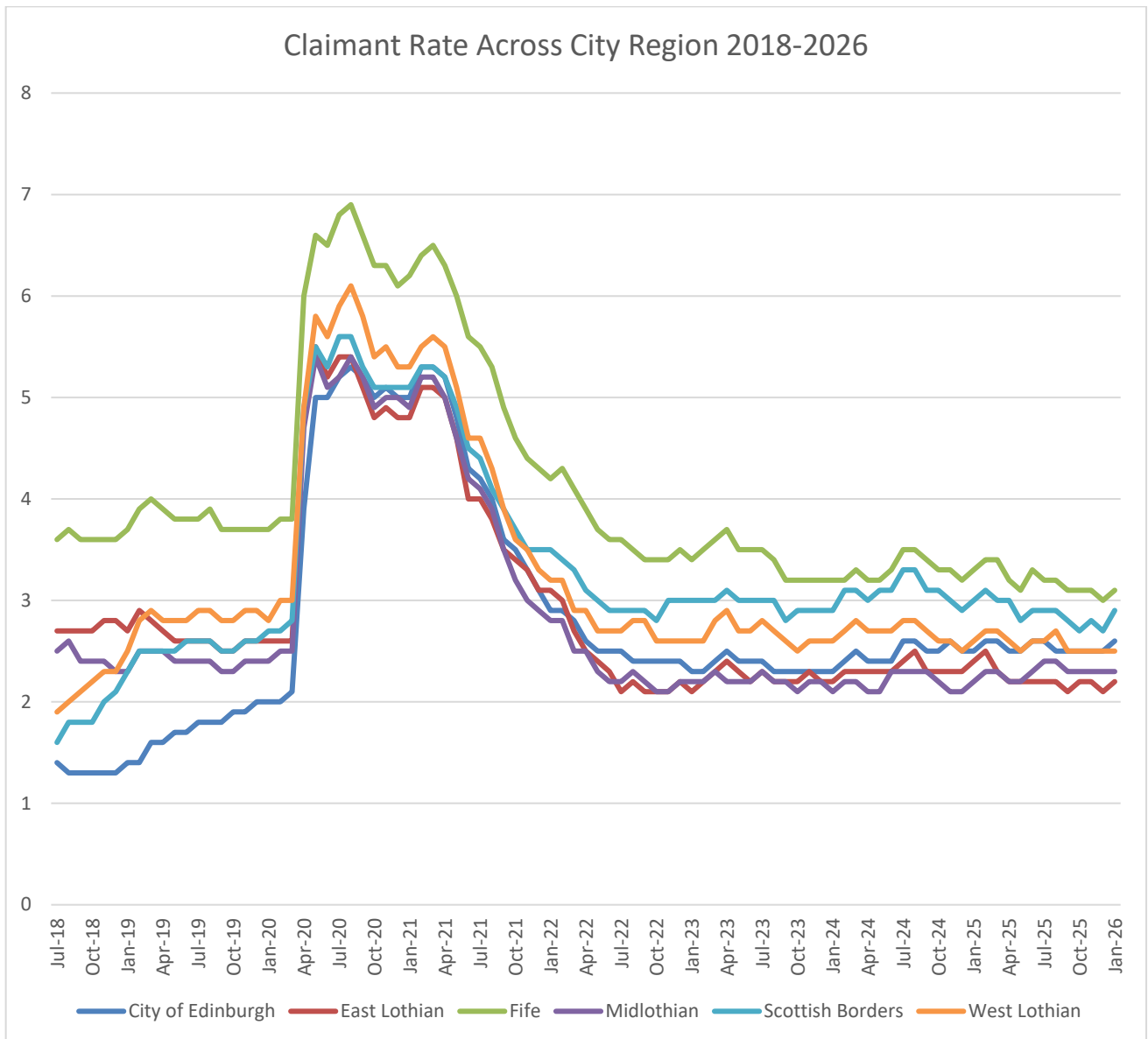


Edinburgh and South East Regional Claimant Count January 2026 Summary Update

<p>Claimant Count Change Between January 2025 and January 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ UK fell by 1.8% ↓ Scotland fell by 2.2% ↑ Edinburgh increased by 4.1% ↓ City Region fell by 0.4% 	<p>Claimant Count Change Between December 2025 and January 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ UK increased by 2.5% ↑ Scotland increased by 3.6% ↑ Edinburgh increased by 3.9% ↑ City Region increased by 4.9%
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Source: NOMIS 26/02/2026

City Region Summary

1. In January 2026 the claimant count for the City Region was 24,590 (in December it was 23,435). Of these
 - a. 4,775 were 16-24 year olds up from 4,605 in December.
 - b. 14,390 were 25-49 year olds down from 13,725 in December.
 - c. 5,435 were 50 or older up from 5,115 in December.
2. In December 2025 there were 48,573 Universal Credit claimants in work in the City Region.

Edinburgh Summary

1. In January 2026 the claimant count for Edinburgh was 9,485 (in December it was 9,125). Of these
 - a. 1,530 were 16-24 year olds. It was 1,485 in December.
 - b. 5,895 were 25-49 year olds. It was 5,680 in December.
 - c. 2,060 were 50 or older. It was 1,960 in December.
2. In December 2025 there were 15,364 Universal Credit claimants in work in Edinburgh.

East Lothian Summary

1. In January 2026 the claimant count for East Lothian was 1,550 (in December it was 1,435). Of these
 - a. 320 were 16-24 year olds. In December it was 320.
 - b. 910 were 25-49 year olds. In December there were 810.
 - c. 325 were 50 or older. In December it was 310.
2. In December 2025 there were 3,853 Universal Credit claimants in work in East Lothian.

Fife Summary

1. In January 2026 the claimant count for Fife was 7,230 (in December it was 6,815). Of these
 - a. 1,595 were 16-24 year olds. In December there were 1,485.
 - b. 4,010 were 25-49 years of age. In December there were 3,810.
 - c. 1,630 were 50 or older. In December there were 1,525.
2. In December 2025 there were 14,204 Universal Credit claimants in work in Fife.

Midlothian Summary

1. In January 2026 the claimant count for Midlothian was 1,445 (it was 1,390 in December). Of these
 - a. 315 were 16-24 year olds. In December it was 305.
 - b. 875 were 25-49 year olds. In December it was 840.
 - c. 255 were 50 or older. In December it was 245.
2. In December 2025 there were 3,737 Universal Credit claimants in work in Midlothian.

Scottish Borders Summary

1. In January 2026 the claimant count for Scottish Borders was 1,935 (in December it was 1,815). Of these
 - a. 365 were 16-24 year olds. In December it was the 355.
 - b. 1,035 were 25-49 year olds. In December there were 970.
 - c. 535 were 50 or older. In December there were 490.
2. In December 2025 there were 3,876 Universal Credit claimants in work in Scottish Borders

West Lothian Summary

1. In January 2026 the claimant count for West Lothian was 2,945 (in December it was 2,885). Of these
 - a. 650 were 16-24 year olds. In December there were 655.
 - b. 1,665 were 25-49 year olds. In December there were 1,615.
 - c. 630 were 50 or older. In December there were 585.
2. In December 2025 there were 7,149 Universal Credit claimants in work in West Lothian.

Edinburgh and South East Regional Claimant Count January 2026 Full Update

Claimant Count by Nation and Region

Table 1 indicates that in the UK the claimant count in January 2026 is lower than it was five years ago in every region and nation. Looking at what has happened over the last 12 months we can see that in all areas, apart from the East, South East and the South West, there are fewer claimants in 2026 than there were in 2025. Looking at the latest month to month change it can be seen in the table that across the UK the claimant count is 2.5% (41,295 more) higher than in December and in Scotland it is 3.6% higher (3,655 additional claimants).

Table 1: National Claimant Count Picture

	January 2021	January 2025	December 2025	January 2026	Percentage Change		
					Jan21 - Jan26	Jan25- Jan26	Dec25- Jan26
UK	2,558,550	1,697,365	1,625,690	1,666,985	-34.8%	-1.8%	2.5%
East	199,220	129,330	126,005	129,810	-34.8%	0.4%	3.0%
East Midlands	157,190	108,895	104,585	107,945	-31.3%	-0.9%	3.2%
London	481,755	347,335	339,905	344,460	-28.5%	-0.8%	1.3%
North East	116,420	66,235	60,570	62,480	-46.3%	-5.7%	3.2%
North West	309,610	204,155	191,015	196,105	-36.7%	-3.9%	2.7%
N. Ireland	55,410	37,810	34,315	35,180	-36.5%	-7.0%	2.5%
Scotland	205,320	106,805	100,820	104,475	-49.1%	-2.2%	3.6%
South East	285,175	180,910	178,920	183,885	-35.5%	1.6%	2.8%
South West	162,855	96,880	95,300	98,765	-39.4%	1.9%	3.6%
Wales	108,560	65,300	62,135	63,955	-41.1%	-2.1%	2.9%
West Midlands	258,825	202,950	194,000	197,620	-23.6%	-2.6%	1.9%
Yorks & Humb	218,205	150,755	138,120	142,305	-34.8%	-5.6%	3.0%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Claimant Count by Scottish Local Authority

Table 2 focuses on Scottish Local Authorities and, like the nations and regions examined in Table 1, we can see that since January 2021 every Local Authority in Scotland has seen the claimant count fall. What is clear from the table below is the degree to which the claimant count has fallen since 2021 differs depending on the Local Authority. The smallest percentage fall (36.1%) being recorded in the Orkney Islands and the greatest percentage fall (60.4%) being recorded in the Shetland Island.

Over the last year, eight Local Authorities saw the claimant count increase (including Midlothian and Edinburgh) and all other Local Authorities saw the claimant count fall year on year except for Moray that saw no change. This fall has ranged from a fall of 9.9% in North Lanarkshire through to a

fall of 0.1% in Dundee. The six Local Authorities that make up the city region are highlighted in Table 2.

Table 2: Claimant Count - Scottish Local Authorities

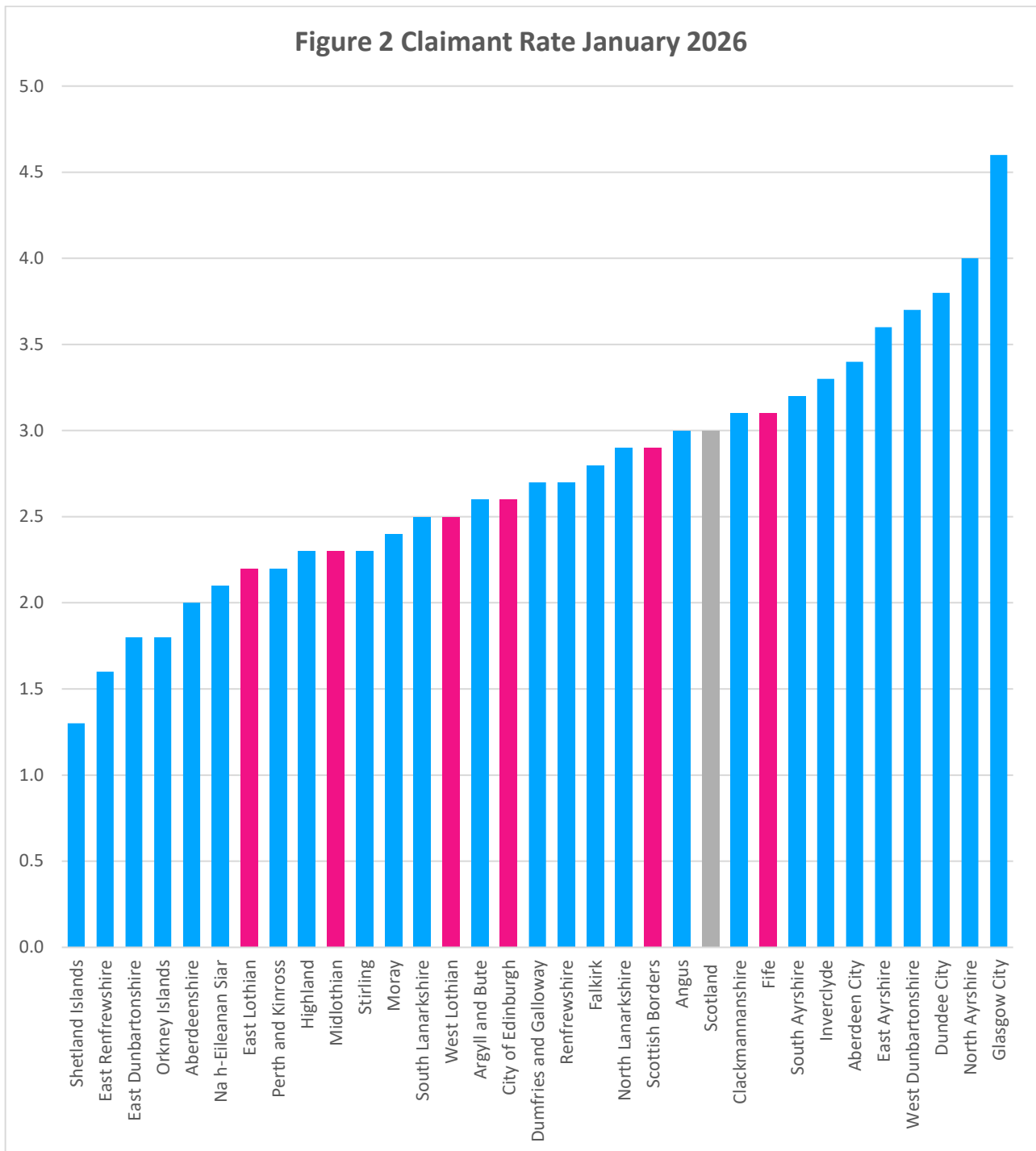
	Jan-21	Jan-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Percentage Change		
					Jan21 - Jan26	Jan25- Jan26	Dec25- Jan26
Aberdeen City	9,470	4,905	5,045	5,280	-44.2%	7.6%	4.7%
Aberdeenshire	6,500	2,885	2,950	3,125	-51.9%	8.3%	5.9%
Angus	3,720	2,030	1,955	2,020	-45.7%	-0.5%	3.3%
Argyll and Bute	2,775	1,400	1,260	1,345	-51.5%	-3.9%	6.7%
Edinburgh	17,475	9,115	9,125	9,485	-45.7%	4.1%	3.9%
Clackmannanshire	2,030	990	940	985	-51.5%	-0.5%	4.8%
Dumfries & Galloway	4,490	2,405	2,190	2,265	-49.6%	-5.8%	3.4%
Dundee City	6,755	3,755	3,670	3,750	-44.5%	-0.1%	2.2%
East Ayrshire	5,635	2,745	2,590	2,660	-52.8%	-3.1%	2.7%
E.Dunbartonshire	2,455	1,210	1,085	1,120	-54.4%	-7.4%	3.2%
East Lothian	3,285	1,635	1,435	1,550	-52.8%	-5.2%	8.0%
East Renfrewshire	2,100	940	925	935	-55.5%	-0.5%	1.1%
Falkirk	5,820	2,790	2,810	2,865	-50.8%	2.7%	2.0%
Fife	14,210	7,570	6,815	7,230	-49.1%	-4.5%	6.1%
Glasgow City	35,615	21,765	20,640	21,030	-41.0%	-3.4%	1.9%
Highland	7,325	3,335	3,065	3,250	-55.6%	-2.5%	6.0%
Inverclyde	2,925	1,565	1,535	1,590	-45.6%	1.6%	3.6%
Midlothian	2,920	1,315	1,390	1,445	-50.5%	9.9%	4.0%
Moray	2,835	1,370	1,285	1,370	-51.7%	0.0%	6.6%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	730	330	285	310	-57.5%	-6.1%	8.8%
North Ayrshire	6,605	3,420	3,155	3,240	-50.9%	-5.3%	2.7%
North Lanarkshire	14,060	7,045	6,170	6,345	-54.9%	-9.9%	2.8%
Orkney Islands	360	215	225	230	-36.1%	7.0%	2.2%
Perth and Kinross	4,065	2,100	1,935	2,025	-50.2%	-3.6%	4.7%
Renfrewshire	6,930	3,330	3,140	3,210	-53.7%	-3.6%	2.2%
Scottish Borders	3,500	2,045	1,815	1,935	-44.7%	-5.4%	6.6%
Shetland Islands	455	195	175	180	-60.4%	-7.7%	2.9%
South Ayrshire	4,725	2,260	2,005	2,075	-56.1%	-8.2%	3.5%
South Lanarkshire	12,195	5,630	5,045	5,215	-57.2%	-7.4%	3.4%
Stirling	2,660	1,340	1,315	1,385	-47.9%	3.4%	5.3%
W.Dunbartonshire	4,525	2,165	2,000	2,085	-53.9%	-3.7%	4.3%
West Lothian	6,175	3,015	2,855	2,945	-52.3%	-2.3%	3.2%
Scotland	205,320	106,805	100,820	104,475	-49.1%	-2.2%	3.6%
City Region	47,565	24,695	23,435	24,590	-48.3%	-0.4%	4.9%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Looking at what has happened between December and January. What we can also see in Table 2 is that **every** Local Authority in Scotland recorded a month to month increase. This has ranged from a 1.1% increase in East Renfrewshire through to an 8.8% increase in the Western Isle's.

Figure 2, below, looks at the claimant rate for all the Scottish Local Authorities as recorded in January 2026. From this it can be seen that, except for Fife, all the City Region Local Authorities had a claimant rate below the Scottish average.

Figure 2 Claimant Rate January 2026



Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

City Region Position

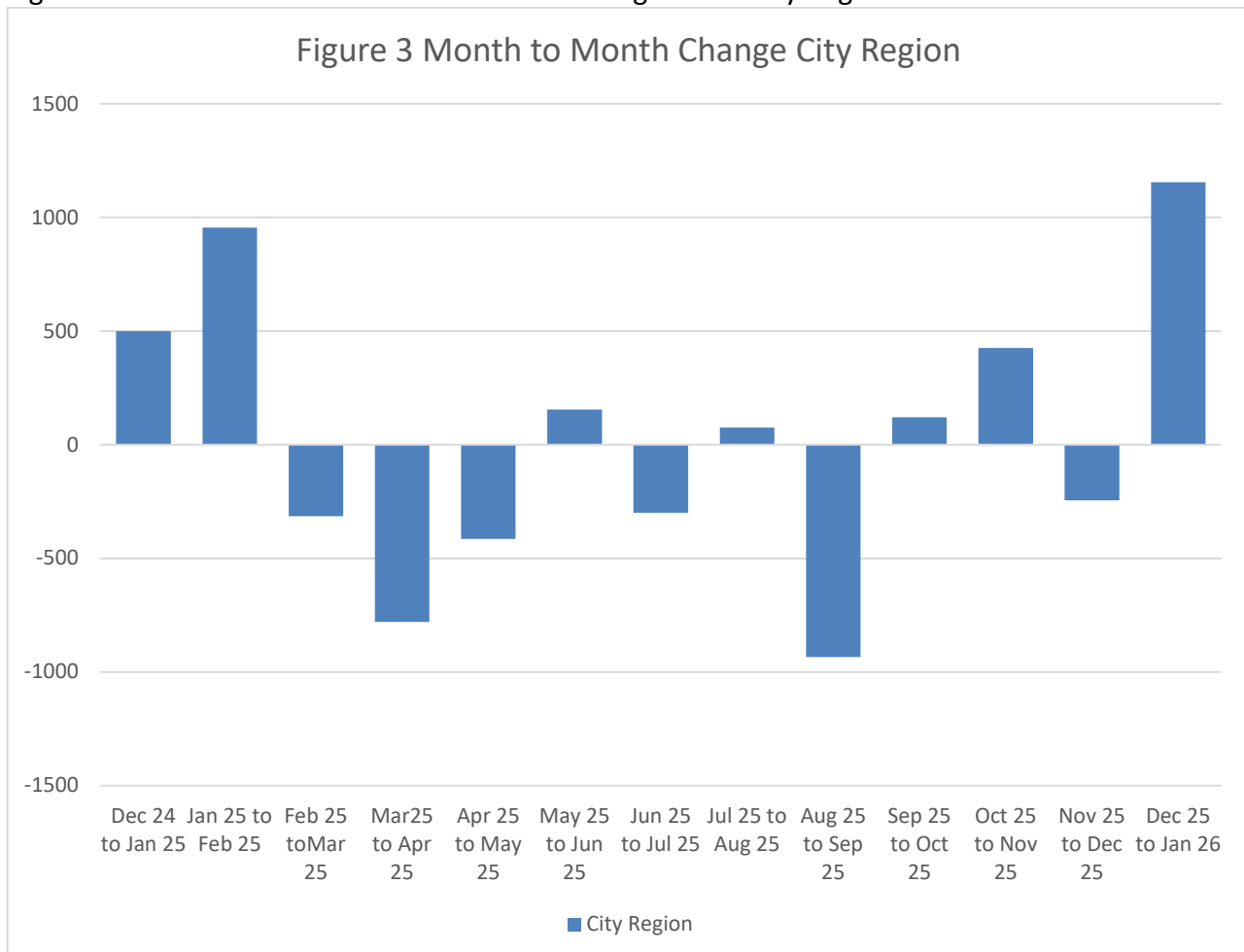
Looking in more detail at the position in the City Region. It can be seen in Table 3 that across the region the claimant count recorded in January 2026 is lower than it was in 2021. The fall ranges from 44.7% in Scottish Borders through to 52.8% in East Lothian. Over the last year two Local Authorities have seen the claimant count increase (Edinburgh and Midlothian). The four other Authorities have seen the claimant count fall by between 2.3% (West Lothian) and 5.4% (Scottish Borders). Between December and January all six Local Authorities saw the claimant count increase. This has ranged from 3.2% in West Lothian through to an 8% increase in East Lothian.

Table 3: Claimant Count – City Region Local Authorities

	Jan 2021	Jan 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026	Percentage Change		
					Jan21 - Jan26	Jan25- Jan26	Dec25- Jan26
Edinburgh	17,475	9,115	9,125	9,485	-45.7%	4.1%	3.9%
East Lothian	3,285	1,635	1,435	1,550	-52.8%	-5.2%	8.0%
Fife	14,210	7,570	6,815	7,230	-49.1%	-4.5%	6.1%
Midlothian	2,920	1,315	1,390	1,445	-50.5%	9.9%	4.0%
Scottish Borders	3,500	2,045	1,815	1,935	-44.7%	-5.4%	6.6%
West Lothian	6,175	3,015	2,855	2,945	-52.3%	-2.3%	3.2%
City Region	47,565	24,695	23,435	24,590	-48.3%	-0.4%	4.9%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Figure 3 below looks at the month to month change in the City Region over the last 13 months.



Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

What we can see in the figure above is that whilst there have been falls, there have also been increases month to month with the result that what we are really seeing is a picture of no real change in the longer term making it very difficult to accurately predict what might happen over the next six to twelve months. One point worth looking at is that the most recent December to January change is twice what we saw last year.

Gender Profile

From Table 4 we can see that three of the six Local Authorities in the city region have seen the number of male claimants decrease over the last twelve months, two have seen an increase and one recorded no change year on year. Across the region the number of male claimants in January 2026 was 125 more than in 2025.

Table 4: Change in Male Claimant Count Across the City Region

Male Claimants	Jan-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	% Change	
				Jan25-Jan26	Dec25-Jan26
Edinburgh	5,345	5,465	5,640	5.5%	3.2%
East Lothian	865	785	850	-1.7%	8.3%
Fife	4,430	3,985	4,275	-3.5%	7.3%
Midlothian	780	790	830	6.4%	5.1%
Scottish Borders	1,125	1,025	1,075	-4.4%	4.9%
West Lothian	1,745	1,700	1,745	0.0%	2.6%
City Region	14,290	13,750	14,415	0.9%	4.8%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Comparing the December 2025 statistics to those of January 2026 we can see that every Local Authority has seen the number of male claimants increase. This culminated in the region as a whole recording a 4.8% increase between December and January. This is based on 665 additional male claimants when compared to the December figures. The largest percentage month to month increase was in East Lothian where the male claimant count increased by 8.3% or 65 additional claimants. This illustrates that whilst the percentage changes can be alarming, in some cases they are based on *relatively* small changes in the actual numbers.

Table 5 looks at the situation for female claimants. This indicates that over the last year there has been a decrease in the number of female claimants in the region (235 fewer female claimants). This is a decrease of 2.3% year on year. East Lothian saw the largest fall whilst Midlothian recorded an increase in the number of female claimants (an increase of 80 over the course of the year).

Table 5: Change in Female Claimant Count Across the City Region

Females	Jan-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	% Change Jan25-Jan26	% Change Dec25-Jan26
Edinburgh	3,770	3,665	3,840	1.9%	4.8%
East Lothian	770	655	700	-9.1%	6.9%
Fife	3,140	2,830	2,955	-5.9%	4.4%
Midlothian	535	595	615	15.0%	3.4%
Scottish Borders	920	790	860	-6.5%	8.9%
West Lothian	1,270	1,155	1,200	-5.5%	3.9%
City Region	10,405	9,690	10,170	-2.3%	5.0%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Between December 2025 and January 2026, we can see that all Local Authorities saw the number of female claimants increase. This ranged from a 3.4% increase in Midlothian through to an 8.9% increase in Scottish Borders. Overall, across the City Region there were 5% more female claimants, 480 additional claimants, in January when compared to December.

Age Profile

16-24 Year Olds

In January 2026 there were 4,775 claimants aged between 16-24 years of age in the City Region. This is 3.7% higher than a month ago and 10.7% higher than a year ago. In numerical terms the City Region has 460 more 16-24 year olds claiming than a year ago and 170 more than last month.

Looking at the different Local Authorities we can see that over the last year, one Local Authority has seen the claimant count for 16-24 year olds fall by 1.5% (East Lothian). The remaining Local Authorities saw the claimant count for 16-24 year olds increase by between 22.4% (Edinburgh with an additional 280) and 2.9% (Fife with an additional 45).

Over the last month every Local Authority in the City Region has seen the claimant count for this age group increase apart from West Lothian which saw the number of 16-24 year old claimants fall by 0.8%.

Table 6: Change in Claimants by Age Across the City Region (All Gender)

16-24 Year Olds	Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	City Region
Jan-21	2,785	650	2,880	645	780	1,320	9,060
Jan-25	1,250	325	1,550	265	345	580	4,315
Dec-25	1,485	320	1,485	305	355	655	4,605
Jan-26	1,530	320	1,595	315	365	650	4,775
% Change							
Jan25-Jan26	22.4%	-1.5%	2.9%	18.9%	5.8%	12.1%	10.7%
Dec25-Jan26	3.0%	0.0%	7.4%	3.3%	2.8%	-0.8%	3.7%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

25-49 Year Olds

In January 2026 there were 14,390 claimants aged between 25-49 in the City Region. This is 2.4% lower than a year ago and 4.8% higher than last month. In numerical terms the City Region has 360 fewer 25-49 year olds claiming than a year ago, and 665 more than last month. This can be seen in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Change in Claimants by Age Across the City Region (All Gender)

25-49 Year Olds	Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	City Region
Jan-21	10,800	1,795	7,915	1,635	1,780	3,465	27,390
Jan-25	5,775	950	4,320	800	1,100	1,805	14,750
Dec-25	5,680	810	3,810	840	970	1,615	13,725
Jan-26	5,895	910	4,010	875	1,035	1,665	14,390
% Change							
Jan25-Jan26	2.1%	-4.2%	-7.2%	9.4%	-5.9%	-7.8%	-2.4%
Dec25-Jan26	3.8%	12.3%	5.2%	4.2%	6.7%	3.1%	4.8%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Looking at the different Local Authorities we can see that four Local Authorities have fewer 25-49 year old claimants than a year ago. Edinburgh and Midlothian have more claimants who are 25-49 years of age than in January 2025.

We can also see that all six Local Authorities in the Region have more claimants in this age group than a month ago. This ranges from 3.1% more (50 claimants) in West Lothian through to 12.3% more in East Lothian (100 claimants). Once again please look at the actual numerical change as this highlights that a large percentage change can be created by a relatively small increase in the number of actual claimants.

50 Year Olds and Over

In January 2026 there were 5,435 claimants over 50 years of age in the City Region. This is 6.3% higher than a month ago and 3.2% lower than a year ago. In numerical terms the City Region has 180 fewer people over the age of 50 claiming than a year ago but 320 more than last month.

Table 8: Change in Claimants by Age Across the City Region (All Gender)

50 years and over	Edinburgh	East Lothian	Fife	Midlothian	Scottish Borders	West Lothian	City Region
Jan-21	3,895	1,895	3,410	635	945	1,385	12,165
Jan-25	2,085	360	1,700	245	600	625	5,615
Dec-25	1,960	310	1,525	245	490	585	5,115
Jan-26	2,060	325	1,630	255	535	630	5,435
% Change							
Jan25-Jan26	-1.2%	-9.7%	-4.1%	4.1%	-10.8%	0.8%	-3.2%
Dec25-Jan26	5.1%	4.8%	6.9%	4.1%	9.2%	7.7%	6.3%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Looking at the different Local Authorities we can see that two Local Authorities (Midlothian and West Lothian) had more claimants in January 2026 than they recorded in the same month in 2025 and all the other Local Authorities have fewer claimants in 2026 than they did in 2025. Comparing January 2026 with December 2025 we can see that the number of claimants aged over 50 increased in all six Local Authorities in the Region.

Ward Profile

The discussion now moves to look at what is happening in the individual wards around the Region. One important point is that NOMIS indicated that from the release of January 2026 data, Claimant Count and JSA datasets will report figures using 2021/2022-based geographies. This has meant that New Data (Jan 2026 onwards) is available on the new 2021/2022-based geographies whilst historical Data (up to Dec 2025) will remain based on 2011 geographies and will remain available under the "historical" category but will not be updated with new figures.

Of greatest impact to this report is the situation in wards, where data published using existing ward geographies will be discontinued. And new data released from January 2026 will use the Ward (May 2025) definition. As a result, this section will not give trend data for wards until there is enough data available on the new wards to allow an accurate comparison that wont be influenced by any geography changes.

Edinburgh

Table 9 gives the current situation in the seventeen Edinburgh wards. From the table we can see that in January 2026 five wards had 750 or more claimants; ten wards had more than 500 and two wards had 200 or fewer claimants. The ward with the highest number of claimants in January was Forth, which also had the highest claimant rate in the city at 4.4%.

Table 9 Edinburgh Claimant Count by Ward January 2026

Wards	January 2026	Rate	Proportion of Claimants January 2026				
			Male	Female	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
Almond	710	3.2	59.2%	40.8%	17.6%	62.0%	20.4%
City Centre	665	2.5	70.7%	29.3%	15.0%	65.4%	19.5%
Colinton/Fairmilehead	285	1.9	49.1%	50.9%	19.3%	59.6%	21.1%
Corstorphine/Murrayfield	170	1.2	58.8%	41.2%	11.8%	64.7%	20.6%
Craightinny/Duddingston	710	3.5	59.9%	40.8%	13.4%	67.6%	19.0%
Drum Brae/Gyle	370	2.5	62.2%	37.8%	16.2%	58.1%	25.7%
Forth	935	4.4	54.0%	46.0%	17.1%	62.6%	19.8%
Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart	320	1.8	60.9%	39.1%	12.5%	64.1%	23.4%
Inverleith	310	1.5	54.8%	45.2%	14.5%	64.5%	21.0%
Leith	735	4.0	61.2%	38.8%	12.2%	66.0%	21.8%
Leith Walk	585	2.2	61.5%	38.5%	14.5%	62.4%	22.2%
Liberton/Gilmerton	795	3.3	55.3%	44.7%	17.6%	59.7%	22.0%
Morningside	200	0.9	55.0%	45.0%	17.5%	55.0%	27.5%
Pentland Hills	790	4.1	60.1%	39.9%	19.0%	59.5%	21.5%
Portobello/Craigmillar	780	3.5	56.4%	43.6%	15.4%	62.2%	21.8%
Sighthill/Gorgie	785	3.2	63.7%	36.3%	18.5%	59.9%	22.3%
Southside/Newington	345	1.2	62.3%	37.7%	14.5%	56.5%	29.0%
Column Total	9,485	2.7	59.5%	40.5%	16.1%	62.2%	21.7%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Overall, in Edinburgh in January 2026, 59.5% of claimants were male and 16.1% are aged 16-24. The City Centre ward records that 70.7% of the claimants are male. In Southside/Newington 29.0% of claimants were over 50 years of age, the highest proportion in the city and in Colinton/Farmilehead 19.3% of claimants were 16-24 years of age.

East Lothian

Table 10 gives the current situation in the six East Lothian wards. Overall, there were 1,550 claimants in East Lothian in January 2026.

Table 10 East Lothian Claimant Count by Ward January 2026

Wards	January 2026	Rate	Proportion of Claimants January 2026				
			Male	Female	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
Dunbar and East Linton	185	2.0	51.4%	48.6%	21.6%	54.1%	24.3%
Haddington and Lammermuir	235	1.9	55.3%	44.7%	23.4%	59.6%	17.0%
Musselburgh	365	3.0	56.2%	43.8%	19.2%	60.3%	20.5%
North Berwick Coastal	130	1.6	53.8%	46.2%	11.5%	61.5%	23.1%
Preston, Seton and Gosford	270	2.5	51.9%	48.1%	20.4%	59.3%	20.4%
Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry	365	2.3	56.2%	43.8%	21.9%	56.2%	21.9%
East Lothian	1,550	2.3	54.8%	45.2%	20.6%	58.7%	21.0%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Across the county 54.8% of claimants are male and this varies from 51.4% to 56.2%. Haddington and Lammermuir is the ward with the highest proportion of 16-24 year old claimants (23.4%) and Dunbar and East Linton is the ward with the highest proportion (24.3%) of people aged over 50 years of age. Musselburgh is the ward with the highest claimant rate of 3.0% of working age people claiming.

Fife

Turning now to look at Fife. Table 11 gives the current situation in the twenty-two Fife wards, and overall, there were 7,230 claimants in Fife in January 2026.

Table 11 Fife Claimant Count by Ward January 2026

Wards	January 2026	Rate	Proportion of Claimants January 2025				
			Male	Female	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
Buckhaven, Methil and Wemyss Villages	615	5.3	62.6%	37.4%	22.0%	56.1%	22.8%
Burntisland, Kinghorn and Western Kirkcaldy	300	3.5	61.7%	38.3%	18.3%	55.0%	26.7%
Cowdenbeath	495	3.5	60.6%	39.4%	27.3%	52.5%	19.2%
Cupar	175	2.2	57.1%	42.9%	20.0%	54.3%	25.7%
Dunfermline Central	305	2.6	57.4%	42.6%	16.4%	62.3%	23.0%
Dunfermline North	300	2.8	58.3%	43.3%	21.7%	56.7%	21.7%
Dunfermline South	360	2.3	61.1%	38.9%	22.2%	56.9%	20.8%
East Neuk and Landward	175	2.5	51.4%	48.6%	17.1%	57.1%	28.6%
Glenrothes Central and Thornton	350	3.9	61.4%	38.6%	30.0%	50.0%	20.0%
Glenrothes North, Leslie and Markinch	325	2.9	58.5%	41.5%	29.2%	50.8%	20.0%
Glenrothes West and Kinglassie	320	3.4	53.1%	46.9%	25.0%	53.1%	23.4%
Howe of Fife and Tay Coast	155	2.1	64.5%	38.7%	16.1%	51.6%	32.3%
Inverkeithing and Dalgety Bay	225	2.1	55.6%	44.4%	17.8%	51.1%	31.1%
Kirkcaldy Central	575	6.5	59.1%	40.9%	20.9%	56.5%	22.6%
Kirkcaldy East	530	5.4	60.4%	39.6%	21.7%	54.7%	23.6%
Kirkcaldy North	325	3.4	58.5%	41.5%	20.0%	63.1%	16.9%
Leven, Kennoway and Largo	375	3.1	61.3%	40.0%	18.7%	54.7%	26.7%
Lochgelly, Cardenden and Benarty	470	4.0	62.8%	37.2%	25.5%	55.3%	18.1%
Rosyth	260	2.7	53.8%	46.2%	19.2%	57.7%	23.1%
St Andrews	105	0.8	52.4%	47.6%	23.8%	52.4%	23.8%
Tay Bridgehead	225	2.4	55.6%	44.4%	17.8%	60.0%	22.2%
West Fife and Coastal Villages	260	2.6	57.7%	42.3%	23.1%	57.7%	19.2%
Fife	7,230	3.2	59.1%	40.9%	22.1%	55.5%	22.5%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Kirkcaldy Central has the highest claim rate in Fife at 6.5% whilst St Andrews has the lowest at 0.8%. We can also see that 59.1% of claimants in January were male and this ranged from 64.5% in Howe of Fife and Tay Coast through to 52.4% in St Andrews. With 30% of claimants being aged 16-24 Glenrothes Central and Thornton is the ward with the highest proportion of this age group in Fife whilst Howe of Fife and Tay Coast East had the highest proportion of claimants over the age of 50 as 32.3% of the claimants in these wards were in that age band.

Midlothian

Table 12 gives the current situation in the six Midlothian wards. Overall, we can see that Midlothian had 1,445 claimants in January 2026.

Table 12 Midlothian Claimant Count by Ward January 2026

Wards	January 2026	Rate	Proportion of Claimants January 2026				
			Male	Female	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
Bonnyrigg	235	2.0	57.4%	42.6%	19.1%	68.1%	12.8%
Dalkeith	275	2.7	61.8%	38.2%	23.6%	60.0%	16.4%
Midlothian East	275	2.7	56.4%	43.6%	25.5%	60.0%	14.5%
Midlothian South	220	2.3	52.3%	47.7%	20.5%	59.1%	20.5%
Midlothian West	240	2.1	50.0%	47.9%	16.7%	58.3%	25.0%
Penicuik	205	2.6	63.4%	36.6%	22.0%	58.5%	19.5%
Midlothian	1,445	2.4	57.4%	42.6%	21.8%	60.6%	17.6%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

We can see that overall, in Midlothian 57.4% of claimants are male, 21.8% are aged 16-24 and 17.6% are 50 or over. Looking at the wards themselves we can see that Penicuik had the highest proportion of male claimants (63.4%) and Midlothian West the highest proportion of female claimants (47.9%). In terms of the age profile 25.5% of claimants in Midlothian East were 16-24 years of age in December 2026. We can also see that 25% of claimants in Midlothian West were over the age of 50. Dalkeith and Midlothian East have the highest claimant rate at 2.7% of working age population claiming in January.

West Lothian

The situation in the West Lothian wards is looked at in Table 13 below. Overall, there were 2,945 claimants in West Lothian in January 2026. The ward that has the highest claimant rate is Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley while Linlithgow has the lowest.

Table 13 West Lothian Claimant Count by Ward January 2026

Wards	January 2026	Rate	Proportion of Claimants January 2026				
			Male	Female	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
Armadale & Blackridge	250	2.6	60.0%	40.0%	22.0%	60.0%	18.0%
Bathgate	400	2.8	60.0%	40.0%	22.5%	53.8%	23.8%
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	275	2.2	54.5%	45.5%	20.0%	58.2%	21.8%
East Livingston & E. Calder	355	2.4	59.2%	40.8%	22.5%	56.3%	21.1%
Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley	340	3.4	61.8%	38.2%	22.1%	60.3%	17.6%
Linlithgow	115	1.1	60.9%	39.1%	26.1%	47.8%	26.1%
Livingston North	310	2.1	61.3%	40.3%	21.0%	56.5%	24.2%
Livingston South	435	2.8	56.3%	42.5%	21.8%	56.3%	21.8%
Whitburn & Blackburn	470	3.3	59.6%	39.4%	23.4%	56.4%	20.2%
West Lothian	2,945	2.5	59.3%	40.7%	22.1%	56.5%	21.4%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

Overall, we can see that 59.3% of claimants in West Lothian are male whilst in Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley 61.8% of claimants are male. In West Lothian overall, 22.1% of claimants are 16-24 years of age and the ward with the highest proportion of these younger claimants is Linlithgow

where 26.1% are 16-24 years of age. Unusually, Linlithgow as well as having the highest proportion of younger claimants also has the highest proportion of older claimants.

Scottish Borders

Table 14 gives the current situation in the eleven Scottish Borders wards. From this table we can see that there were 1,935 people claiming in January 2026.

Table 14 Scottish Borders Claimant Count by Ward January 2025

Wards	January 2026	Rate	Proportion of Claimants January 2026				
			Male	Female	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
East Berwickshire	180	2.9	41.7%	58.3%	16.7%	52.8%	30.6%
Galashiels and District	345	3.5	58.0%	42.0%	18.8%	58.0%	23.2%
Hawick and Denholm	220	4.1	54.5%	43.2%	18.2%	56.8%	22.7%
Hawick and Hermitage	185	3.7	62.2%	37.8%	27.0%	45.9%	27.0%
Jedburgh and District	135	2.7	55.6%	44.4%	18.5%	59.3%	25.9%
Kelso and District	160	2.8	53.1%	50.0%	21.9%	50.0%	28.1%
Leaderdale & Melrose	120	1.8	54.2%	41.7%	20.8%	50.0%	29.2%
Mid Berwickshire	160	2.6	50.0%	50.0%	12.5%	50.0%	37.5%
Selkirkshire	170	3.0	61.8%	38.2%	20.6%	58.8%	20.6%
Tweeddale East	140	2.2	53.6%	46.4%	14.3%	46.4%	39.3%
Tweeddale West	120	2.0	62.5%	37.5%	12.5%	54.2%	33.3%
Scottish Borders	1,935	2.9	55.6%	44.4%	18.9%	53.5%	27.6%

Source: NOMIS 26/2/2026

The data in Table 14 also indicates that across Scottish Borders in January 55.6% of claimants were male, 18.9% were 16-24 years of age and 27.6% were over 50 years of age. In Tweeddale West 62.5% of claimants were males, in East Berwickshire 58.3% were females. In terms of age cohorts 27% of claimants in Hawick and Hermitage were 16-24 years of age and in Tweeddale East 39.3% of claimants were fifty or over.

Universal Credit

In the United Kingdom as a whole, Universal Credit is the second largest benefit by claimants after the State Pension. It is awarded to claimants out of work (both those currently looking and also those not currently looking for work) as well as to clients who are in work. It covers a number of historical benefits such as Income Support.

Table 15 Universal Credit Claimants in Employment in the City Region

In employment	Dec-24	Nov-25	Dec-25	% Change	
				Dec-24 to Dec-25	Nov-25 to Dec-25
East Lothian	3,734	3,745	3,737	0.1%	-0.2%
Scottish Borders	3,846	3,865	3,853	0.2%	-0.3%
Midlothian	4,104	3,941	3,876	-5.6%	-1.6%
City of Edinburgh	14,580	14,326	14,204	-2.6%	-0.9%
Fife	7,362	7,153	7,149	-2.9%	-0.1%
West Lothian	15,688	15,545	15,364	-2.1%	-1.2%
City Region	49,310	48,573	48,184	-2.3%	-0.8%

Source: StatXplore 4/3/2026

We can see in Table 15 that across the region there were 48,184 people in work who were claiming Universal Credit in December. All six Local Authorities have seen the number of people in this position fall between November 2025 and December 2025.

Social Security Scotland Payments

Job Start Payments are a benefit delivered through Social Security Scotland which help with the costs of starting a new job. It is targeted at young people or care leavers who have been on certain benefits and are out of work. Table 16 below looks at the number of applications from each of the six Local Authorities and then the number that were authorised.

Table 16 Applications and Decision for Job Start Payment

	Applications				Authorised				% Successful
	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	total	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	total	
City of Edinburgh	85	105	45	235	30	35	20	85	36%
East Lothian	25	15	5	45	5	5		10	22%
Fife	190	225	105	520	85	95	45	225	43%
Midlothian	25	15	10	50	10	5		15	30%
Scottish Borders	15	20	10	45	10	5	5	20	44%
West Lothian	55	55	25	135	10	15	5	30	22%
City Region	395	435	200	1,030	150	160	75	385	37%

Source: Social Security Scotland 6/3/2026

What we can see in this table is there are large differences between the success rates which range from 44% in Scottish Borders through to 22% in West Lothian and East Lothian. We can see that overall, in the region, 37% of applications for this payment were authorised.

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