to 844 over the same period.

There was a total of 1,352 deaths registered across the WMCA (3 LEP) area in the week of the 22nd January. There were 612 deaths registered that were related to Coronavirus over the same period – accounting for 45.3% of total deaths. The WMCA (3 LEP) area accounted for 72.5% of the 844 Coronavirus related deaths registered in the West Midlands Region. In comparison to the week of the 15th January, the overall registered death figures in the WMCA (3 LEP) area increased by 107, while the number of deaths related to Coronavirus increased by 127 people.

At a local authority level, Birmingham accounted for 26.1% (160) of deaths related to Coronavirus in the WMCA (3 LEP), this is followed by Sandwell at 11.4% (70 deaths).

Of deaths involving Coronavirus registered in the week of the 22nd January, 75.3% (461) were registered in a hospital, 14.1% (86) were in a care home, 8.0% (49) were registered as at home. 1.8% (11) of deaths were registered in a hospice, 0.5% (3) of deaths were registered in an other communal establishment and 0.3% (2) of deaths classed as registered elsewhere.

Place and number of deaths registered that are related to Coronavirus in the week of 22nd January 2021:

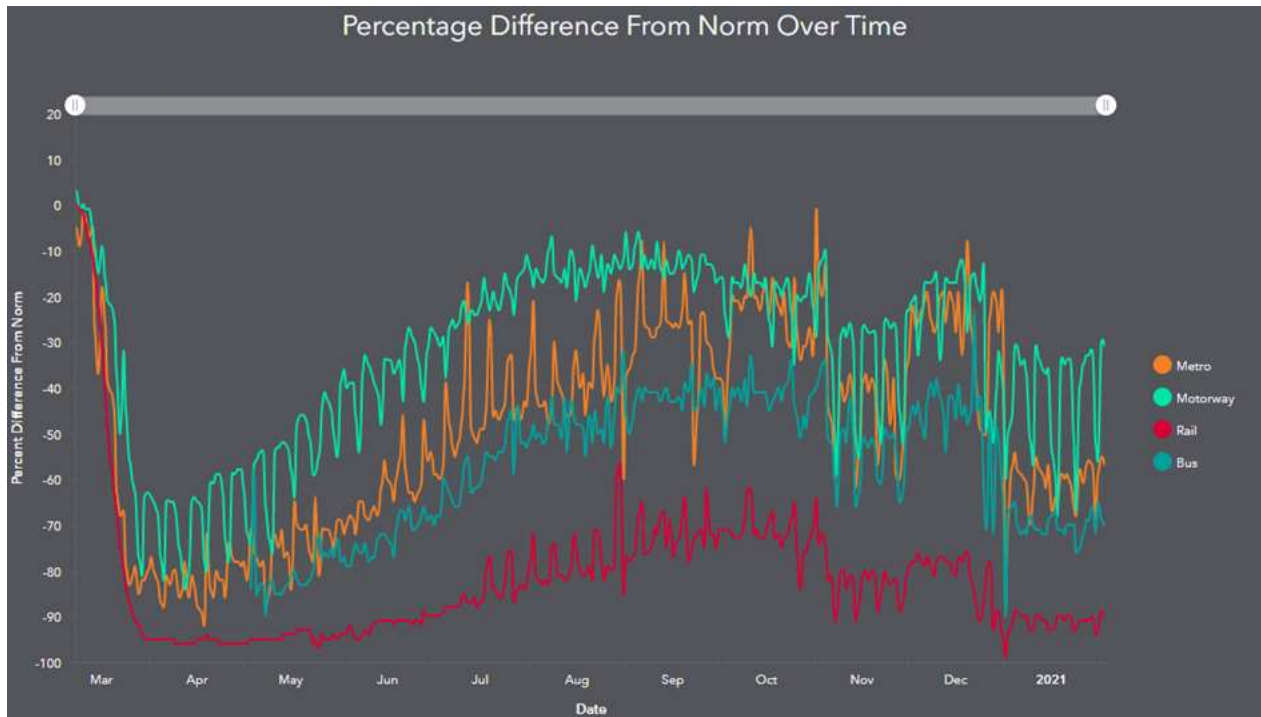
Area name	Care home	Elsewhere	Home	Hospice	Hospital	Other communal establishment	Total
Cannock Chase	4	0	2	0	15	0	21
East Staffordshire	2	0	2	0	15	0	19
Lichfield	2	0	0	0	11	0	13
Tamworth	1	0	0	0	9	0	10
North Warwickshire	3	0	0	0	5	0	8
Nuneaton and Bedworth	0	1	1	0	6	0	8
Rugby	4	0	0	0	18	0	22
Stratford-on-Avon	3	0	1	0	6	0	10
Warwick	8	0	1	0	7	0	16
Bromsgrove	3	0	1	0	13	0	17
Redditch	1	0	0	0	14	1	16
Wyre Forest	4	0	1	0	10	0	15
Birmingham	11	0	20	3	124	2	160
Coventry	8	0	1	0	20	0	29
Dudley	3	0	4	0	27	0	34
Sandwell	7	0	5	0	58	0	70
Solihull	5	0	3	1	17	0	26
Walsall	6	0	3	2	39	0	50
Wolverhampton	11	1	4	5	47	0	68
WM 7 Met.	51	1	40	11	332	2	437
Black Country LEP	27	1	16	7	171	0	222
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	26	1	4	0	62	0	93
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	33	0	29	4	228	3	297
WMCA (3 LEP)	86	2	49	11	461	3	612

Source: ONS, Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board, 2nd February 2021

Transport Data

Anne Shaw TFWM

There have been minimal changes since last week in terms of demand and services on public transport remain at the revised levels during this current lockdown.



Levels of use – 2nd February (data 1 day behind). The graphs above shows the level of use on all modes

The table provides intel in terms of the levels of services and the use of the network per mode compared to this time last year, the day before and the week before (26th January).

	% levels pre covid	% change from day before	% change from Week before
Bus	30	-1	+2
Train	10	-1	+1
Tram	43	-2	+4
Roads (HE SRN)	69	-1	+4

ONS Weekly Release Indicators

BCCEIU

ONS Weekly Release Indicators

On the 28th January 2021 ONS released the weekly publication containing data about the condition of the UK society and economy and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

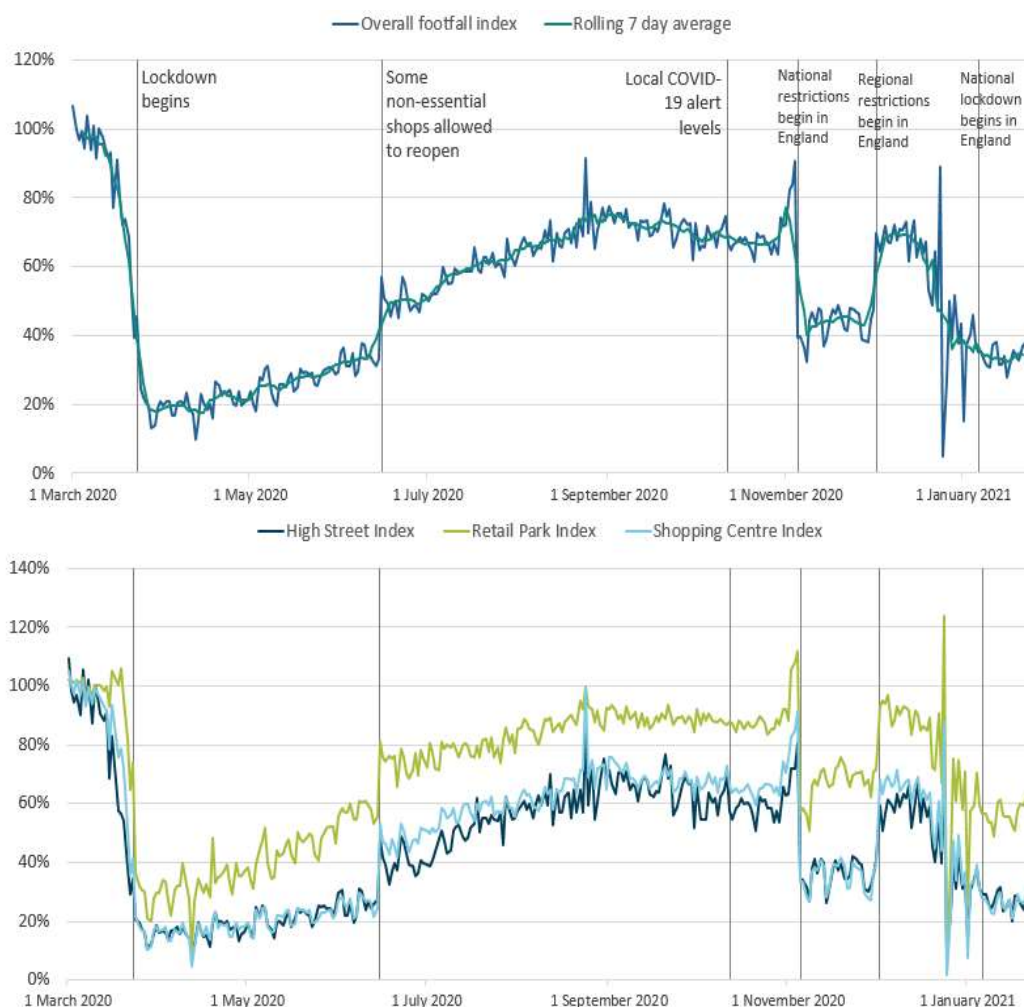
The statistics are experimental and have been devised to provide timely information. The following information contains footfall data, final results from Wave 22 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey (BICS), national company incorporations and voluntary dissolution, Wave 42 of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) and experimental online job advert indices.

Footfall

Please note, percentage changes are based on an average of the percentage change on each of the seven days, and are not weighted by footfall volume on each day. For example, Sunday 24th January 2021 was compared with Sunday 26th January 2020.

For the week ending the 24th January 2021, overall footfall was at 34% when compared to the same week in 2020. Overall footfall in the UK decreased by 1 percentage from the previous week. Footfall in retail parks increased by 3 percentage points compared to the previous week to 59% of the level in the same week of 2020. Retail and shopping centres were at 27% of the level seen in the same week as the previous year.

The following chart shows the volume of footfall, percentage change from the same day the previous year for the UK between 1st March 2020 to 24th January 2021:



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

National Company Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolution

Companies House data shows for the UK, there were 15,905 incorporations in the week ending 22nd January 2021. This is up from 15,326 recorded in the previous week and also when compared to the same week in 2020 (13,934) and 2019 (13,378).

Also, for the week ending 22nd January 2021, there were 4,828 voluntary dissolution applications, an increase from 4,629 recorded in the previous week. However, the number of voluntary dissolution applications was lower than levels seen in the fourth week of 2020 (6,391) and also the same week in 2019 (7,276).

Business Impact of the Coronavirus

The final results from Wave 22 of the Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey (BICS) based off the 5,118 businesses surveyed across the West Midlands that businesses have a presence in with a response rate of 27.0% (1,382) and to 2,936 businesses that are head quartered in the West Midlands, with a response rate of 25.7% (756). Please note, unless stated, the following data is based on the period between 11th to the 24th January and only covers topics where there is a regional breakdown. Also, the data used is unweighted for regions and response levels can be low so the following results should be treated with caution when evaluating the impact of COVID-19. Due to weighted data being available for the UK a comparison has not been included.

Trading and Financial Performance

90.3% of responding West Midlands businesses were trading between 11th to 24th January. In the West Midlands, 9.2% of businesses had temporarily closed or temporarily paused trading and less than 1% of businesses had permanently ceased trading.

In the West Midlands, 88.6% of responding businesses were trading between the 11th and the 24th January and had been for more than the last two weeks. 1.7% of responding West Midlands businesses had started trading within the last two weeks after a pause in trading. 8.6% of West Midlands businesses had paused trading and do not intend to restart in the next two weeks.

For West Midlands businesses that indicated they had sites that had paused or ceased trading, 73.7% were required to temporarily close due to lockdown regulations, 21.7% stated that it was not financially viable to keep open and 11.5% reported insufficient footfall or customer interest. While 6.2% reported the reason as other and 2.3% were unsure.

5.5% of responding West Midlands businesses were expecting to temporarily or permanently close sites in the next two weeks. 77.3% of West Midlands businesses were expecting to close sites in the next two weeks due to being required by lockdown regulations, 13.6% due to insufficient customer interest or footfall and also 19.7% reported it was not financially viable to keep open.

46.9% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported their turnover had decreased by at least 20%. However, 36.2% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported that their turnover was unaffected and around 8% reported their turnover had increased by at least 20%.

Profits

Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 28th December to 10th December 2020. However, for questions regarding the last two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (11th to 24th January 2021).

Businesses were asked in the last two weeks if the Coronavirus had affected profits when compared with normal expectations for the time of year. 43.2% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported profits had decreased by at least 20%. However, 34.1% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported that profits had stayed the same and approximately 6% reported their profits had increased by at least 20%.

Prices Brought and Prices Sold

Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 28th December to 10th December 2020. However, for questions regarding the last two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (11th to 24th January 2021).

Businesses were asked in the last two weeks how the prices of materials, goods or services brought by their business when compared with normal price fluctuations. Excluding those who responded not applicable or unsure, prices brought data shows 56.6% of West Midlands businesses reported prices did not change any more than normal, 13.1% reported prices increased more than normal and 6.6% of West Midlands businesses reported some prices increased and some prices decreased.

Businesses were also asked in the last two weeks how the prices of materials, goods or services sold by their business when compared with normal price fluctuations. Excluding those who responded not applicable or unsure, prices sold data shows 1.4% of businesses in the West Midlands reported prices had decreased more than normal. 69.4% of West Midlands businesses reported prices did not change any more than normal, 4.3% reported prices increased more than normal and 4.9% of West Midlands businesses reported some prices increased and some prices decreased.

Stock Levels and Stockpiling

Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 28th December to 10th December 2020. However, for questions regarding the last two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (11th to 24th January 2021).

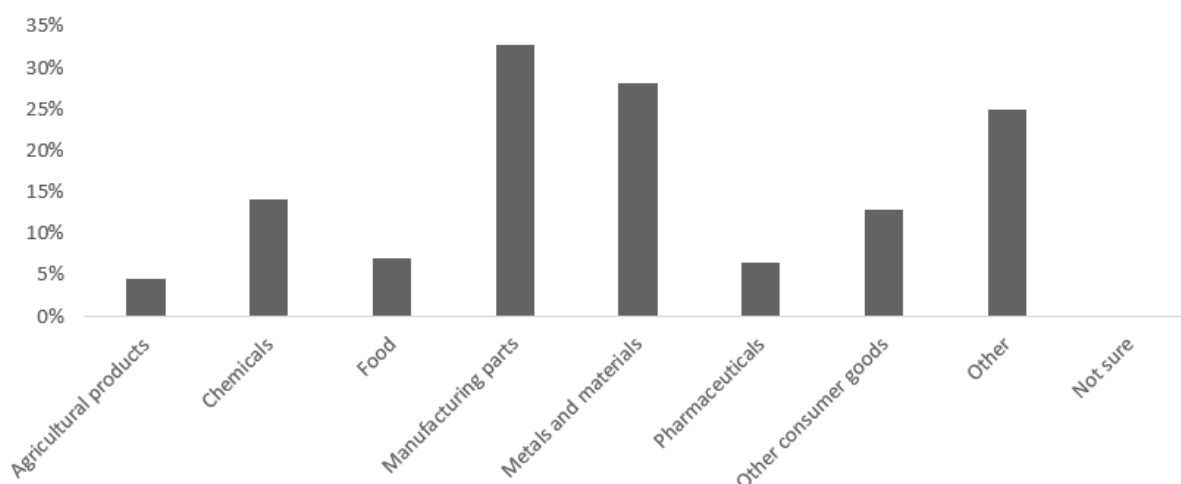
Businesses were asked how the pandemic had affected stock levels in the last two weeks. Excluding not sure of not applicable responses, 13.9% of West Midlands businesses reported that stock levels were higher than normal. 37.9% reported stock levels had not changed and 12.2% reported that stock levels were lower than normal.

Excluding not sure responses, 39.6% of West Midlands businesses reported that the main reason for the difference in stock levels were due to COVID-19. 26.4% of West Midlands businesses reported the main reason to be COVID-19 and the end of the EU transition period. 23.3% of West Midlands businesses reported just the end of the EU transition period as the main reason and 5.8% of West Midlands businesses reported the main reason as other.

5.0% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they were stockpiling goods or material from UK suppliers, 9.2% were stockpiling from EU Suppliers and 3.2% were stockpiling from non-EU suppliers. 77.8% of West Midlands businesses reported not stockpiling any goods or materials.

Of the West Midlands businesses that reported they had stockpiled goods or material the highest percentage were in manufacturing parts at 32.7%.

The following chart shows what goods or materials responding West Midlands businesses were stockpiling:



Grants Applied and Received, Finance Agreements and Further Schemes

12.2% of West Midlands businesses had applied for Local Restrictions Support Grant – England (81.5% have received). 1.1% of West Midlands businesses had applied for a grant from the Lockdown Business Fund – Wales (6.0% have received). 3.6% of West Midlands businesses have received a grant from the Strategic Framework Business Fund Scotland and 1.2% had received a grant from Local Restrictions Support - Northern Ireland. While 77.1% of West Midlands businesses have not applied for any of these grants.

7.4% of West Midlands businesses have received small business grant, 5.9% have received a sector-specific grant and 2.0% have received an additional Restriction Grant.

23.7% of West Midlands businesses have received government-backed loans or finance agreements during COVID-19.

6.0% of West Midlands businesses are using or intend to use Kickstart Job Scheme for young people. 64.0% are using or intend to use the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. While 25.7% of West Midlands businesses are not using or intend to use either of these schemes.

International Trading

Businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 28th December to 10th December 2020. However, for questions regarding the last two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (11th to 24th January 2021).

Businesses were asked in the last two weeks, had their businesses exporting or importing of goods or services been affected by the Coronavirus in the last two weeks when compared to normal expectations for the time of year. 33.5% of exporting businesses in the West Midlands reported their businesses were still exporting but less than normal. Of those businesses who continued to trade and import, 25.1% in the West Midlands were importing less than normal.

43.7% of West Midlands businesses who were exporting reported that they had not been affected and 50.2% reported that importing had not been affected.

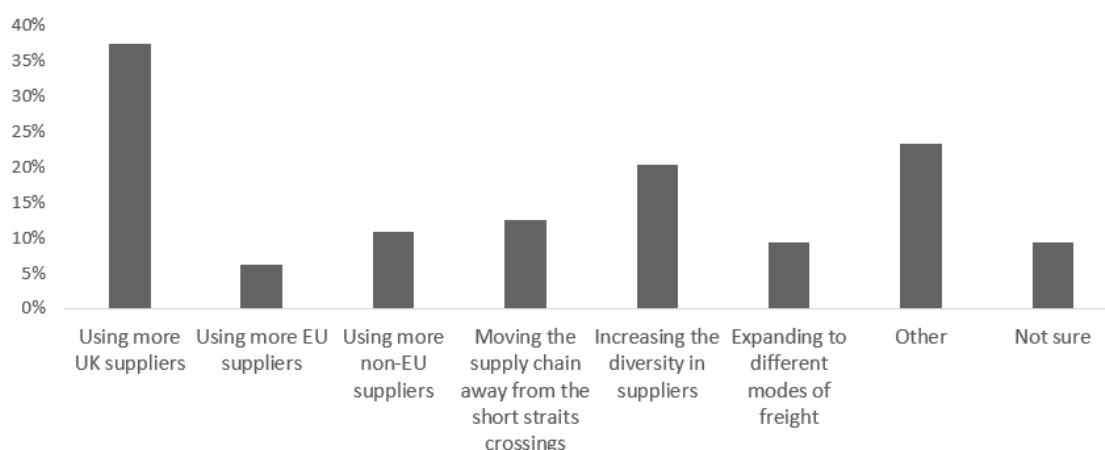
1.3% of businesses in the West Midlands are exporting more than normal and 3.0% are importing more than normal.

7.2% of businesses in the West Midlands have not been able to export in the last two weeks and 5.0% of West Midlands businesses have not been able to import in the last two weeks.

Supply Chains

Businesses were asked if they had made changes to supply chains due to the end of the EU transition period. 5.1% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they had. Where businesses stated they had made changes, 37.5% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they were using more UK suppliers.

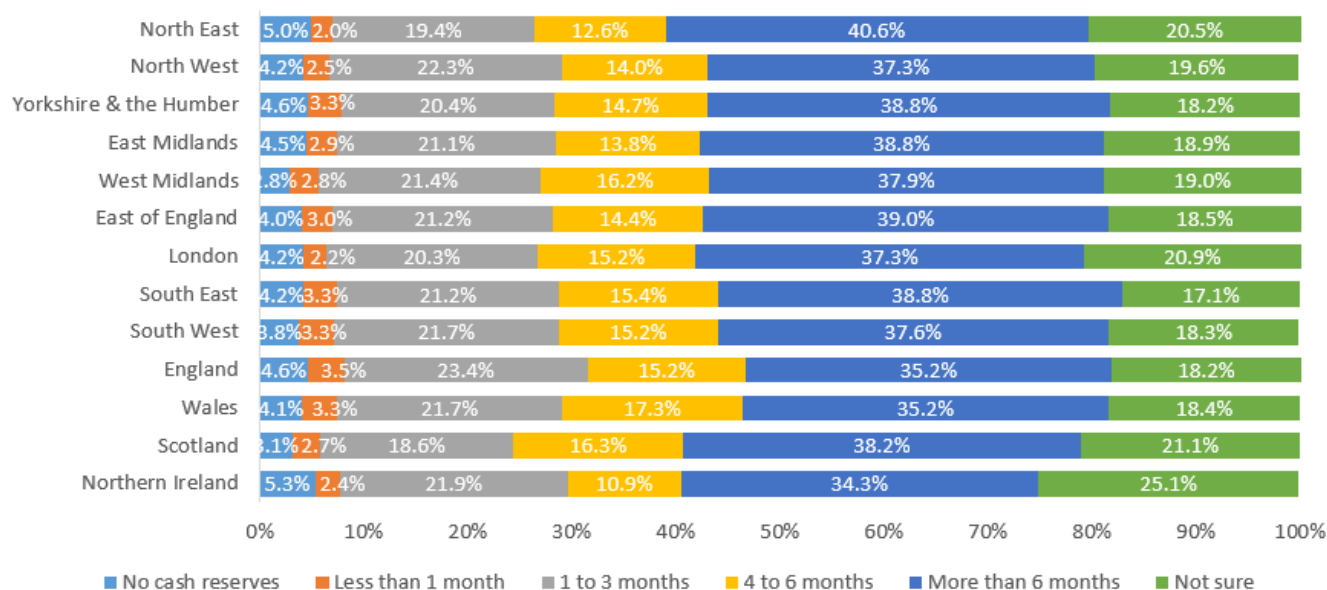
The following chart shows where West Midlands businesses had reported they had made changes to supply chain, what the change was:



Cash Flow

2.8% of responding West Midlands businesses that have not permanently stopped trading have no cash reserves.

The following graph shows across the UK regions how long cash reserves will last:



Business Confidence, Insolvency and Debt Repayments

In the West Midlands, 63.1% of responding businesses had high confidence in surviving over the next three months. 26.3% had moderate confidence of survival, 3.6% had low confidence. The remaining 6.5% were not sure.

1.2% of West Midlands businesses reported they were at severe risk from insolvency and 12.4% of West Midlands businesses reported they were at moderate risk. 50.9% of West Midlands businesses reported a low risk of insolvency and 26.0% reported no risk.

42.8% of West Midlands businesses reported that the risk of insolvency had increased due to COVID-19. While, 46.0% of West Midlands businesses reported insolvency risk had stayed the same and 2.4% reported the risk had decreased.

Businesses were asked over the last month how debt repayments compared with turnover. 2.3% of responding West Midlands businesses reported that repayments were more than 100% of turnover. 2.8% reported repayments were between 50 and 100% of turnover and 3.6% of West Midlands businesses reported repayments were between 20% and 50% of turnover. 19.2% reported repayments were up to 20% of turnover and 41.9% had no repayments.

Work from Home

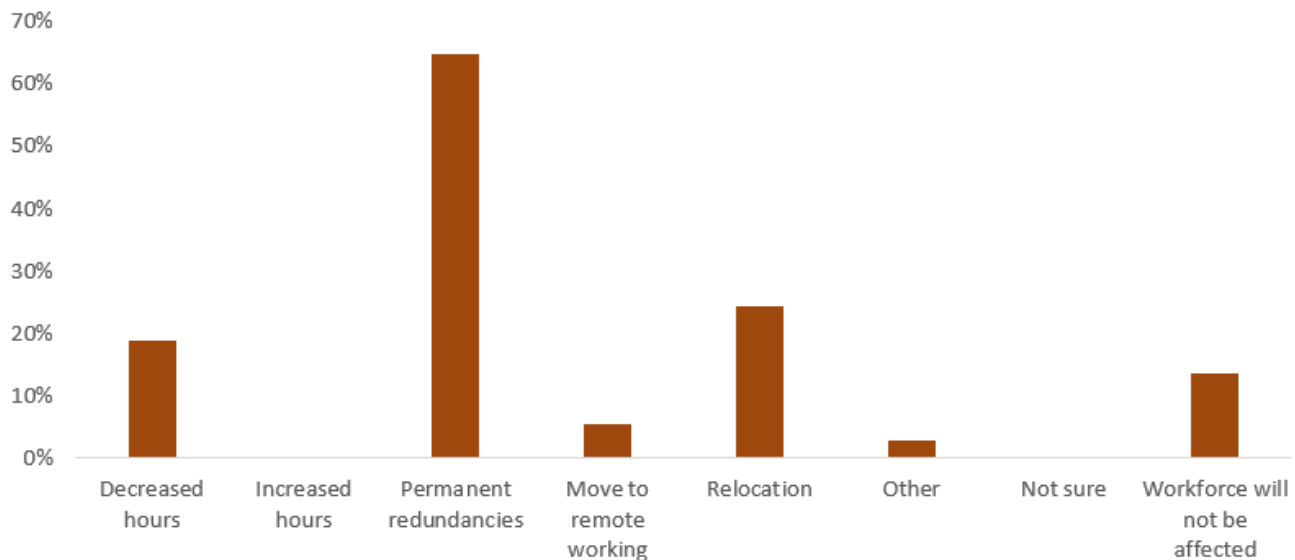
76.4% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they had more staff working from home due to COVID-19. 9.7% of responding West Midlands businesses reported homeworking had increased productivity, 53.5% reported productivity had stayed the same and 19.4% reported productivity had decreased.

25.3% of responding businesses in the West Midlands intended to use increased homeworking as a permanent business model going forward.

Expected Site Closures in Next Three Months

2.7% of West Midlands businesses intended to permanently close sites in the next three months. 64.9% of West Midlands businesses expect this to cause permanent redundancies.

The following chart shows how the workforce will be affected by site closures in the West Midlands:



Expected Redundancies

6.7% of responding West Midlands businesses expected redundancies to happen within the next two weeks. 17.3% of West Midlands businesses expected redundancies to occur between two weeks and one month and 69.2% expected between one and three months. 10.6% of West Midlands businesses were unsure when redundancies would occur.

EU and Non-EU Workers

Businesses were asked since the start of COVID-19, how the number of workers within the EU or outside the EU has changed.

1.5% of West Midlands business reported the number of workers from within the EU had increased and 1% reported the number of workers outside the EU had increased. 33.8% of West Midlands businesses reported the number of workers within the EU had stayed the same and 24.1% of workers outside the EU had stayed the same. 8.0% of West Midlands businesses reported the number of EU workers had decreased and 3.7% of workers outside the EU had decreased. Overall, for the change in EU and non-EU workers 7.0% of West Midlands businesses preferred not to say and 53.4% were not sure. 39.6% of West Midlands businesses reported it was not relevant as have not employed workers from outside the EU.

Expected Recruitment and the Immigration System

Businesses were asked if they expected to recruit new workers from countries in the EU or EEA in the next 12 months. 7.6% of responding businesses reported there were expecting to recruit from EU or EEA countries within the next 12 months, 42.1% reported they were not expecting to. 2.7% of West Midlands businesses preferred not to say and 47.6% were unsure.

Businesses were asked to what extent did they agree or disagree with the following statement: “We understand what the new immigration system for recruiting EU or EEA citizens means for our business”. For West Midlands businesses, 44.2% either agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the new immigration system for recruiting EU or EEA citizens.

Online Jobs Adverts

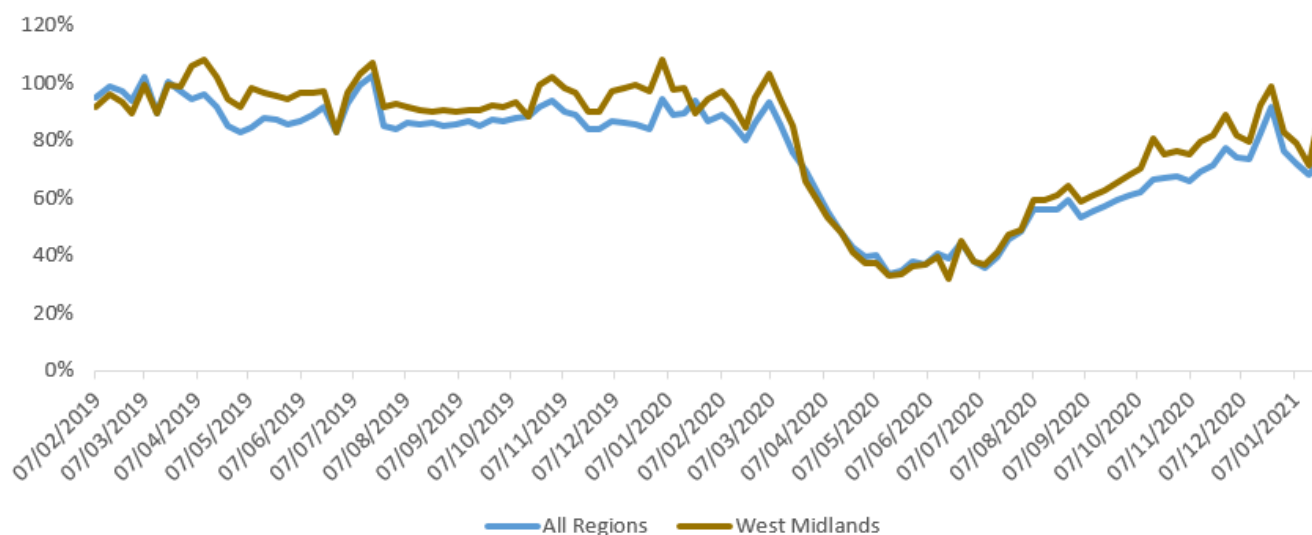
These estimates are experimental figures are taken from jobs adverts provided by Adzuna. Previously the analysis compared the latest period with the whole of the previous year average. This has now changed to show the percentage

change from the same week in the previous year for each category. This will remove some of the seasonality that previous comparisons may have contained. The Adzuna categories do not correspond to SIC categories and therefore not comparable with the ONS Vacancy Survey.

Nationally, between the 15th January and 22nd January total online job adverts increased by 5.4 percentage points to 73.6% of the levels seen in the same week as the previous year. Out of the 28 categories (excluding unknown) 21 increased from the previous week, with the highest increase in domestic help by 22.3 percentage points to 116.6% of the level seen in the same week in the previous year. The highest decrease was in the education category (decreasing by 10.7 percentage points to 65.6% of level seen in the same week in the previous year).

Between the 15th January and the 22nd January, for the West Midlands, the total online jobs adverts decreased by 18.5 percentage points to 90.1% of the levels seen in the same week in the previous year. The East of England was the only region to experience a decrease over the period by 3.0 percentage points to 63.6% of levels seen in the same week in the previous year. London had the highest increase over the period by 29.2 percentage points to 84.6% of levels seen in the same week in the previous year.

The following chart shows the total weekly job adverts on Adzuna, for all regions and the West Midlands, 7th February 2019 to 22nd January 2021: percentage change from the same week in the previous year:



Source: Adzuna

Social Impacts of the Coronavirus

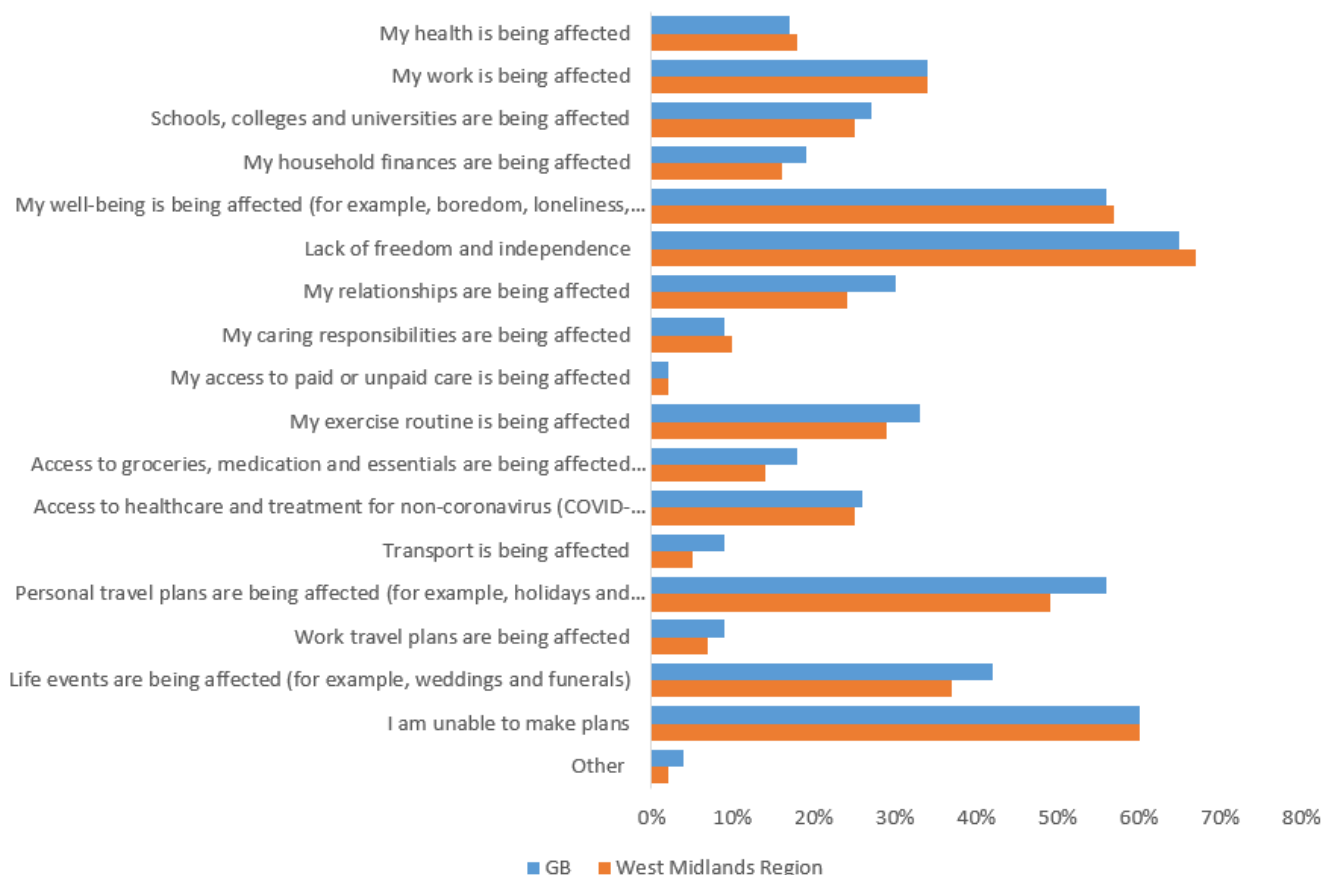
The following refers to the period of 20th to 24th January unless stated otherwise.

Impact on People's Life Overall

In the West Midlands 75% of adults reported they were very or somewhat worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their life, slightly above the Great Britain average of 76%. Only 8% of responding West Midlands adults reported that they were somewhat unworried or not at all worried (9% GB).

The main concern that COVID-19 was affecting West Midlands adults at 67% was the lack of freedom and independence.

The following chart shows how COVID-19 is affecting West Midlands adults and also the overall all persons total:



Well-Being, Loneliness and Perceptions of the Future

Average personal well-being scores for life satisfaction was 6.4 in the West Midlands (6.5 GB), worthwhile was 6.9 in the West Midlands (7.0 GB), happiness was 6.4 for West Midlands adults (matching GB) and anxious was recorded at 4.6 for West Midlands adults (4.3 GB).

42% of adults in the West Midlands reported high levels of anxiety (37% for GB).

26% of adults in the West Midlands reported to often/always or some of the time to feeling lonely (27% GB). While 46% reported hardly ever or never feeling lonely in the West Midlands (47% GB).

22% of West Midlands adults believe it will take 6 months or less before life returns to normal (20% GB). While 37% of West Midlands adults believed it will take 7 to 12 months (35% GB). 25% of West Midlands adults think it could more than a year to return back to normal (28% GB) and 2% for the West Midlands adults thought it would never go back to normal (3% GB).

Government Guidelines

59% of adults in the West Midlands felt they had enough information about government plans to manage COVID-19 (56% GB). 89% of adults in the West Midlands strongly or tend to support the current lockdown measures for where they live (87% GB). Only 5% of West Midlands adults strongly or tend to oppose the lockdown measures (6% GB).

78% of adults in the West Midlands region reported it was very easy or easy to understand the current lockdown measures (74% GB). 8% of West Midlands adults found them difficult or very difficult to understand the measures (9% GB).

81% of adults in the West Midlands region reported it was very easy or easy to follow the current lockdown measures (78% GB). 5% of West Midlands adults found them difficult or very difficult to follow the measures (8% GB).

Mass Testing and Vaccines

In the West Midlands, 83% of adults strongly or tend to support mass testing (79% GB), while only 2% strongly or tend to oppose mass testing (3% GB).

70% of adults in the West Midlands were very or fairly likely to get a test for COVID-19 even if they did not have any symptoms (69% GB). While 14% were very or fairly unlikely to get a test without symptoms (16% GB).

12% of responding adults In the West Midlands region have received a vaccine (matching GB average) a further 5% have been offered a vaccine and waiting to be vaccinated (6% GB). 83% have not received or been offered the vaccine (81% GB).

90% of adults in the West Midlands were very or fairly likely to have the vaccine if it was offered to them (88% GB). While 5% of West Midlands adults were very or fairly unlikely (matching GB average) to have the vaccine if offered.

HEADLINES

SECTOR	KEY CONCERNS
Cross Sector	<p>COVID-19 and Related Support</p> <p>Despite unprecedented levels of business support from Government during the pandemic, regional business leaders are stressing that the support is not enough to help businesses to stay afloat and are calling for further, urgent aid from Government in order to avoid further job losses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is amid hearing that many firms locally are being forced to consider making redundancies in order to weather the economic climate. • The potential looming unemployment crisis may be beginning to show in the data: according to the ONS the West Midlands employment rate fell to 73.8% between September and November 2020 and unemployment increased by 1.4%. • Local job losses, some undoubtedly Covid related, are also being reported in the local press. For example, GKN have announced the closure of their Birmingham factory, with a loss of 500 jobs. <p>Growth Hubs are receiving distressed calls from businesses and sole traders who are facing financial difficulties and struggling to cope without further Covid-19 support.</p> <p>Clients are also querying decisions where Local Authorities has not awarded them a grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses are reporting that, from their perspective, some LAs are not pushing grants and support out quickly enough and they are waiting with no indication of if and when a grant will be awarded. <p>Additional issues raised related to COVID 19 and accompanying support this week include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furlough Holiday Pay – Employees that were on furlough for most of last year, are now due their holiday pay including bank holidays. Companies now facing large holiday pay commitments some of which are concerned about the affordability of this and the impact on their operational futures. This has also highlighted a lack of understanding on employer rights, as businesses are able to enforce holiday during a furlough period. With the furlough scheme extended, this problem may further be highlighted as businesses complete their financial years between now and April 2021. • Employment & Kickstart/Apprentices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are reports from Growth Hubs of an increased number of employment related enquiries with businesses looking to recruit entry level staff and take on apprentices. This is mixed with some reports of redundancies of senior and middle management as businesses look to adjust their strategies and make savings on workforce related expenses. - Changes to Kickstart should make the application process more streamlined. - Some businesses have reported that due to previous unsatisfactory dealings with DWP candidates. This input has resulted in applications to the scheme that would otherwise have not been progressed by the business. - Now the DWP has removed the threshold of 30 job placements from 3rd February, clients intend to apply directly. There are concerns about the fee charged by the Gateway. • Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As we near a second month of renewed lockdown measures, a number of business across the region have raised the subject of mental health among their workforce, particularly with those families trying to undertake home learning to children, often whilst they are suffering with positive COVID tests. A number of businesses are offering free COVID testing and in some cases are discussing counselling and other services to their staff, with one example of this involving dealing with the loss of colleagues due to the disease. - Leaders and managers across region's business community are under an incredible amount of pressure as they try to do the best thing for their people. In many cases, this also includes facing new challenges, such as trying to support parents and carers

SECTOR	KEY CONCERNS
	<p>with increased responsibilities, and employees struggling with increased mental health concerns brought about by the pandemic.</p> <p>UK Transition</p> <p>Ongoing issues are being reported by some businesses in the West Midlands. Key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional costs associated with freight. Freight agencies continue to be employed by those with little knowledge or resource to conduct this activity themselves. • Port Stacking. Businesses predicting, or certainly posing the question, that the real impact of port stacking will not be felt until the economy returns to normal levels. • DIT queries remain around the movement of people and with the current travel restrictions, particularly within the service sector. Other issues and concerns around the sourcing of international skills and delays with issuing VISA's for prospective new employees. • Confusion over duties payable. • Instances of EU firms cancelling orders from the UK due to the extra bureaucracy and looking to source products from the EU instead. • Costs of having to set up a subsidiary in the EU affecting profitability. • Delays in transport times for exports and increase in transit time for inbound goods. • Large increases in related admin and disruption. • Many enquiries from companies asking about European carnets. • Confusion over rules origin, particularly businesses confused about whether Certificate of Origin covers goods of EU origin. <p>However, many businesses are reporting that they are unaffected by our departure from the EU, have felt little impact or that they are sufficiently prepared in relation to their obligations. Others, whilst not directly affected, are dealing with a small number issues with suppliers or clients.</p> <p>Start-Ups and New Business Models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital – There has been a large shift to digital and online activity as a result of the pandemic with businesses looking to diversify and adapt. IT related projects are common as is the demand for support with developing new Sales & Marketing Strategies. There is also a high demand for skills in producing online brochures and sales collateral. Many businesses highlighting their online strategy as a priority along with advice and guidance around general business planning. <p>Schemes and Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This week has seen a healthy number of referrals to support businesses proactively rather than just supporting Covid survival. Start-Ups have featured highly along with grant referrals for Green Business initiatives and Capital and Tech Investment projects. Assistance has also been sought for property searches, training and recruitment.
Manufacturing	<p>UK Transition</p> <p>As above, there is continued signs of EU Exit related problems surfacing – that are likely to disproportionately affect manufacturing. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of businesses across the region have expressed their concern in the decreased ease of flow of essential components, which has resulted in damaging production hold-ups and knock-on effects to supply chains. Previous slickness (particularly with just-in-time processes) is now peppered with risk which is decreasing competitive edge. • There is uncertainty around Rules of Origin and fear that this will add time and costs and time to exporting processes. The rules are currently unclear, including differences across countries and the status of product warranties. • In many manufacturing sectors where parts are shipped to and from Europe to make a final product, it can be very difficult to determine origin for some products (with so many components adding value), particularly within complex manufacturing supply chains. The system for calculating where a product has originated from is also

SECTOR	KEY CONCERNS
	<p>not well communicated and potentially difficult for many businesses to understand without good advice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Companies are also witnessing price rises for materials such as steel, copper, nickel and brass There are gaps in paperwork, including on the EU side as well as here – and inconsistency across EU countries. As freight/trucks can have containers from different companies as part of their consignment, 1 product with bad paperwork can hold up the whole lorry (with different products from different companies included). This means firms have no control over some delays; this is particularly bad for SMEs/lower value products that are more likely to be transported in this way. Reverse charging for VAT is having a serious effect on cash flow <p>The UK-EU transition and COVID impacts continue to have a dual disruption on business and trade. For example, a concern has been raised by manufacturing firms (including automotive tier 1 suppliers) around access to the supply of materials from Asia (Thailand, Taiwan and Japan). This is largely down to the “container crisis”; where across the world containers are stuck in various ports as a result of staff shortages at ports, shipping companies, which causes bottlenecks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impacts are extra cost: as a result of needing to satisfy just-in-time contracts, more companies are having to ship components by air, which costs a lot more. Firms have also had to move to weekend working to make up lost time, which costs more and causes disruptions while putting pressure on workforces. Small consignments are really delayed, such as from 24hr delivery to 2-3 weeks. Some couriers are a serious issue. <p>MakeUK released a paper this week on ‘The Impact of the EU-UK Agreement on manufacturers’. Its findings include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Even those companies deeming themselves “ready” have still faced disruption Supply chain disruption has been felt immediately New rules for products including rules of origin, conformity and product markings are a whole new world for many: The NI protocol brings new checks but not all companies have taken the necessary steps Manufacturers are regularly sending employees to the EU for business but again these rules will change
Aviation	Quarantining Policy – Urgent clarity is required on new quarantine rules for airports, stressed by Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce .
Technology	Tech start-ups and scaleups in the West Midlands raised a record £390m in funding in 2020 , almost three times more than 2019’s previous record of £132m. According to new data by Tech Nation and job search engine Adzuna, the West Midlands tech success story in 2020 was Gymshark , the Solihull-based fitness e-commerce platform which raised £200m in growth equity funding to become the region’s second-ever unicorn , a private company valued at \$1bn or more.

NEW ECONOMIC SHOCKS

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	SOURCE/DETAIL
Economy-wide	Wider region	All	The number of deals completed in the Midlands last year fell to its lowest level since 2014, according to new figures, while their values slumped by almost 60 per cent. Experian has said transaction numbers dropped from 989 to 825 in 2020, a fall of 17 per cent. The value of the deals dropped by 57 per cent from £15.3bn to £6.6bn, the lowest level over the last decade.
GKN Automotive	Birmingham	Automotive	GKN Automotive have announced plans to close their Birmingham factory, with the loss of more than 500 jobs
FireAngel	Coventry	Manufacturing	Coventry-based home safety products developer FireAngel has said its full-year revenues for 2020 look likely to drop by around £6m. In a trading update this morning (February 25), the company blamed the Covid-19 pandemic for reporting reduced sale of approximately £39.5m and for the delay in making progress on its Connected Homes strategy. Despite this, the firm said that trading in the second half of the year had been “encouraging”. No profit or loss figures were supplied in the trading update. Last year, FireAngel announced a loss of £11m for 2019.
Lookers	Black Country and nationwide	Car dealership	Car dealership Lookers swung to a £50m loss in 2020 as Covid-19 forced its showrooms to close for large parts of the year.
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre	Wolverhampton	Entertainment	Staff are set to be made redundant at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton as the coronavirus crisis continues to hit the entertainment industry hard. The theatre would not confirm how many jobs it is looking to cut, but said a formal consultation period had begun.
The Rank Group	Wider region and nationwide	Entertainment – gambling and betting activities	The Rank Group, which includes Mecca Bingo and Grosvenor Casinos, slipped to a £48.6 million pre-tax loss in the last six months of 2020 after a challenging first half of its financial year.
Barclays	Black Country and nationwide	Banking	Barclays is closing its branch on Lichfield Street, Bilston in May as the bank continues to axe dozens across the country. Barclays says there will be no redundancies from the Bilston branch closure as staff will be “reallocated” within the business.

NEW INVESTMENT, DEALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
Boohoo	Wider region and nationwide	Retail	Boohoo is in talks to buy the final three Arcadia brands: Dorothy Perkins, Wallis and Burton. Rival online group Asos also confirmed this week it was closing in on a deal to buy Arcadia's biggest brands, including Topshop. Neither Boohoo nor Asos, which are web-only, are expected to take on any of Arcadia's 444 outlets that employ the lion's share of its 13,000 employees.
Sandwell Council	Sandwell	Public	Ministers have signed off on £24m for the £30.1m project to cut traffic congestion at the Birchley Island in Oldbury, describing it as a key element in the region's fight back from the pandemic.
JCB	Wider region	Manufacturing	Staffordshire digger giant JCB is recruiting more than 400 additional UK shop floor employees as the company gears up for a surge in production.
Persimmon Homes	Wolverhampton	Housing	Residents in one of Wolverhampton's most deprived neighbourhoods have given a thumbs up to a new £800,000 park being built near their homes. The development, which includes a multi-purpose gaming zone, cricket pitch, adult gym equipment and a children's play area, is taking shape on a large area of unused land off Ward Street and Coningsby Drive in Ettingshall.
Dudley Council	Dudley	Public	Dudley's Plaza Mall building, a landmark town centre building where Woolworths was originally located. is undergoing £100,000 of restoration works. The improvements are being funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Dudley Council through the Dudley Townscape Heritage Programme which provides grant assistance to historic buildings centred around the marketplace and neighbouring streets.
Norton Motorcycle Company	Solihull	Transport	Norton Motorcycle Company has announced that it is moving from Castle Donnington to a new state-of-the-art headquarters in Solihull. The new facility, on Solar Park, is the result of a multimillion-pound investment by Norton's Indian parent company TVS Motor Company, which says it will be the most advanced in the 122-year-old motorcycle brand's history. 50 jobs will be created.
DB Schenker	Tamworth	Logistics	German logistics and supply chain management firm DB Schenker is expanding its presence in the West Midlands in a move expected to create 100 new jobs. The company has signed a seven-year deal on an additional 153,064 sq. ft unit at the 21-acre Centurion Park in Tamworth where it already occupies 140,000 sq. ft.
Mega Lab (Leamington) NHS Test and Trace programme	Leamington Spa	Medical Technologies	Around 850 jobs are now available at a state-of-the-art laboratory in Leamington as part of the UK's NHS Test and Trace programme. Laboratory support technicians are needed at the high output diagnostics laboratory which will be processing Covid-19 tests. The technicians will provide support with testing the coronavirus samples when they arrive through to processing and storage, and will work closely with junior and senior laboratory technicians, and biomedical scientists.

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
Alsters Kelley	Coventry, Leamington Spa, Nuneaton and Southam	Professional Services	A Warwickshire solicitors' firm has acquired a counterpart in the county for an undisclosed sum. It is the company's first acquisition for 15 years and is set to boost its turnover by 10 per cent in the next 12 months. Alsters Kelley has snapped up Bonell & Co Solicitors in Stratford-upon-Avon, bringing its total number of offices to five. The buyer currently has bases in Coventry, Leamington Spa, Nuneaton and Southam.
Alliance Medical Group	Warwick	Medical Technologies	Revenue remained static at a Warwick medical imaging group during its latest financial year, despite the impact of Covid-19. Alliance Medical Group has reported a revenue of £319m for the 12 months to 30 September 2020, the same as in the prior year. Its pre-tax profits however dipped from £13.1m to £5.5m over the same period. Alliance Medical Group operates in the UK, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain.
Tom White Waste	Coventry	Waste Disposal Services	A waste disposal company grew its turnover in the year before it was acquired by Coventry City Council, new documents show. Tom White Waste has posted a turnover of £14.5m for the 12 months to 31 March 2020, up from £14.1m during the prior period. Its pre-tax profits went from £1.2m to £754,407 over the same time. Coventry City Council snapped up the company at the start of March 2020.
Urban Air Port Air-One	Coventry	Engineering/	The world's first airport for flying taxis and delivery drones is to open in Coventry. Urban Air Port Air-One has been selected as a winner of the UK Government's Future Flight Challenge to develop aviation infrastructure and systems that enable the next generation of electric and autonomous air vehicles Air-One will be a hub for future electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and will be launched in the city later this year.
Stadium Traffic Management	Coventry	Manufacturing	A Coventry-based event management specialist has joined the national effort against Covid-19 by committing resource to a new network of lateral flow testing sites across the city. Stadium, which is based on Bodmin Road, Coventry, is providing around 80 of its experienced events staff to help facilitate lateral flow Covid tests for asymptomatic individuals, which produce results after 30 minutes. The new testing sites that Stadium staff will be supporting include Coventry Transport Museum, The Alan Higgs Centre and Moat House Leisure & Neighbourhood Centre, with more sites to follow.
CeraCon UK	Leamington Spa	Manufacturing	Managing Director Robert Jones led the management buy-out of Leamington-based CeraCon UK, which safeguarded the future of the 20 staff at the foam sealing company. After a nine-month process, the deal was completed with the support and guidance of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Growth Hub. Contrary to the recent problems being experienced by its German parent company, CeraCon UK has consistently grown year-on-year in its seven-year history, applying its services and technology to new markets. Even with the challenges over the last 12 months, the company will grow by 20 per cent.
Fertility Focus	Warwick	Medical Technologies	A Warwickshire-based manufacturer of fertility monitoring products has secured further investment through a £250,000

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
			loan, enabling it to invest in its staff, continue research and development while safeguarding against the impact of COVID-19. Fertility Focus secured the finance from The FSE Group Debt Finance Fund, part of the Midlands Engine Investment Fund (MEIF) and backed by the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS).
The Red Kangaroo Trampoline Park	Bedworth	Leisure & Retail	The Red Kangaroo Trampoline Park is set to re-open this year after the company signed a 15-year lease on a purpose-built unit on the same site as its previous home that was destroyed by fire in 2018. A reopening date was set for April, but is now dependent on how the leisure industry and the region will be affected by any changes to the current COVID-19 restrictions.

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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