

Economic Factsheet: Unemployment and Economic Inactivity September 2017



Unemployment is an important indicator of the state of the economy. There are several measures which can be used to show levels of unemployment and economic inactivity:

- **Claimant count** – This shows the number of people who are out of work and claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and is often expressed as a rate. Data is published monthly.
- **Unemployment rate** – Often called the ILO unemployment rate, this measure assesses the number of jobless people who want to work, are available to work and are actively seeking employment. This measure is usually higher than the claimant rate as not all people looking for work are either eligible or choose to claim JSA. Data is published quarterly.
- **Economic inactivity** – This is a broader measure of people who are economically inactive for a range of reasons, including students, people who are unable to work due to illness, retired people and those looking after family/home. Data is published quarterly.

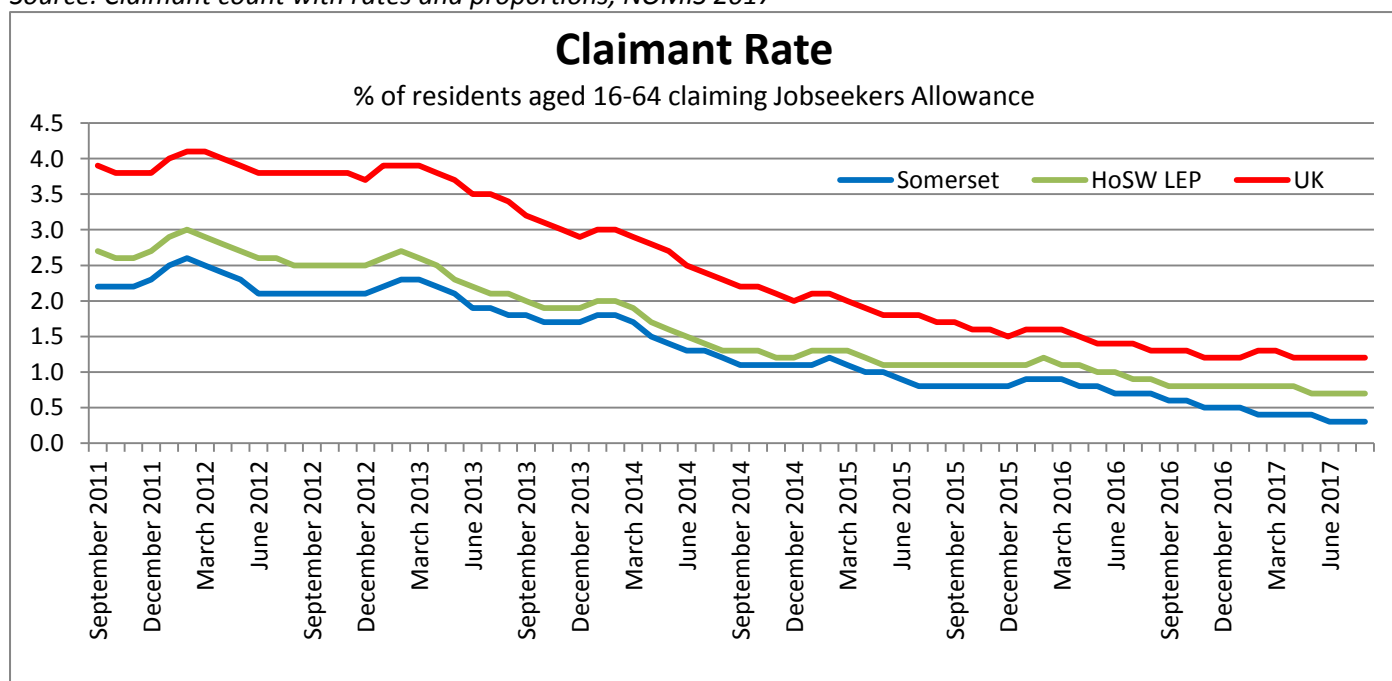
Claimant Count (August 2017)

% of residents aged 16-64 claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)

Area	Current claimant rate (%)	Qtrly change (May – August 2017)	Annual Change (August 2016 - 17)
Somerset	0.3	-0.1	-0.4
Mendip	0.1	-0.1	-0.5
Sedgemoor	0.2	-0.1	-0.4
South Somerset	0.4	-0.2	-0.3
Taunton Deane	0.3	-0.1	-0.6
West Somerset	0.2	0.0	-0.2
HOSW LEP	0.7	0.0	-0.2
UK	1.2	0.0	-0.1

In August 2017, 0.3% of people in Somerset aged 16-64 were claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA). South Somerset has the highest claimant rate in Somerset (0.4%). Mendip had the lowest claimant count (0.1%). Claimant rates have dropped in all five districts, with Taunton Deane having the largest fall in claimants over the year (0.6%)

Source: Claimant count with rates and proportions, NOMIS 2017



Source: Claimant count with rates and proportions. NOMIS 2017

Somerset has a consistently lower claimant rate than the UK and Heart of the South West LEP area. Somerset's claimants fell by 0.4% whereas the national average fell by 0.1%

Unemployment rate (March 2017)

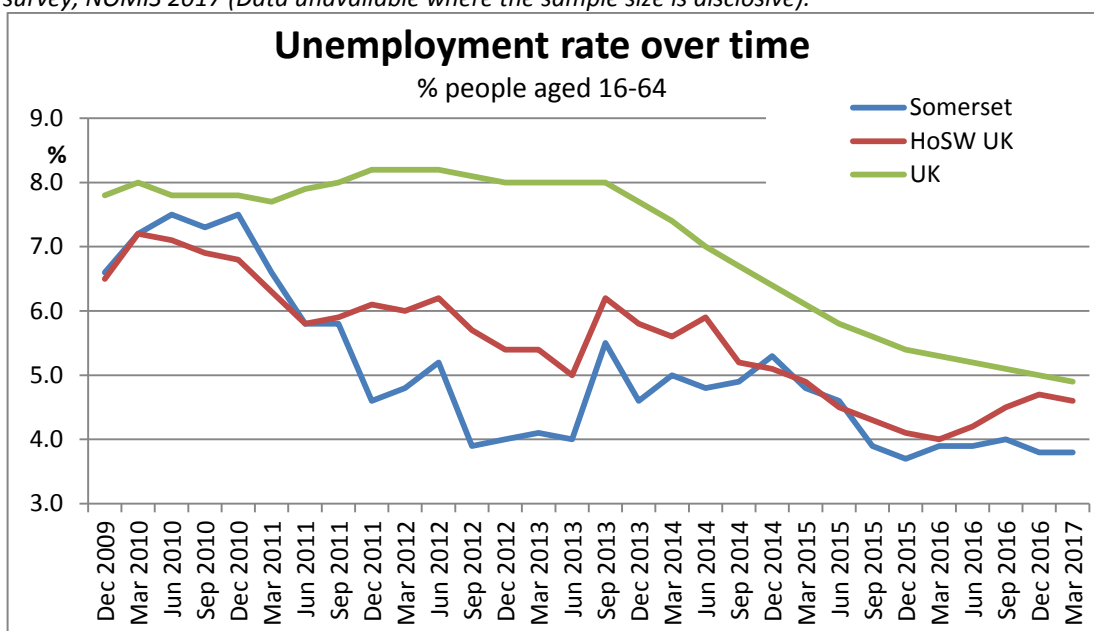
% of residents aged 16-64 who are unemployed

Area	Current unemployment rate (%)	Qtrly Change (April 2016 – March 2017)	Annual Change (March 2016 - 2017)
Somerset	3.8	0	-0.1
Mendip	5.2	0.2	-0.8
Sedgemoor	3.9	-0.4	-0.3
South Somerset	2.9	-0.4	-0.6
Taunton Deane	3.2	0.3	0.2
West Somerset	5.0	Not Available	Not Available
HoSW LEP	4.6	0	0.6
UK	4.9	-0.1	-0.4

ILO unemployment in Somerset stood at 3.8% in March 2017, lower than the Heart of the South West LEP area (4.6%) and the UK as a whole (4.9%). Somerset's unemployment rate has fallen over the last year (0.1%). Available data shows Mendip has the highest unemployment rate of all the districts (5.2%).

Source: Annual population survey, NOMIS 2017 (Data unavailable where the sample size is disclosive).

Somerset's unemployment rate is consistently lower than the national level. After peaking at 8% in December 2010, the general trend has been downwards. Over the same period, the UK unemployment rate remained constant, with declining trend from September 2013.



Source: Annual population survey, NOMIS 2017

Economic inactivity (March 2017)

Area	Current economic inactivity rate (%)	Qtrly change (Dec 2016 – March 2017)	Annual Change (March 2016-17)	% of economically inactive who want a job	Qtrly change (Dec 2016 – March 2017)	Annual Change (March 2016 – 17)
Somerset	20.7	-0.4	1.7	33.2	-0.9	1.7
Mendip	21.1	-2.0	-3.1	41.7	-4.3	9.4
Sedgemoor	22.6	-0.7	2.9	31.2	-2.5	-5.7
South Somerset	21.6	1.1	5.0	23.2	2.3	2.4
Taunton Deane	18.0	-0.9	-0.2	41.3	2.4	5.0
West Somerset	16.6	0.9	4.5	41.5	0.0	Not Available
HoSW LEP	21.1	-0.9	1.8	33.2	1.1	3.9
UK	22.2	-0.1	-0.1	23.7	-0.1	-0.6

Source: Annual population survey, NOMIS 2017. NB. Some data unavailable due to small sample size.

Somerset's economic inactivity rate is lower than nationally. Sedgemoor has the highest proportion of economically inactive residents (22.6%). West Somerset has the lowest economic inactivity rate (16.6%). Mendip has the highest proportion of economically inactive persons who want a job (41.7%) closely followed by West Somerset (41.5%) and Taunton Deane (41.3%). South Somerset has the lowest rate of economically inactive who want a job (23.2%).