

National Assembly for Wales
Research paper

Unemployment Briefing

March 2015

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National Assembly for Wales
Research paper

Unemployment Briefing

March 2015

Gareth Thomas

This briefing paper provides a statistical overview of unemployment trends.

Information is included on Assembly constituencies, Wales and UK nations and regions.

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Unemployment Briefing: March 2015

Introduction

Unemployment statistics are published each month by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This paper is released shortly after the ONS data and aims to provide a brief summary of the latest unemployment situation in Wales and the UK.

Section 1 contains headline figures and analysis relating to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and claimant count measures. Additional information is provided in sections 2 to 7. These sections cover comparative information on unemployment rates between genders, age groups, and between Wales and the other UK nations and regions. Additionally, information and analysis on long-term unemployment, and the latest unemployment figures for Assembly Constituencies is provided.

The Research Service is able to provide **Assembly Members and their staff** with more detailed analyses in relation to unemployment and long-term labour market trends on request. If you would like us to do this, please contact Gareth Thomas on 029 2089 8917 or at GarethDavid.Thomas@Assembly.Wales

1. Headline Figures

Table 1.1: Headline unemployment figures (seasonally adjusted)

Measure	Latest figure	Change since previous	
		Month/quarter	Year
Number of ILO unemployed people in Wales (November 2014 - January 2015)	92,000	↓ Decrease of 13,000 since last quarter	↓ Decrease of 8,000
ILO unemployment rate in Wales (November 2014 - January 2015)	6.2%	↓ Decrease of 0.9 percentage points since last quarter	↓ Decrease of 0.4 percentage points
Claimant count in Wales (February 2015)	45,700	↓ Decrease of 1,300 since last month	↓ Decrease of 17,300
Claimant count rate in Wales (February 2015)	3.2%	↓ Decrease of 0.1 percentage points since last month	↓ Decrease of 1.2 percentage points

Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics – March 2015 Headline indicators for Wales: Table 1 – Summary of LFS headline indicators](#) and [Table 7: Claimant Counts and Rates](#)

Labour Force Survey and ILO Unemployment

- In November 2014 to January 2015, the male ILO rate was 6.7%, which has decreased from 7.2% since the previous year. The female ILO rate was 5.7%, which has decreased from 6.1% since the previous year. *Figure 2.1;*
- At 6.2%, the ILO unemployment rate in Wales was 0.5 percentage points above the UK rate in November 2014 to January 2015, and the highest of the UK nations. *Figure 3.1*
- In October 2013 to September 2014, 39,300 people aged 16-24 were ILO unemployed; the ILO rate for 16-24 year olds was 17.6%. *Table 6.1 and Figure 6.1.*

Claimant count

- In February 2015 13,900 people in Wales had been claiming JSA for over 12 months. This has decreased by 5,400 since the previous February. Of those claiming JSA for over 12 months, 7,900 have been claiming for over 24 months, a decrease of 2,100 since the previous February. *Figure 5.2;*
- The claimant count for the 18-24 age group was 13,600 in February 2015. This has increased by 620 since the previous month and decreased by 6,110 since the previous February. *Table 6.2;* and
- The Assembly Constituencies with the highest claimant count rates in February 2015 (based on unofficial estimates) were Blaenau Gwent (6.3%) and Rhondda (5.3%). The lowest claimant count rate estimates were in Brecon and Radnorshire (1.6%), Montgomeryshire, Ceredigion and Alyn and Deeside (all 1.8%). *Table 7.2.*

ILO Unemployment

The **International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of unemployment is the primary measure used in the UK and internationally**, and UK figures are derived by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) from the Labour Force Survey. In the UK people who are classed as ILO unemployed are **those who are without a job, are available to start work in the next two weeks, who have been seeking a job in the last four weeks or are waiting to start a job already obtained.**

The **ILO unemployment rate is the number of ILO unemployed people as a percentage of the economically active population** (this includes people who are in employment and those who are defined as ILO unemployed).

Claimant Count

The **claimant count measures people who are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)**. It is lower than the ILO definition, because some unemployed people are either not entitled to claim benefits, or choose not to do so. **It is the most up-to-date unemployment measure, particularly for smaller areas.**

The **claimant count rate** is calculated in three ways in this paper:

- **For all figures and tables except those for age groups and Assembly Constituencies it has been calculated using the workplace based claimant count rate** which is used by the ONS in its Regional Labour Market Statistics publication. **This is the number of JSA claimants resident in an area as a percentage of the number of workforce jobs plus JSA claimants in an area.**
- **For age groups, claimant count rates are calculated by the ONS as a percentage of the population of the relevant age group.** They are not seasonally adjusted, and therefore take no account of factors such as labour market recruitment patterns. They also do not take account of differences in economic activity levels between areas.
- **For Assembly Constituencies, the claimant count rates are calculated unofficially by the Research Service using the same methodology as the House of Commons Library.** They are calculated by expressing the number of JSA claimants as a **percentage of the economically active population aged between 16 and 64 residing in the constituency.** The population figures are estimates based on the mid-2012 population estimates. **Following publication of data from these estimates, this methodology has changed. Therefore the figures in this paper are not comparable with those in previous editions.** Further detail can be found in House of Commons Library, [*Unemployment by constituency: changes in methodology 2014*](#).

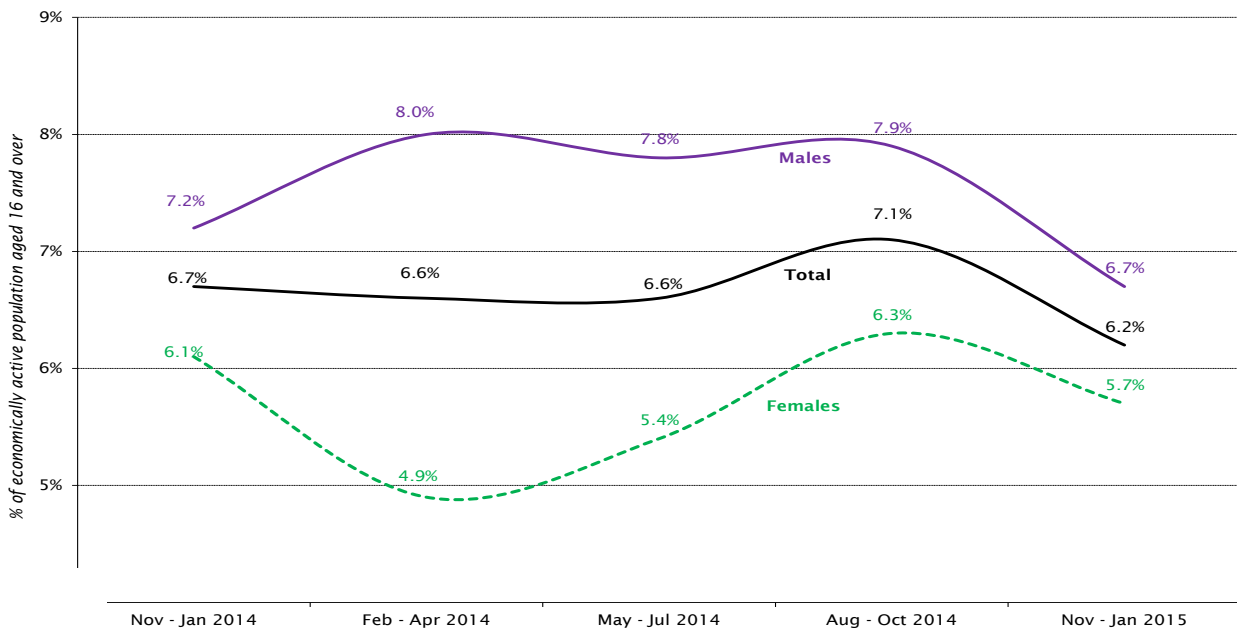
Seasonally adjusted and non-seasonally adjusted data

Headline ILO unemployment and claimant count data for Wales and the other UK nations and regions is seasonally adjusted by the ONS. This means that it is statistically adjusted to remove seasonal factors such as holidays and labour market recruitment patterns. For example, a large number of people leave full-time education and enter the labour market in the summer. To make it easier to identify labour market trends the ONS seasonally adjusts this data. **Other unemployment data such as that for age groups and Assembly Constituencies is not seasonally adjusted by the ONS.**

2. Unemployment rates in Wales

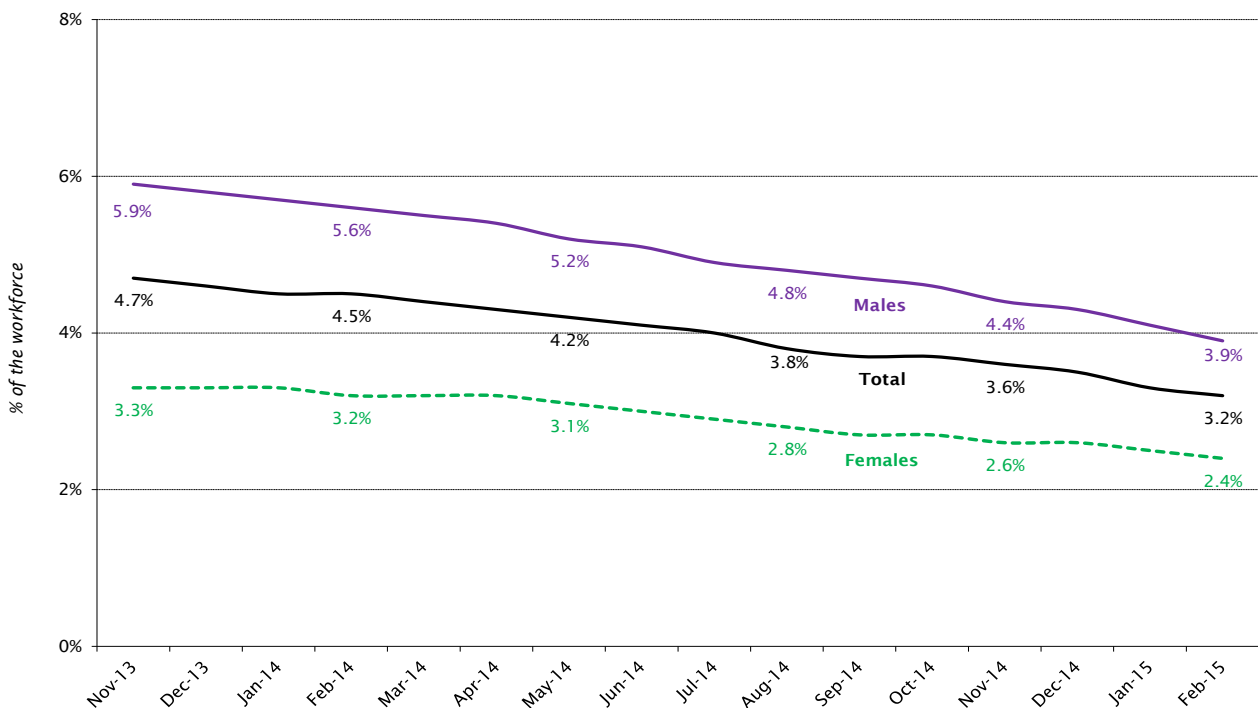
This section provides information on unemployment rates in Wales by gender for the two main measures of unemployment.

Figure 2.1: ILO unemployment rates for Wales, by gender (seasonally adjusted)



Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics – March 2015 Headline indicators for Wales: Table 1 – Summary of LFS headline indicators](#)

Figure 2.2: Claimant count rates for Wales, by gender (seasonally adjusted)

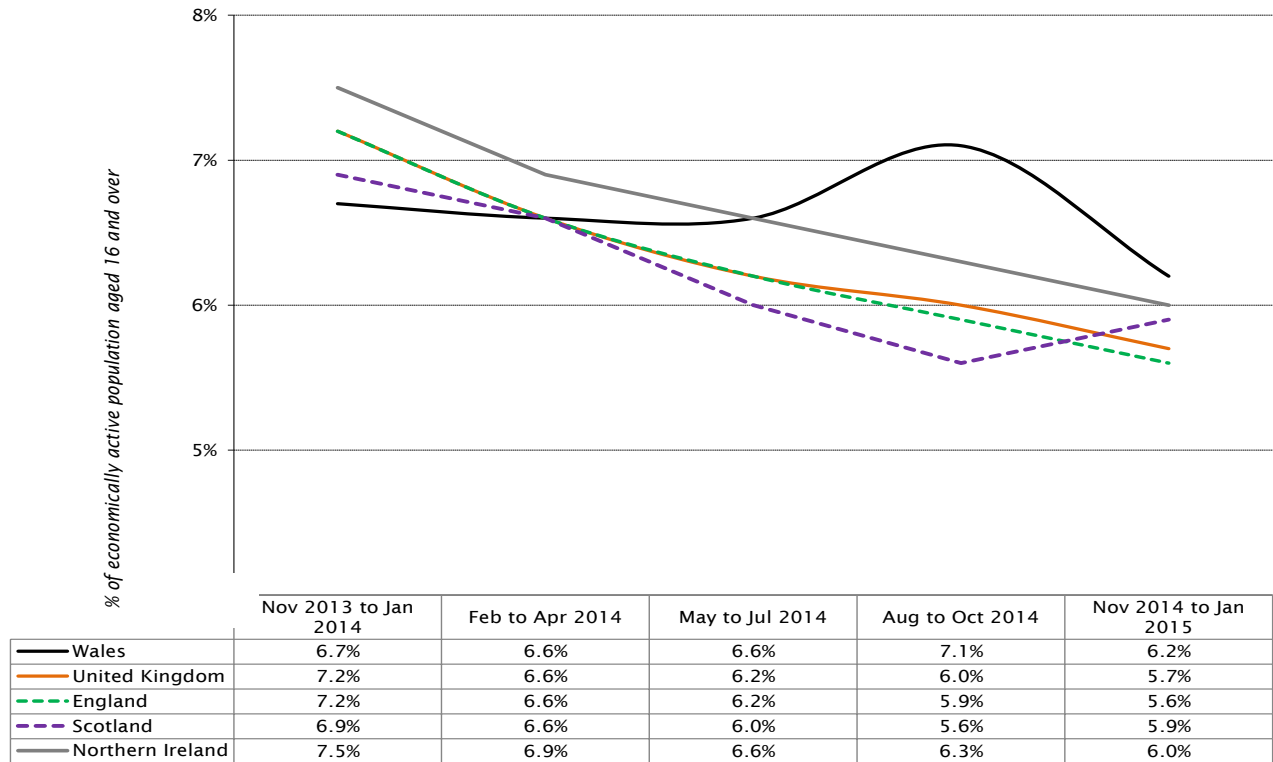


Source: Office for National Statistics, [Claimant Count and Vacancies Series](#)

3. Unemployment statistics for UK nations

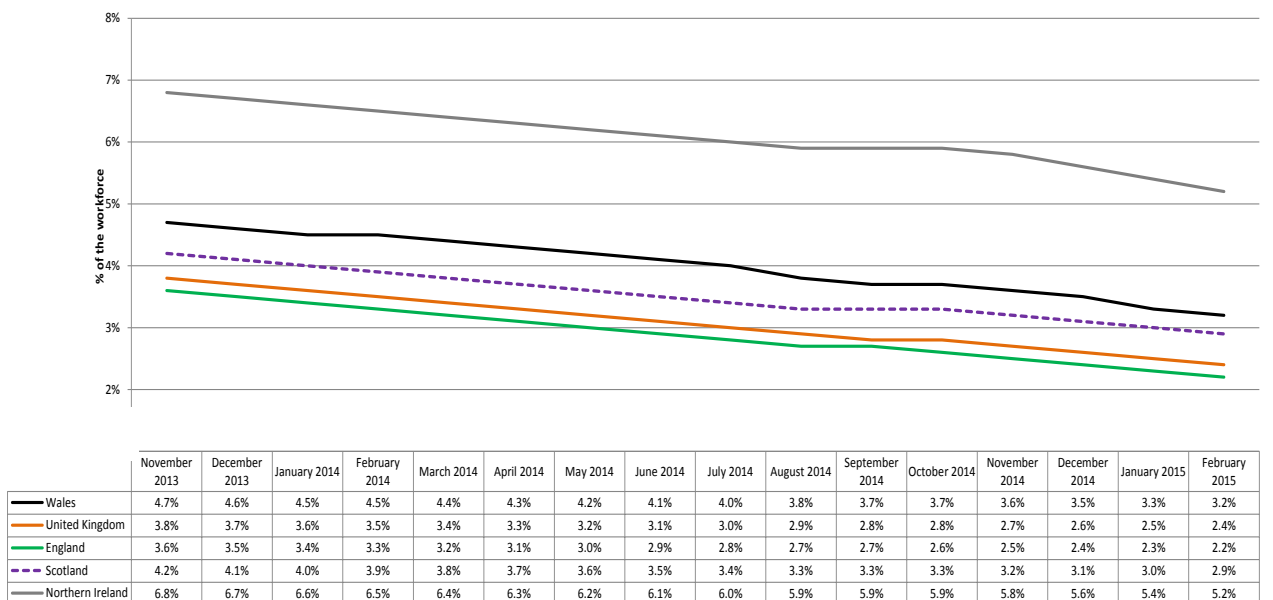
This section provides comparative information on unemployment rates in Wales and the UK nations for the two main measures of unemployment.

Figure 3.1: ILO unemployment rates for UK nations, seasonally adjusted



Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics – March 2015 Headline indicators for all regions](#) and [Labour Market Statistics – March 2015 Summary of Labour Market Statistics](#)

Figure 3.2: Claimant count rates for UK nations

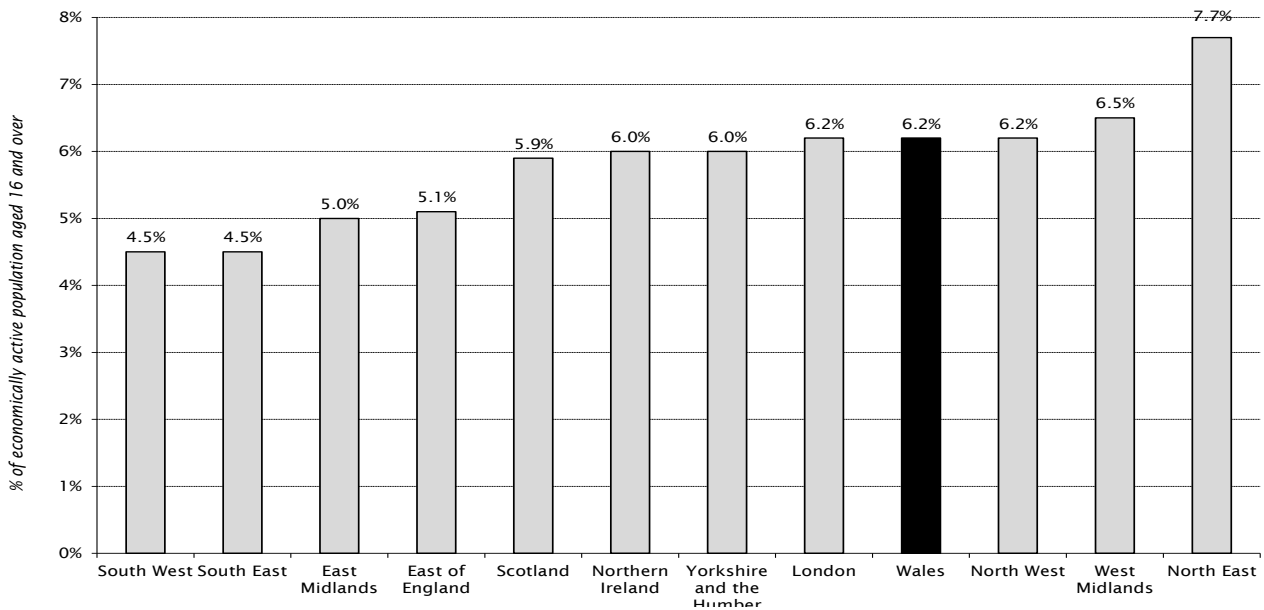


Source: Office for National Statistics, [Claimant Count and Vacancies Series](#)

4. Unemployment rates in UK regions and nations

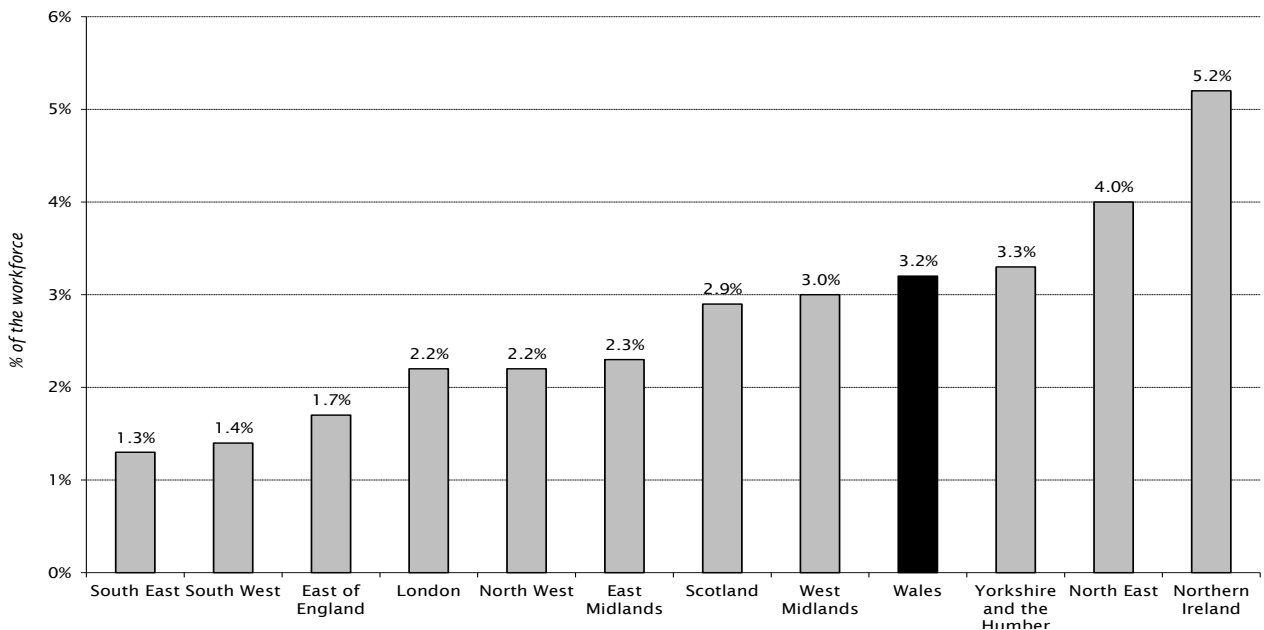
This section provides information on the latest unemployment rates in Wales compared to the UK nations and regions for the two main unemployment measures.

Figure 4.1: ILO unemployment rates (November 2014 to January 2015) (seasonally adjusted)



Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics - March 2015 Summary of headline indicators - Table 1](#)

Figure 4.2: Claimant count rates (February 2015) (seasonally adjusted)



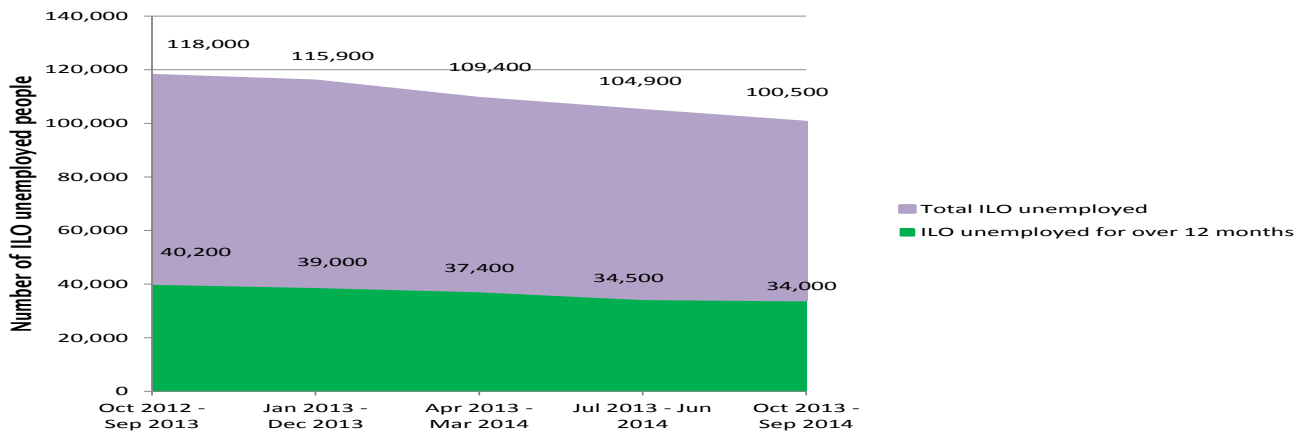
Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics - March 2015 Summary of headline indicators - Table 2](#)

5. Long-term unemployment in Wales

This section provides analysis of the number of people that are classed as long-term unemployed for both main measures of unemployment.

Statistics relating to the duration of unemployment using the ILO measure are published by the Welsh Government. This data is available on a rolling twelve-monthly basis, updated once a quarter.

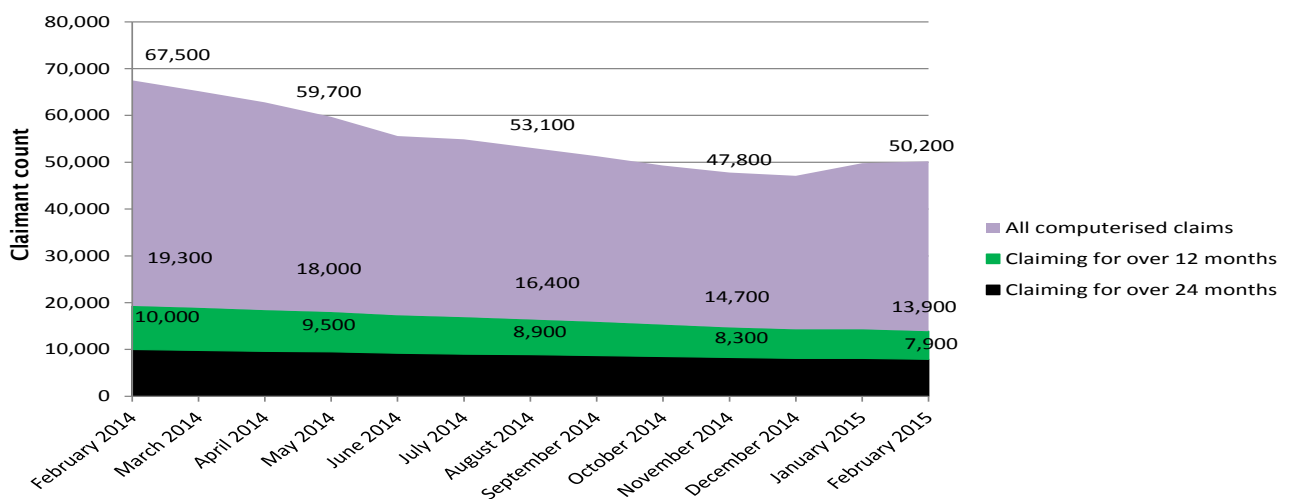
Figure 5.1: ILO unemployment in Wales by duration of unemployment (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: Stats Wales, [Long Term Unemployment by Area and Year](#)

The ONS publishes data to show the number of JSA claimants that have been claiming for over 12 and 24 months. The figures for those claiming JSA for over 12 months include those claiming for over 24 months. **These figures are not seasonally adjusted, and are for computerised claims as only these claims are analysed by the ONS in terms of duration. For these reasons comparisons cannot be made with the claimant count statistics in the other sections of this paper.**

Figure 5.2: Claimant count in Wales by duration of computerised claims (not seasonally adjusted)



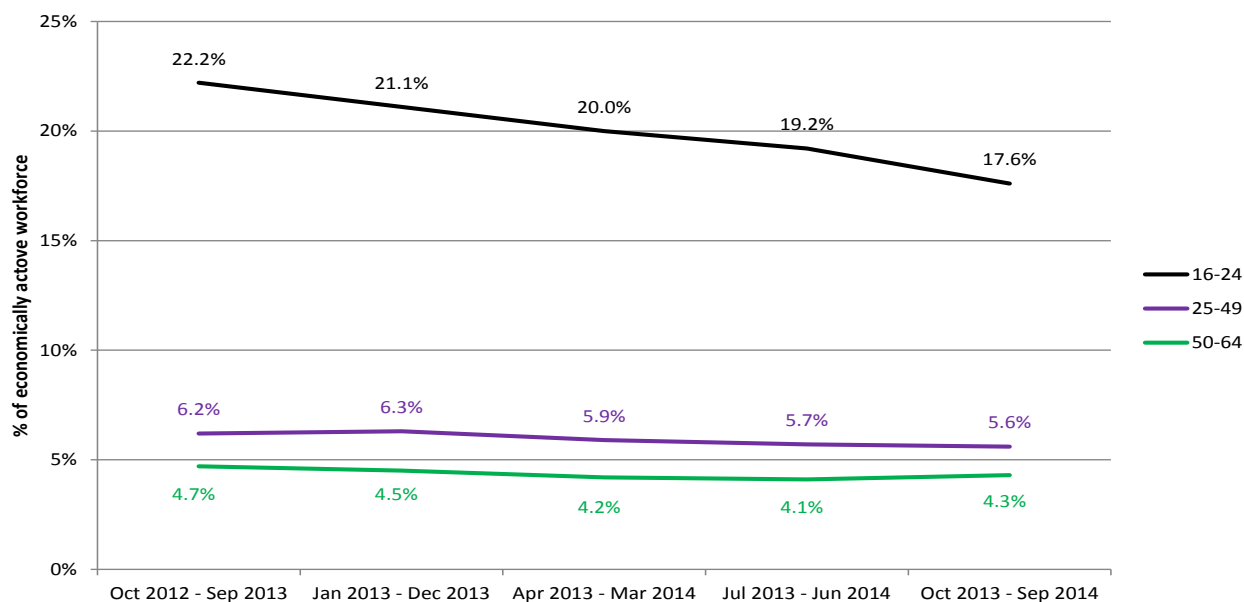
Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics - March 2015 Headline indicators for Wales: Table 8 - Claimant Count by Age and Duration \(Computerised claims only\)](#)

6. Unemployment by age group

This section of the paper gives information on the number and percentage of unemployed people in Wales for the two main measures of unemployment, by age group.

The sample based nature of the Labour Force Survey means that ILO unemployment statistics for different age groups and areas within Wales such as Assembly Constituencies are not available on a rolling three-monthly basis. This data is available on a rolling twelve-monthly basis, updated once a quarter.

Figure 6.1: ILO unemployment rates by age group (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: Office for National Statistics, [NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics](#)

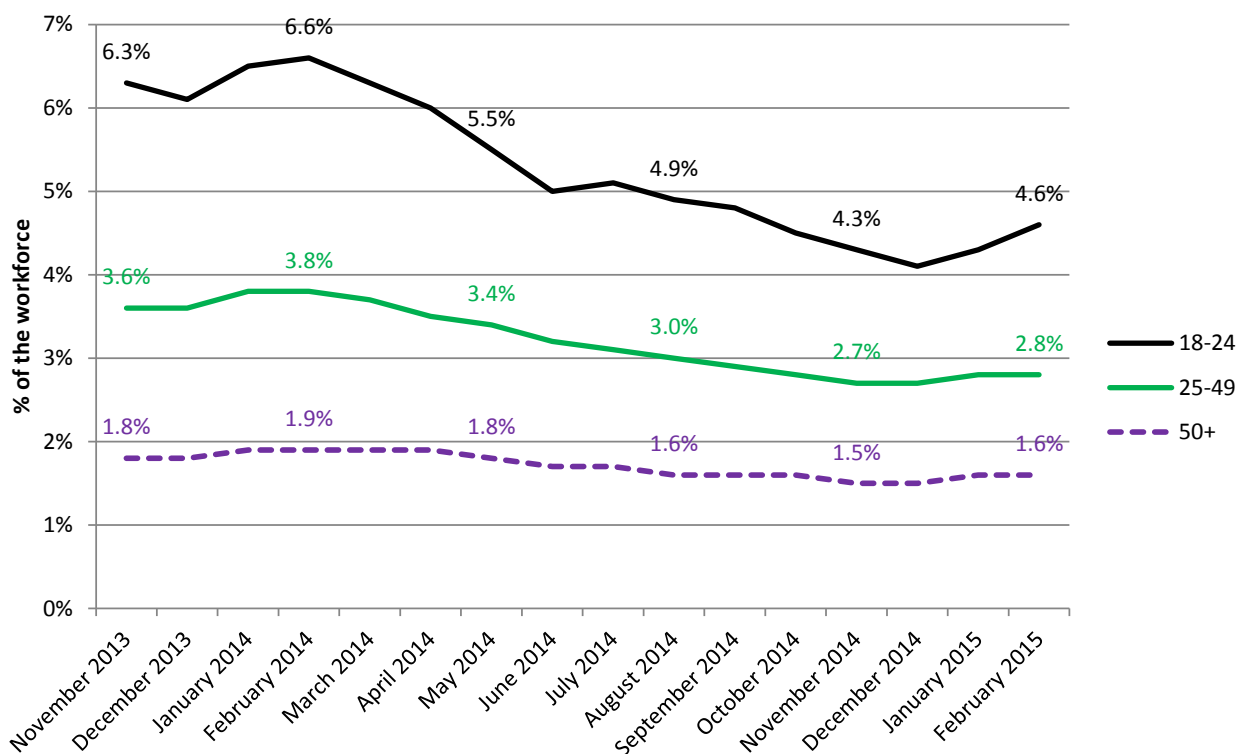
Table 6.1: Number of ILO unemployed people by age group (not seasonally adjusted)

	Age group (years)		
	16-24	25-49	50-64
Oct 2012 - Sep 2013	49,700	50,700	18,400
Jan 2013 - Dec 2013	47,400	51,600	17,700
Apr 2013 - Mar 2014	45,800	48,100	16,400
Jul 2013 - Jun 2014	43,500	46,200	16,300
Oct 2013 - Sep 2014	39,300	45,300	17,000

Source: Office for National Statistics, [NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics](#)

Claimant count rates by age group are calculated by the Office for National Statistics as a percentage of the population, and do not take into account whether people are economically active or not. **They are also not seasonally adjusted, and so are not comparable with the claimant count rates in the rest of the paper.**

Figure 6.2: Claimant count rate by age group (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: Office for National Statistics, [NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics: Labour Market Profile Wales](#)

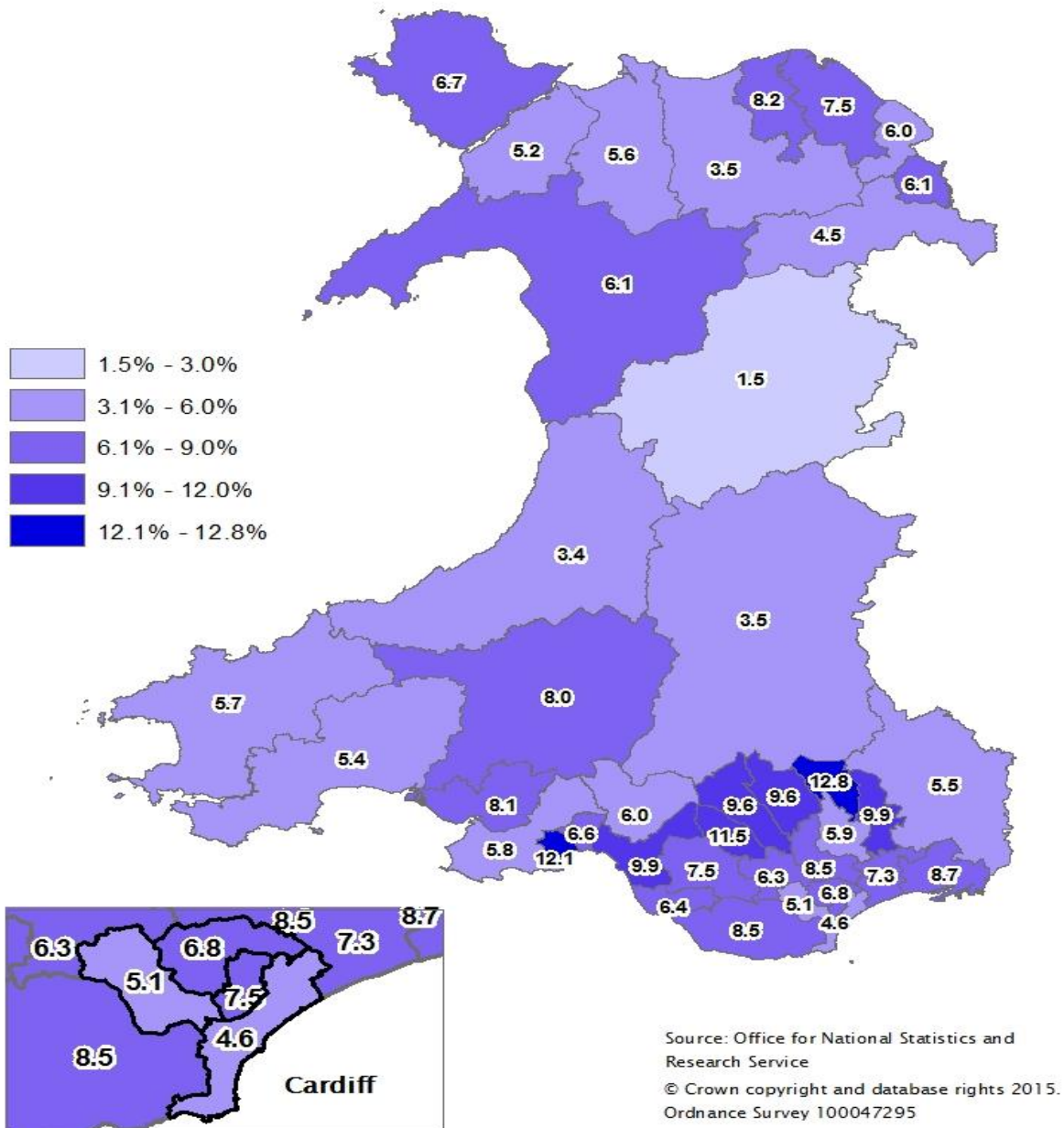
Table 6.2: Number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance, by age group (not seasonally adjusted)

	18-24	25-49	50+
November 2013	18,655	34,615	10,750
December 2013	18,115	34,530	10,745
January 2014	19,305	36,540	11,520
February 2014	19,710	36,285	11,485
March 2014	18,890	35,150	11,115
April 2014	17,850	33,955	10,970
May 2014	16,465	32,565	10,580
June 2014	15,070	30,465	9,995
July 2014	15,155	29,895	9,755
August 2014	14,550	28,940	9,550
September 2014	14,350	27,615	9,335
October 2014	13,570	26,540	9,170
November 2014	12,895	25,895	8,990
December 2014	12,210	25,730	9,120
January 2015	12,980	27,170	9,590
February 2015	13,600	26,995	9,550

Source: Office for National Statistics, [NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics: Labour Market Profile Wales](#)

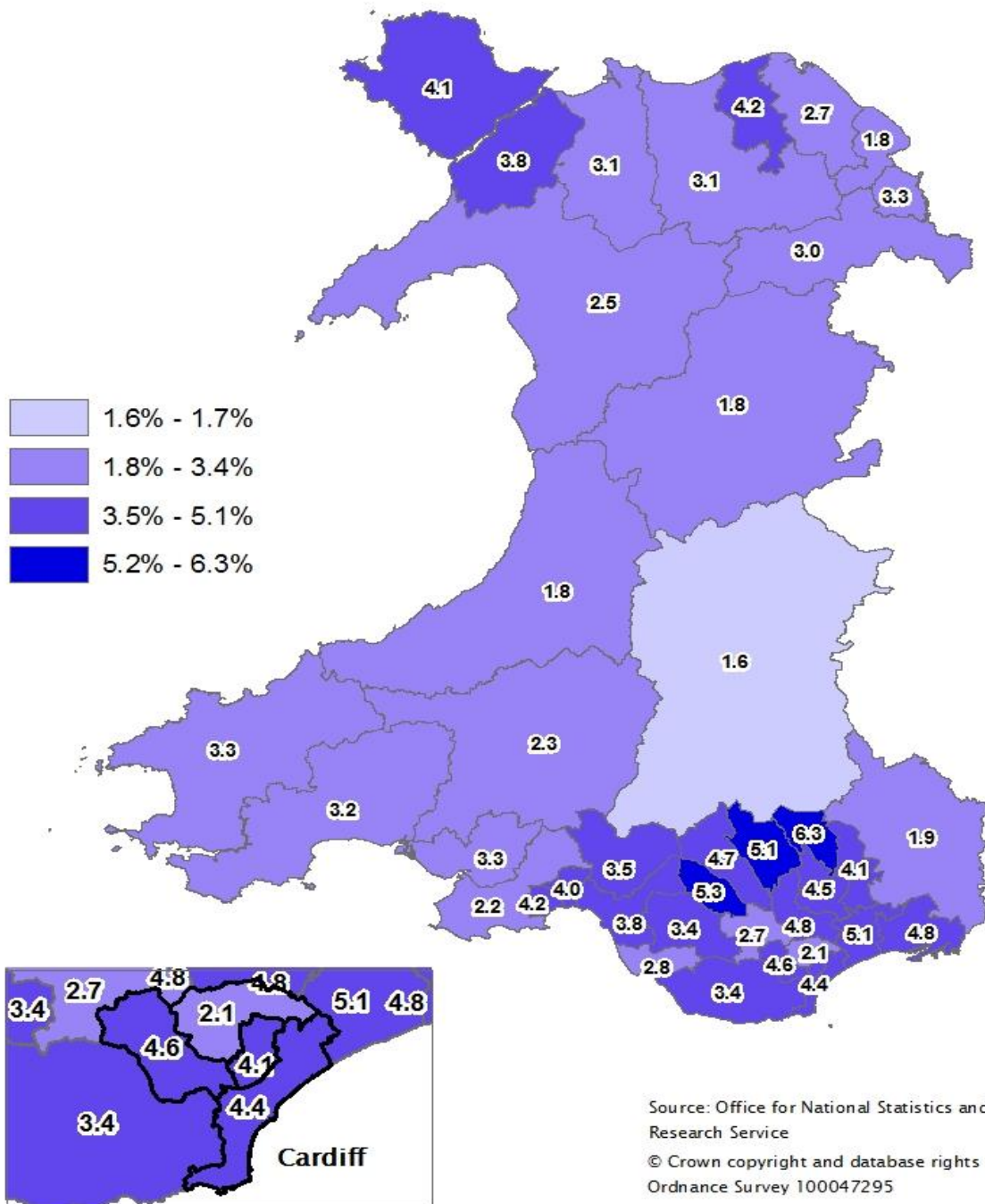
7: Unemployment statistics for Assembly Constituencies

Map 7.1: ILO unemployment rates by Assembly constituency (October 2013 to September 2014)¹



¹ Latest available data (not seasonally adjusted). The rate is the number of ILO unemployed persons as a percentage of the economically active population aged 16 and over.

Map 7.2: Unofficial claimant count rates by Assembly Constituency, February 2015²



² Source: Research Service. Claimants of Job Seekers Allowance as a **percentage** of the economically active population aged between 16 and 64. See page 4 for details.

The tables in this section of the paper show the latest figures for the number and percentage of unemployed people in Assembly Constituencies for the two main measures of unemployment, and also the ranking of each Constituency's unemployment rate.

Table 7.1: ILO unemployment numbers, rates and rank by Assembly Constituency, October 2013 – September 2014 (not seasonally adjusted) (a)

Constituency	Number ILO unemployed	ILO unemployment rate	Constituency rank for ILO unemployment rate
Aberavon	3,109	9.9	4
Aberconwy	1,522	5.6	30
Alyn and Deeside	2,523	6.0	25
Arfon	1,511	5.2	33
Blaenau Gwent	4,296	12.8	1
Brecon and Radnorshire	1,227	3.5	37
Bridgend	2,579	6.4	21
Caerphilly	3,939	8.5	9
Cardiff Central	2,635	7.5	14
Cardiff North	4,150	6.8	18
Cardiff South and Penarth	2,329	4.6	35
Cardiff West	2,405	5.1	34
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	2,590	8.0	13
Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire	1,838	5.4	32
Ceredigion	1,164	3.4	39
Clwyd South	1,661	4.5	36
Clwyd West	1,185	3.5	37
Cynon Valley	2,522	9.6	6
Delyn	2,509	7.5	14
Dwyfor Meirionnydd	1,723	6.1	23
Gower	2,205	5.8	28
Islwyn	2,057	5.9	27
Llanelli	3,096	8.1	12
Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	3,062	9.6	6
Monmouth	2,359	5.5	31
Montgomeryshire	..	1.5	40
Neath	2,063	6.0	25
Newport East	3,228	8.7	8
Newport West	2,982	7.3	17
Ogmore	2,578	7.5	14
Pontypridd	2,986	6.3	22
Preseli Pembrokeshire	2,266	5.7	29
Rhondda	3,790	11.5	3
Swansea East	2,503	6.6	20
Swansea West	4,862	12.1	2
Torfaen	3,837	9.9	4
Vale of Clwyd	2,574	8.2	11
Vale of Glamorgan	4,107	8.5	9
Wrexham	2,084	6.1	23
Ynys Mon	2,173	6.7	19

Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics – March 2015: Table LI02 Local Indicators for Parliamentary Constituencies](#)

Notes:

- (a) The Assembly Constituency with the highest ILO unemployment rate is ranked as 1, and the Assembly Constituency with the lowest ILO unemployment rate is ranked as 40.
- (b) The estimate of ILO unemployed people in Montgomeryshire is less than 500, so has not been published.

Table 7.2: Claimant count and unofficial residence-based claimant count rates and rank by Assembly Constituency, February 2015 (not seasonally adjusted) (a), (b)

Constituency	Claimant count	Claimant count rate	Constituency rank for claimant count rate
Aberavon	1,107	3.8	18
Aberconwy	808	3.1	26
Alyn and Deeside (c)	770	1.8	38
Arfon	1,060	3.8	17
Blaenau Gwent	1,961	6.3	1
Brecon and Radnorshire	500	1.6	40
Bridgend	1,041	2.8	29
Caerphilly	1,958	4.8	5
Cardiff Central	1,766	4.1	14
Cardiff North	921	2.1	35
Cardiff South and Penarth	2,362	4.4	10
Cardiff West	2,058	4.6	8
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	729	2.3	33
Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire	1,112	3.2	25
Ceredigion	594	1.8	39
Clwyd South	1,039	3.0	28
Clwyd West	1,018	3.1	27
Cynon Valley	1,436	4.7	7
Delyn	905	2.7	30
Dwyfor Meirionnydd	663	2.5	32
Gower	784	2.2	34
Islwyn	1,578	4.5	9
Llanelli	1,176	3.3	24
Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	1,744	5.1	3
Monmouth	744	1.9	36
Montgomeryshire	557	1.8	37
Neath	1,155	3.5	19
Newport East	1,774	4.8	6
Newport West	2,060	5.1	4
Ogmore	1,195	3.4	21
Pontypridd	1,030	2.7	31
Preseli Pembrokeshire	1,178	3.3	22
Rhondda	1,562	5.3	2
Swansea East	1,487	4.0	16
Swansea West	1,463	4.2	12
Torfaen	1,578	4.1	13
Vale of Clwyd	1,307	4.2	11
Vale of Glamorgan	1,615	3.4	20
Wrexham	1,153	3.3	23
Ynys Mon	1,289	4.1	15

Source: Research Service and Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics – March 2015: Table JSA02 Claimant count for Parliamentary Constituencies](#)

Note:

- (a) Claimants of Jobseekers Allowance as a percentage of the economically active population aged 16 to 64. See page 4 for details. **For Assembly Constituencies, the claimant count rates are calculated unofficially by the Research Service using the same methodology as the House of Commons Library.** They are calculated by expressing the number of JSA claimants as a percentage of the economically active population aged between 16 and 64 residing in the constituency. The population figures are estimates based on the mid-2012 population estimates. **Following publication of data from these estimates, this methodology has changed. Therefore the figures in this paper are not comparable with those in previous editions.** Further detail can be found in House of Commons Library, [*Unemployment by constituency: changes in methodology 2014*](#).
- (b) The Assembly Constituency with the highest claimant count rate is ranked as 1, and the Assembly Constituency with the lowest claimant count rate is ranked as 40.
- (c) Universal Credit has been introduced from 7 April 2014 for some jobseekers at Shotton Jobcentre Plus Office in Alyn and Deeside constituency. These new claimants are not yet included in the figures for the claimant count.