



Universal Credit aims to reduce poverty, by making work pay, and to help claimants and their families to become more independent.

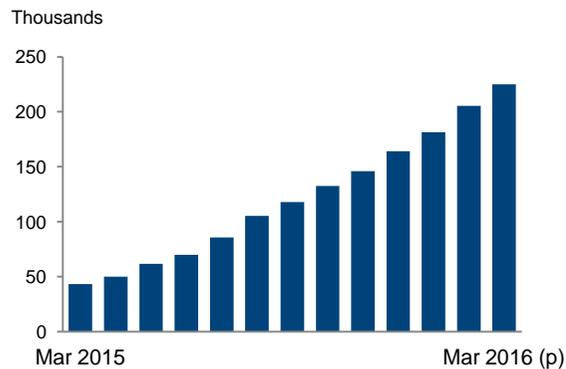
Universal Credit was introduced in April 2013 in certain pathfinder areas of North West England. Since October 2013, it has progressively been rolled out to other areas. In the period covered by this release, 690 Jobcentre Plus offices have started to introduce Universal Credit.

## Main story

The number of people on Universal Credit as of 10 March 2016 was 225,002. The number of people in employment is currently 87,592 (39 per cent).

### 225,002 claimants

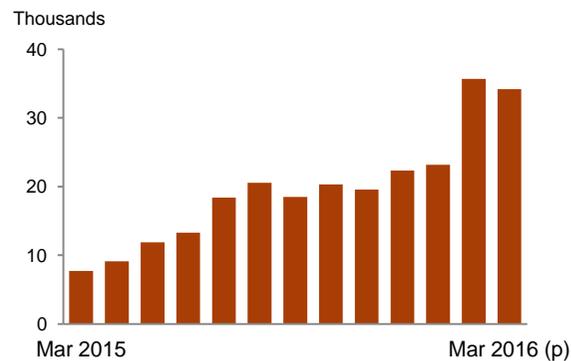
March 2016



As Universal Credit is expanded across the country the number of people receiving it continues to increase, reaching 225,002 in March 2016.

### Starts remain high

March 2016



The number of starts made to Universal Credit was 31,538 in March 2016 as roll-out extends to cover over 95% of Jobcentre Plus Offices.

### Claims drop over Easter

Up to 7 April 2016



453,952 claims have been made for Universal Credit up to 7 April 2016. 38,369 claims have been made for Universal Credit in the last four weeks at an average of 9,592 per week.

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Thoughts? We welcome feedback

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## What you need to know

This summary contains statistics on Universal Credit covering the period to 7 April 2016 (for claims made) and 10 March 2016 (for starts and people receiving Universal Credit) encompassing the 690 Jobcentre Plus offices which had implemented Universal Credit up to those dates.

Universal Credit aims to reduce poverty, by making work pay, and to help claimants and their families to become more independent. It also aims to simplify the benefits system by providing a single payment based upon the circumstances of the household. Support for housing costs, children and childcare costs are integrated in the new benefit. It also provides additions for disabled people and carers.

The following benefits will be replaced as Universal Credit rolls out.

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

The main differences between Universal Credit and the current welfare system are:

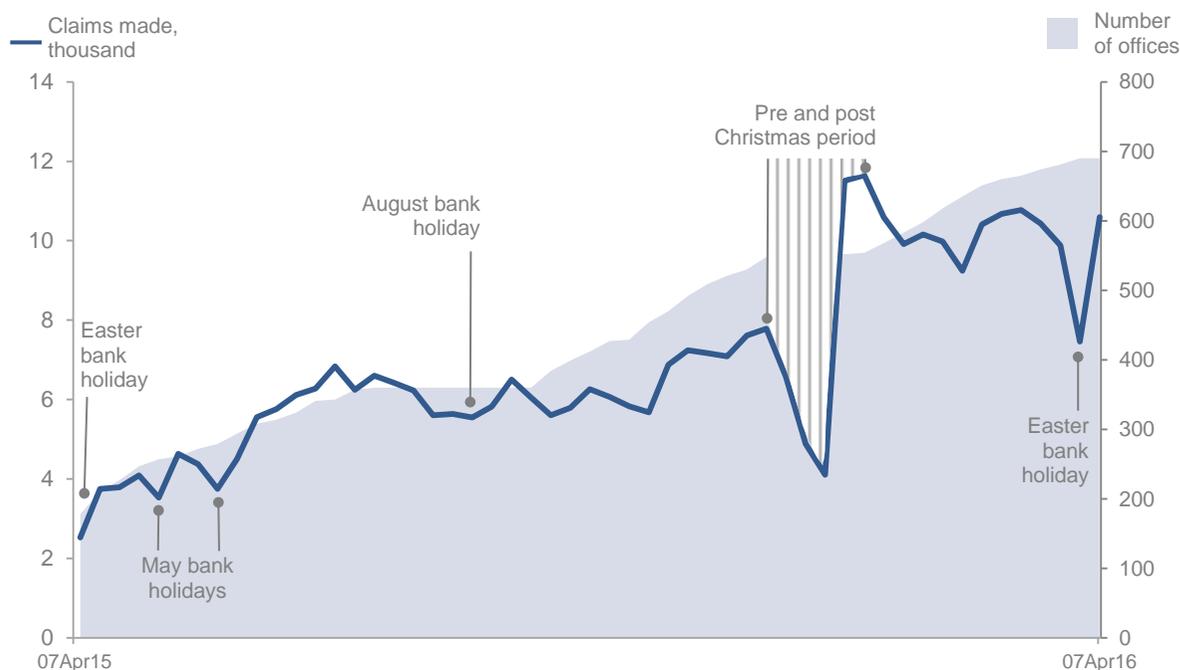
- Universal Credit is available to people who are in work and on a low income, as well as to those who are out-of-work.
- Most people will apply online and manage their claim through an online account.
- Universal Credit will be responsive – as people on low incomes move in and out of work, they will get on-going support.
- Most claimants on low incomes will still be paid Universal Credit when they first start a new job or increase their part-time hours.
- Claimants will receive a single monthly household payment, paid into a bank account in the same way as a monthly salary; support with housing costs will usually go direct to the claimant as part of their monthly payment.

This report contains three measures. **Claims** made counts the number of applications submitted for Universal Credit. Some of these people will go on to **Start** receiving Universal Credit. **People on Universal Credit** includes all those who have started and are still on Universal Credit at the count date (second Thursday of the month). Some people will have their claim terminated either at the request of the individual or if their entitlement to Universal Credit ends. See the Background Information document for more detail on the definitions used in this publication.

# Claiming Universal Credit

## The number of claims made dipped over Easter but generally remain high

New claims per week and number of offices accepting claims in the last year to Thursday 7 April 2016



The total number of claims made for Universal Credit in the last four weeks is 38,369, with an average of 9,592 claims per week, compared to an average of 10,276 claims in the previous four weeks.

There was a decline in the number of claims made to Universal Credit over the Easter period. The number of claims made for Universal Credit dropped to 7,462 for the week ending 31 March 2016. However, the number of claims picked up again the following week. This is a seasonal Easter trend, and matches what we have seen since Universal Credit has been rolled out.

Claims made for Universal Credit reached a daily peak of 3,227 on 4 January 2016, and a weekly peak of 11,647 on the week ending 14 January 2016. These peaks are part of the post-Christmas seasonal trend and follow a lull in claims before Christmas.

See **Table 1.1** for summary statistics and [Stat-Xplore](#) for the full data series.

## How people claim Universal Credit

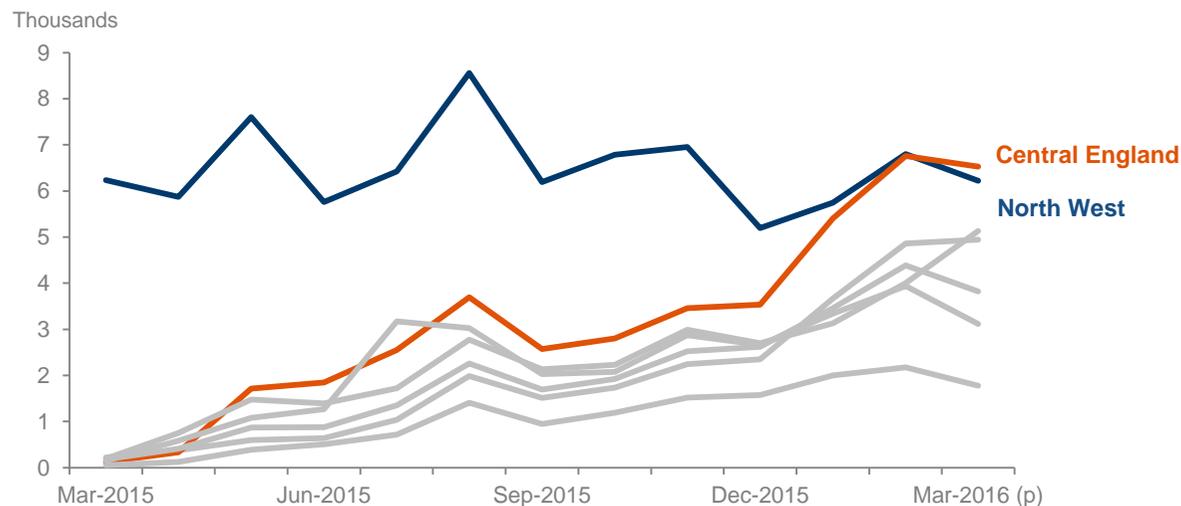
People will usually make a claim for Universal Credit online, during which initial claim verification will take place. After making a claim, an initial interview will take place with the claimant at which the eligibility for Universal Credit will be confirmed, and the claimant will accept a [Claimant Commitment](#). At this point, a claimant will be recorded as starting Universal Credit. Users should note that the statistics on claims made are four weeks more up-to-date than statistics on starts and people on Universal Credit. Not all people who make a claim for Universal Credit will go on to start. The statistics for claims and starts used in this publication include all claims and starts to Universal Credit.

In last month's publication improvements to the people on Universal Credit data and starts data at a local level led to both data series being revised. As a result, if not already obtained, it is advisable to get the new data series for starts and people on Universal Credit via [Stat-Xplore](#).

# Starts to Universal Credit

## Proportion of starts to Universal Credit from the North West is decreasing

Number of starts to Universal Credit by region and month



Since national roll-out in February 2015 the regional picture of starts has changed dramatically.

The proportion of overall starts in the **North West** has decreased as Universal Credit expands to other areas. It has fallen from 87 per cent in March 2015 to 20 per cent in March 2016.

**Central England** is now the largest region in terms of new starts to Universal Credit. In March, 21 per cent of all starts came from this region.

London and the Home Counties and the North East have also seen a rise in starts, and are the third and fourth highest region respectively in March.

**The total number of starts that have been made to Universal Credit in the month up to 10 March 2016 was 31,538.** This is the second highest monthly number of starts to Universal Credit. The total number of starts that have been made since Universal Credit began is 298,664.

In the past month, there have been more starts to Universal Credit in Bolton, Blackhorse Street, Jobcentre Plus office than any other (229 people starting).

Oldham Jobcentre Plus office still has the highest cumulative number of starts of any Jobcentre Plus office (7,041).

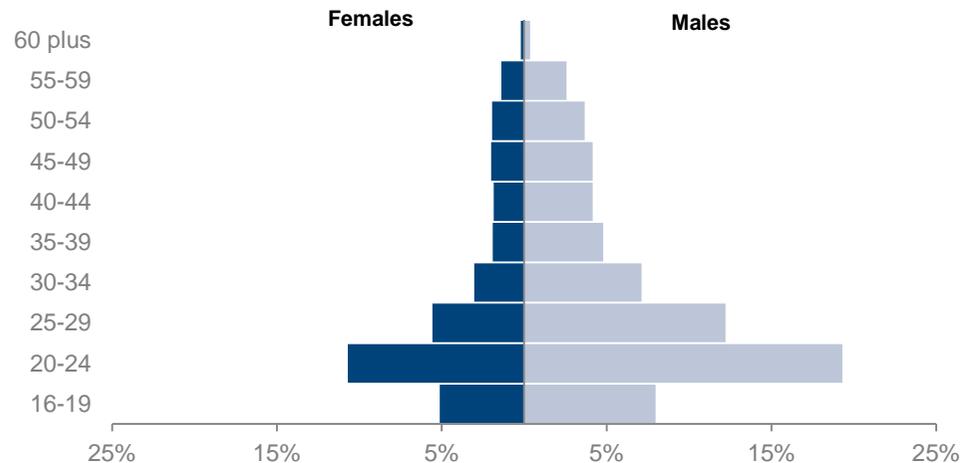
Over the last two months there have been more starts to Universal Credit from the 16-24 age group compared to other age groups. This goes against the trend we were seeing towards the end of last year, when the proportion of starts from the 16-24 age group was declining.

Please note the figures for the latest month (March 2016) are provisional and will be finalised in the next release. See the Background Information document for more details. See **table 2.1** for summary statistics and [Stat-Xplore](#) for the full data series.

# People on Universal Credit

## Men aged 20-24 make up one fifth of the total on Universal Credit

Percentage of people on Universal Credit, by age group and gender, March 2016



**There were 225,002 people on Universal Credit as of 10 March 2016.** This represents an increase of 10 per cent when compared to the number of people on Universal Credit in February 2016.

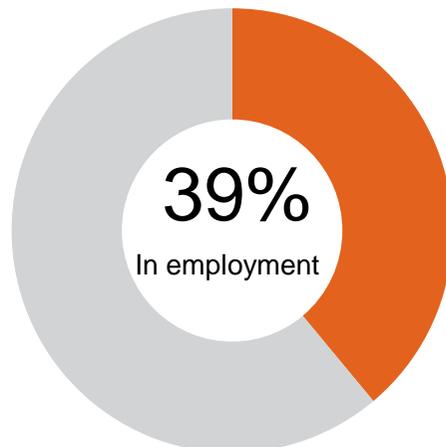
In March, there were more males on Universal Credit than females (66 per cent compared to 34 per cent).

Males aged 20-24 made up 19 per cent of the total Universal Credit figure. However, since the last summer there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of 20-24 year olds males on Universal Credit.

Over the last two months there has been an increase in the proportion of people who have been on Universal Credit for less than three months. At 38 per cent it has risen to match the proportion of people who have been on Universal Credit for more than six months.

## Almost two fifths of people on Universal Credit are in employment

Percentage of people on Universal Credit who are in employment, March 2016



Of the people on Universal Credit in March 2016, 39 per cent (87,592) were in employment and 61 per cent (137,414) were not in employment. The proportion in employment dipped in February 2016 following the seasonal trade period, but has risen to 39 per cent this month.

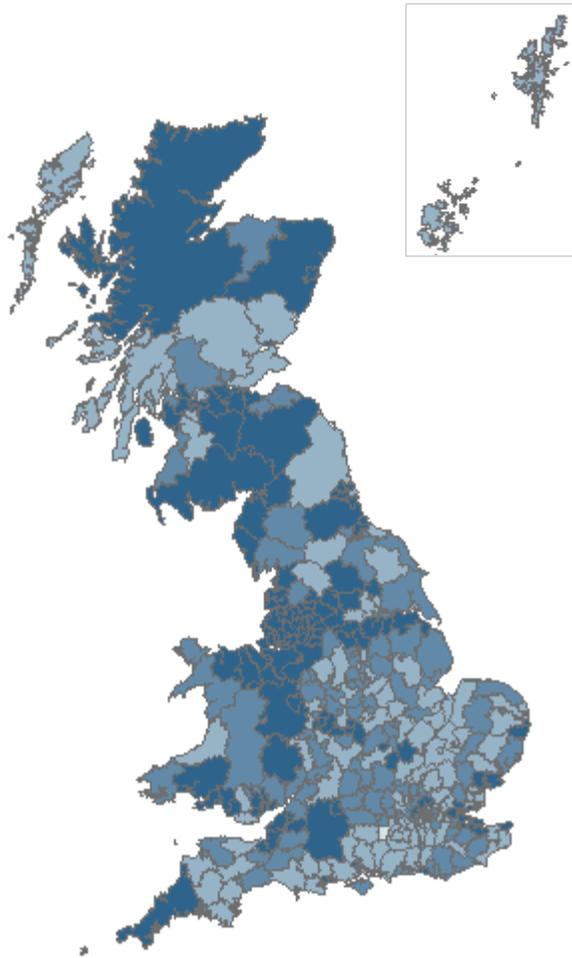
The Jobcentre Plus office with the most people on Universal Credit was Bolton, Blackhorse Street, with 3,066 Universal Credit claimants, followed by Oldham, with 3,030 (breakdowns of people on Universal Credit by Jobcentre Plus office, local authority and parliamentary constituency are available on [Stat-Xplore](#)).

See **tables 3.1-3.3** for summary statistics and [Stat-Xplore](#) for the full data series.

Please note figures for the latest month (March 2016) are provisional and will be finalised in the next release. See the Background Statistics document for more details.

# Where Universal Credit claimants live

## The North West, where roll-out started, has the largest number of Universal Credit claimants



The adjacent map shows people on Universal Credit by Local Authority as at 10 March 2016.

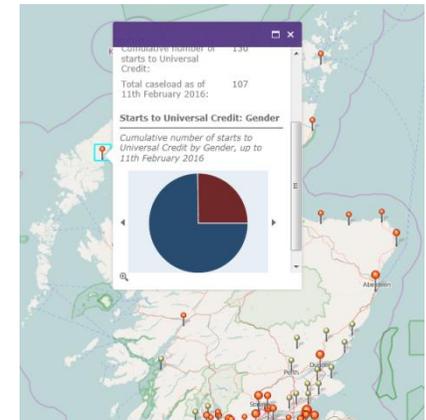
The darker areas of the map are local authorities with high levels of Universal Credit claimants, while the lighter areas are the Local Authorities with fewer Universal Credit claimants.

### Where you live

Find information about your local Jobcentre plus office on our interactive map.

Please click [here](#) to access the interactive map.

On the interactive map, the size of each pin is proportional to the number of claimants on Universal Credit as of 10 March 2016. Key statistics for each Jobcentre Plus office can be viewed by clicking on each pin, as can be seen in the adjacent example.



For further information on supported browsers, please visit the following website: <http://doc.arcgis.com/en/arcgis-online/reference/browsers.htm>

## About these statistics

These official statistics have been compiled using data from systems within local offices and records of Universal Credit benefit payments made by the Department.

This and other new data sources will, in time, allow a progressively wider range of breakdowns to be published as new IT systems are introduced. The methodology used and definitions of the official statistics may be updated within subsequent releases, along with information on the impact of any changes to the time series already released. A [strategy](#) for the release of official statistics on Universal Credit was published in September 2013 and updated in February 2016.

These statistics have been developed using guidelines set out by the UK Statistics Authority, and are new official statistics undergoing evaluation. They have, therefore, been designated as [Experimental Statistics](#). Users are invited to [comment](#) on the development and relevance of these statistics at this stage.

For the period which these statistics cover there were 690 Jobcentre Plus offices delivering Universal Credit. See **table 4.1** for a full list of Jobcentre Plus offices by the date they implemented Universal Credit.

## Further roll out

Universal Credit, which is available in the majority of Jobcentre Plus offices across England, Scotland and Wales, completed its roll out to the whole of the North West of England on 15 December 2014. From 30 June 2014 Universal Credit expanded to include new claims from couples and from 24 November 2014 to new claims from families. Universal Credit continued its roll out to all Jobcentre Plus offices and local authorities across the country on 16 February 2015.

A limited test of the Full Service for Universal Credit was launched in Sutton, South London, on 26 November 2014, and expanded into Croydon and Southwark, South London on the 10 June 2015 and 4 November 2015 respectively. Claimants will manage their Universal Credit claim online to monitor payments, communicate with their work coach and record work search progress. Please note that this publication does not currently include statistics covering these areas.

The Full Service for Universal Credit was introduced into Hounslow, West London, on 27 January 2016, and Musselburgh, East Scotland, on 23 March 2016. Figures for Hounslow and Musselburgh in this publication do not include Full Service claimants.

## Where to find out more

This document and the summary tables can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>

Build your own tables using Stat-Xplore: <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

See our interactive map: <http://dwp-stats.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=82116e01690d4e8584014362d67900c6>

Older releases can be found here but please note that figures are subject to change. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>

Background Information and a release strategy for the statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-statistics-background-information>