

## March 2026 (Issue 12)

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## New Businesses February 2026

- 488 new businesses were incorporated (a **12%** decrease from January 2026).
- 550 businesses were dissolved or liquidated (a **5%** increase from January 2026).

There were 62 more dissolved businesses than those that were newly created.

## Claimants February 2026

- Claimant count increased by **5.8%** in West Sussex over the last month.
- The claimant count rate increased to **3.2%** in West Sussex, matching the regional rate which also rose to **3.2%**, while the national rate increased to **4.1%**.

## Universal Credit Claimants February 2026

- Universal Credit claimants increased by **1.3%** in West Sussex over the last month.
- Significant rise since March 2020 (**212%** increase). Higher increase than national (**180%**) or regional (**194%**) average.
- In January 2026, **16%** of the 16-64 population in West Sussex are claiming UC, close to the regional percentage and lower than the national percentage of **19.1%**.

## No of Employees (Real Time Information) February 2026 (% Change from previous month in brackets)

- West Sussex: 397,572 (increased by 0.08%)
- West Sussex (South West): 195,477 (increased by 0.13%)
- West Sussex (North East): 202,095 (increased by 0.04%)
- Adur: 26,773 (increased by 0.05%)
- Arun: 68,552 (increased by 0.17%)
- Chichester: 49,645 (decreased by 0.01%)
- Crawley: 62,358 (increased by 0.03%)
- Horsham: 66,568 (increased by 0.02%)
- Mid Sussex: 73,168 (increased by 0.06%)
- Worthing: 50,508 (increased by 0.25%)
- South East: 4,281,297 (increased by 0.09%)
- UK: 30,338,961 (increased by 0.07%)

## Median Pay (Real Time Information) February 2026 (% Change from previous month in brackets)

- West Sussex (South West): 2,482 (decreased by 0.16%)
- West Sussex (North East): 2,774 (decreased by 0.07%)
- Adur: 2,493 (no change)
- Arun: 2,424 (decreased by 0.33%)
- Chichester: 2,452 (decreased by 0.69%)
- Crawley: 2,696 (increased by 0.11%)
- Horsham: 2,776 (decreased by 0.18%)
- Mid Sussex: 2,873 (decreased by 0.14%)
- Worthing: 2,561 (increased by 0.08%)
- South East: 2,727 (increased by 0.15%)
- UK: 2,586 (increased by 0.04%)

## Job Postings (Lightcast)

- In February 2026, there were 10,029 unique job postings in West Sussex, which is about 2% lower than the same time last year.
- In terms of the top posted occupations over the last six months (September 2025 to February 2026), home health aide is the top posted followed closely by janitors/cleaners.

## Economic Activity Oct 2024 - Sept 2025

- West Sussex: 82.9%
- South East: 81.6%
- England: 79.3%

## Economic Activity Three month % change Jun 2025 - Sept 2025

- West Sussex: 0.1%
- South East: 0.6%
- England: 0.2%

## Average House Price December 2025

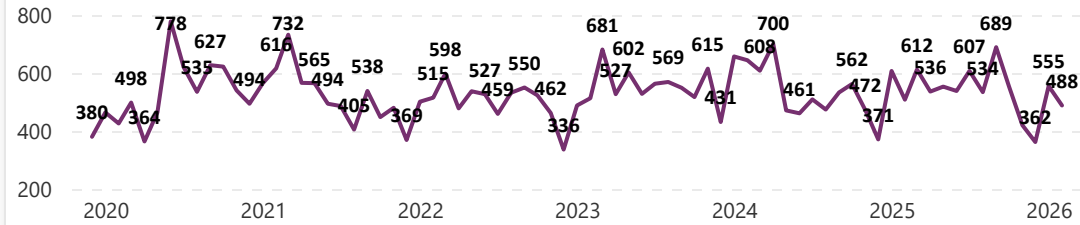
- Adur: £371,000
- Arun: £325,000
- Chichester: £441,000
- Crawley: £336,000
- Horsham: £441,000
- Mid Sussex: £437,000
- Worthing: £308,000

## Average House Price Change from previous year December 2024 - December 2025

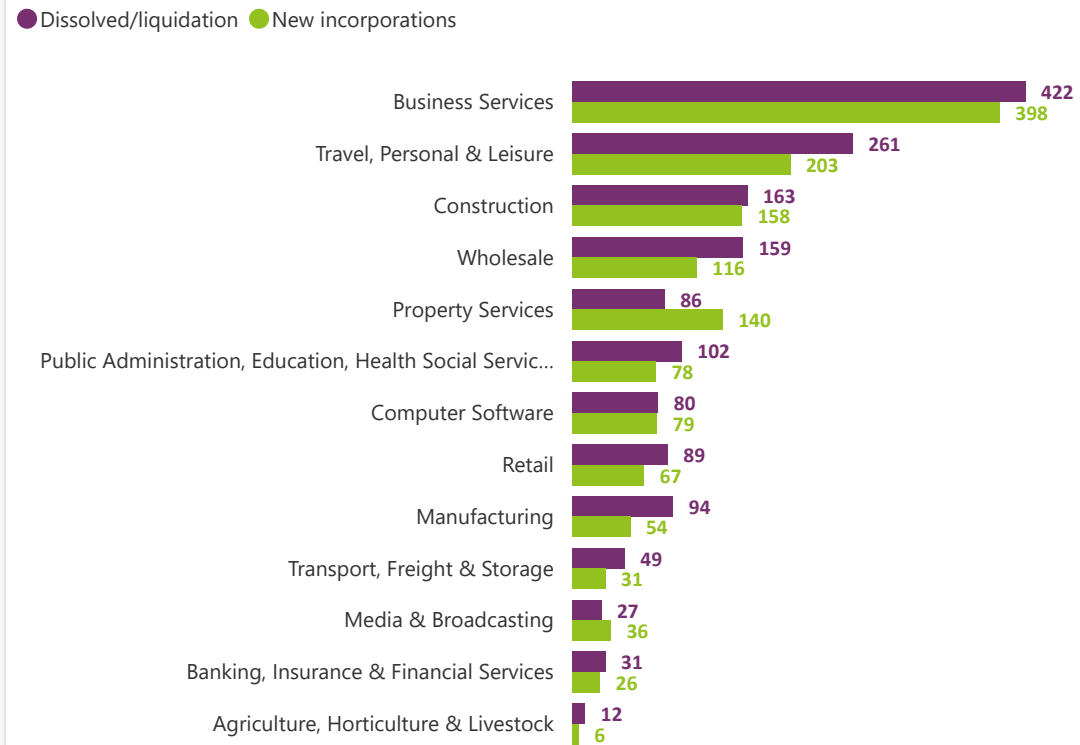
- Adur increased by 0.5%
- Arun decreased by 1.8%
- Chichester decreased by 0.1%
- Crawley increased by 6.7%
- Horsham increased by 4.1%
- Mid Sussex increased by 1.4%
- Worthing decreased by 3.0%

# West Sussex: New Businesses

New business incorporations in West Sussex



Number of new business incorporations and businesses dissolved/in liquidation by industry in West Sussex (Dec'25 - Feb'26)



Number of new business incorporations and businesses dissolved/in liquidation by local authority (Dec'25-Feb'26)



## Summary of Business Formation Trends in West Sussex

**Overall trend:** Over the past three months, a predominantly negative trend has been observed across all districts and boroughs, with the exception of Horsham, which has remained unchanged. Most sectors have seen a decline during this period, except for property services, media and broadcasting. This same trend can also be observed in previous years for the equivalent time period.

### Last 12 months:

- 7,015 new businesses incorporated.
- 6,517 businesses dissolved or liquidated.
- Net gain of 498 businesses.

### Last 3 months:

- 1,408 new businesses incorporated.
- 1,683 businesses dissolved or liquidated.
- Net decrease of 275 businesses.

### February 2026:

- 488 new businesses incorporated. (12% decrease from January 2026)
- 550 businesses dissolved or liquidated. (5% increase from January 2026)
- Net decrease of 62 businesses.

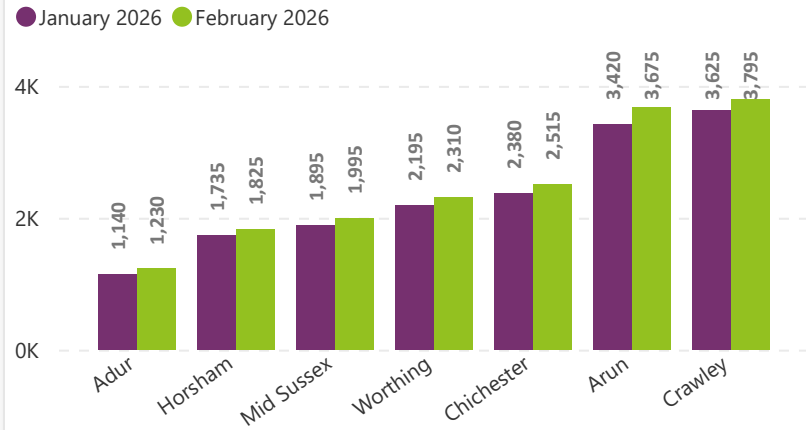
# West Sussex: Claimant Count



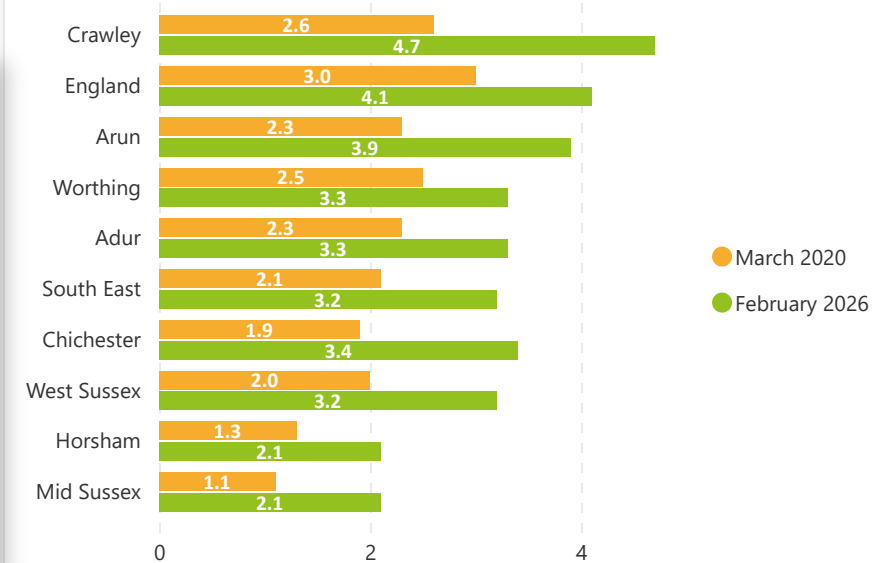
17,345  
Feb'26

16,390  
Jan'26

## Total Number of Claimants by Local Authority



## Claimant count rate change



Summary of Claimant Count Changes in West Sussex, February 2026

### Overall:

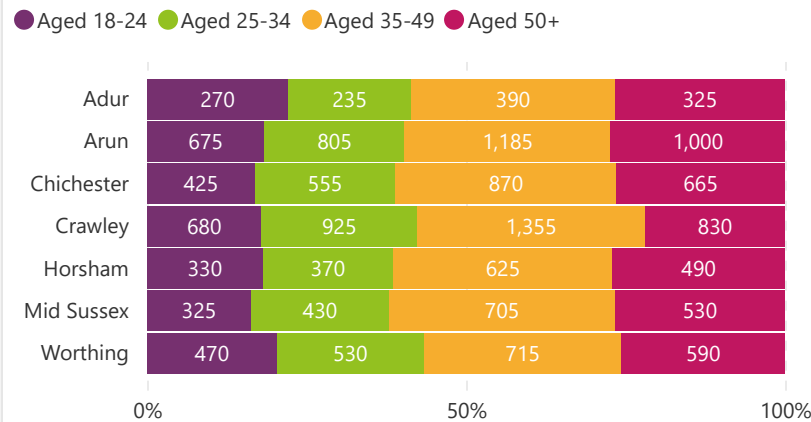
- Claimant count has increased over the last month by **5.8%** (17,345) in West Sussex.
- Claimant count rate rose to **3.2% in West Sussex**, remaining below the **national average of 4.1%** and in line with the **regional rate of 3.2%**.

### Breakdown by district (Jan'26 - Feb'26):

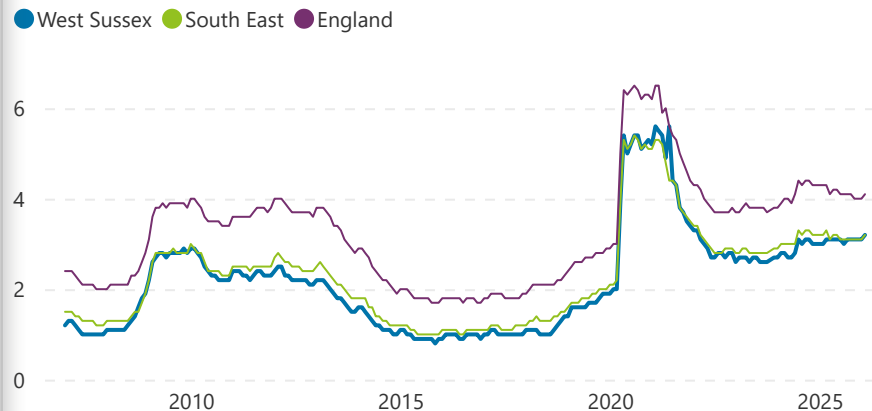
#### Increases:

- Adur (**7.9%**)
- Arun (**7.5%**)
- Chichester (**5.7%**)
- Crawley (**4.7%**)
- Horsham (**5.2%**)
- Mid Sussex (**5.3%**)
- Worthing (**5.2%**)

## Distribution of claimants by age band



## Claimant count rate



### Specifics (Feb'26):

- Crawley recorded the highest claimant count (**3,795**).
- Crawley had the highest claimant count rate (**4.7%**), higher than regional and national average.
- Horsham and Mid Sussex had the lowest claimant count rate (**2.1%**).

Source: [ONS, Claimant Count](#)

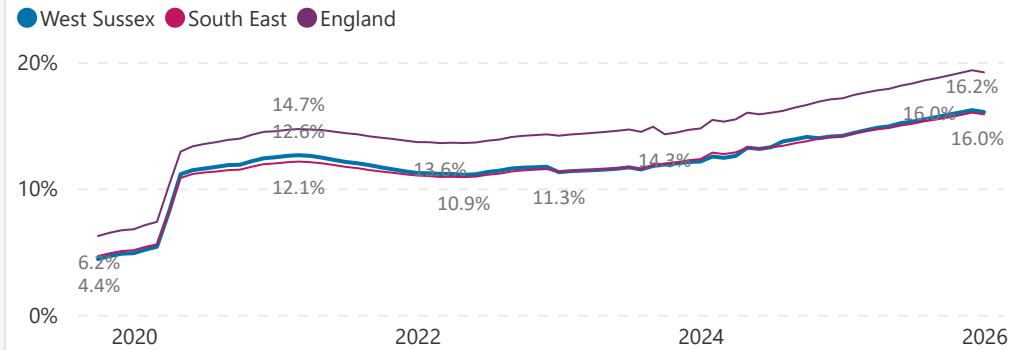
Released: 19 Mar 2026 (Feb 2026 Figures are provisional)

\*The claimant count includes those people who are claiming either Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit principally because they are out of work or working very few hours and/or have a very low wage.

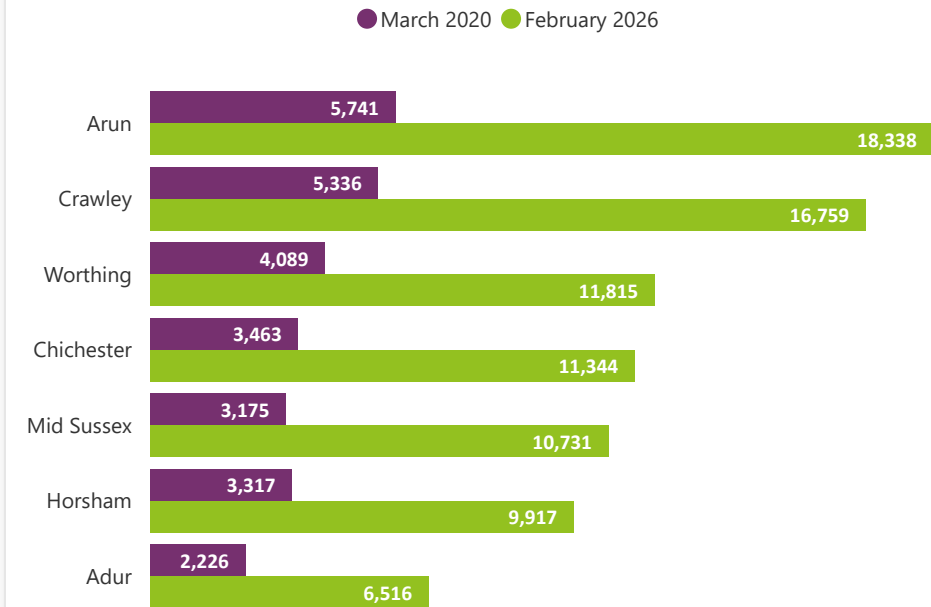
# West Sussex: Universal Credit Claimants



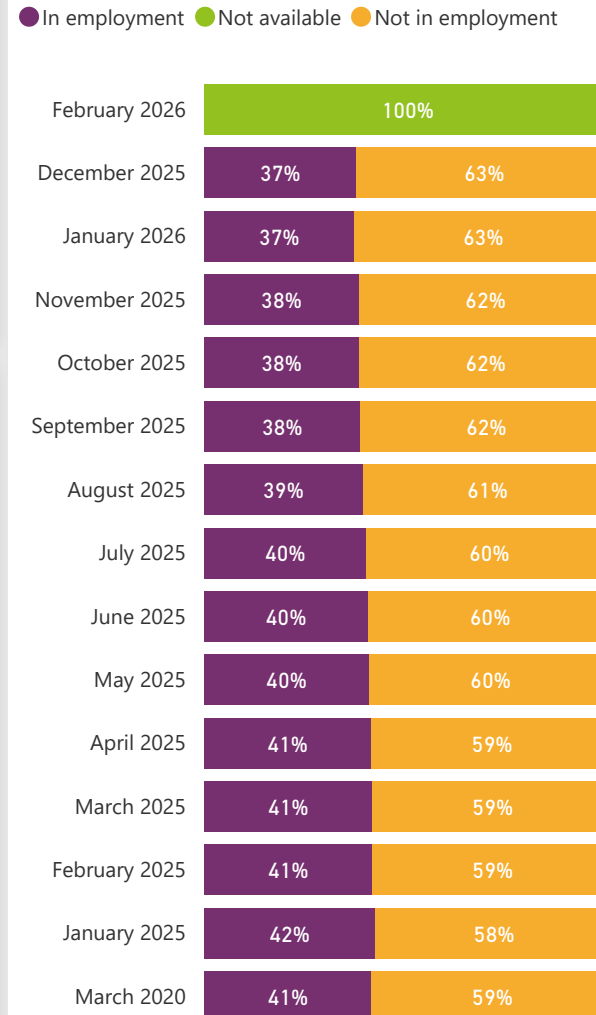
Percentage of people aged 16-64 years claiming Universal Credit



Universal Credit claimants in West Sussex change



Universal Credit claimants in West Sussex by employment status



Summary of Universal Credit Claimants in West Sussex, February 2026

**Overall:**

- In February 2026, numbers of Universal Credit claimants increased by almost 1.3% (85,420 total) over the last month in West Sussex.
- Significant rise since March 2020 (212% increase).
- Higher increase than national (180%) or regional (194%) average.
- The percentage (January 2026) of the 16-64 population claiming UC in West Sussex has risen to 16%, which is almost the same as the regional percentage and lower than the national percentage of 19.1% for the last month.

**Employment status:**

- 37% of claimants were in employment in January 2026. Higher than national (32%) or regional (34%) average.
- Mid Sussex and Horsham had the highest percentage of employed claimants (39%).

**District-specific:**

- Mid Sussex had the highest percentage increase in claimants (238%) since March 2020.
- At February 2026, Arun had the highest number of claimants at 18,338.

**Note:** Employment/not in employment breakdown for February 2026 is not available.

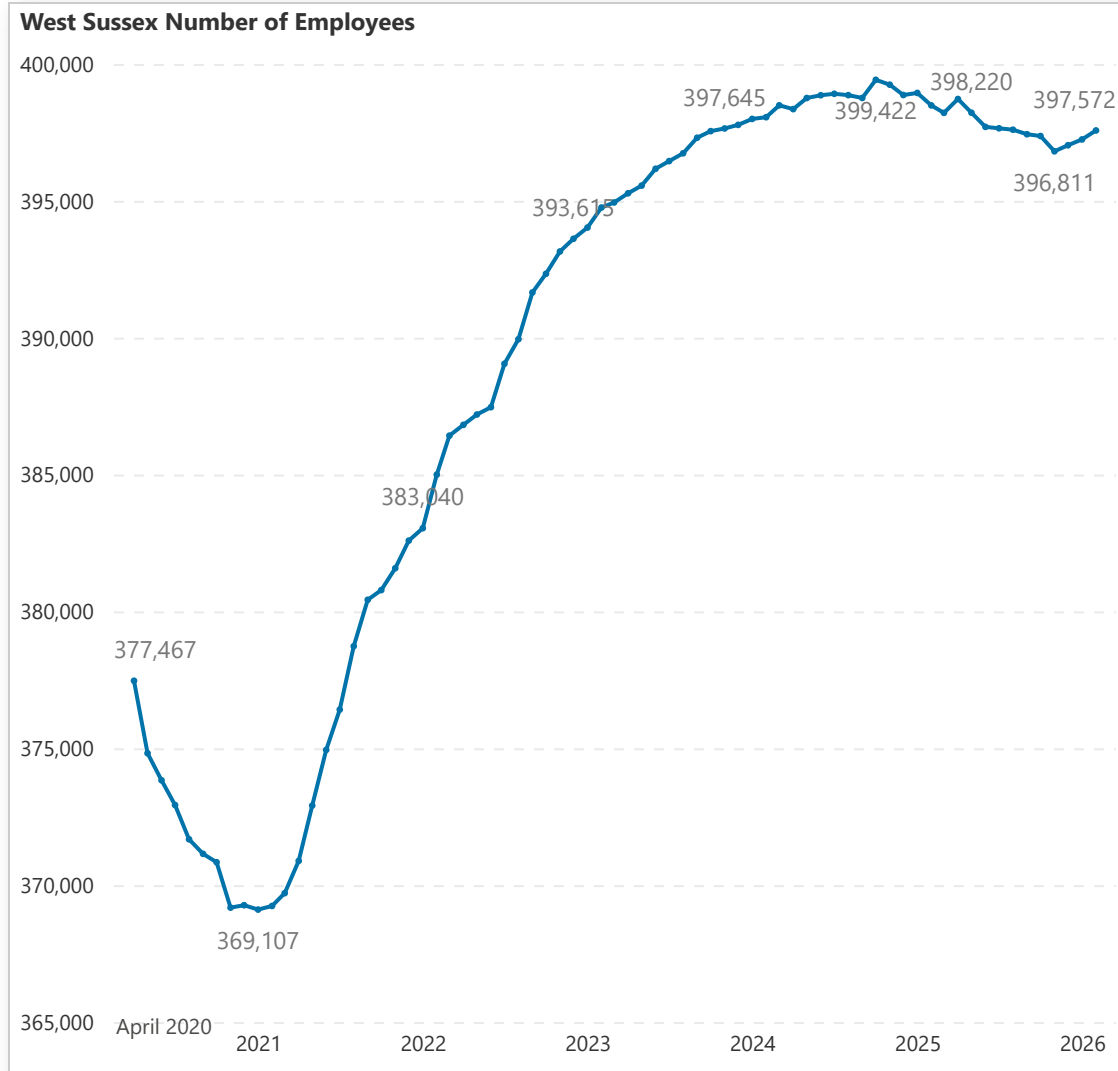
*Update: Since 17th of June 2025 Changes were made to the format of the underlying Universal Credit Full Service data feed to provide improvements to the accuracy of Service Centre and Jobcentre site information.*



Source: [Department for Work and Pension](#) Released: 17 Mar 2026

(Feb 2026 figures are provisional)

# Real Time Information Earnings and Employment



Summary of RTI employees in West Sussex for February 2026.

**Overall:**

- West Sussex: 397,572
- West Sussex (South West): 195,477
- West Sussex (North East): 202,095
- Adur: 26,773
- Arun: 68,552
- Chichester: 49,645
- Crawley: 62,358
- Horsham: 66,568
- Mid Sussex: 73,168
- Worthing: 50,508
- South East: 4,281,297
- UK: 30,338,961

**One Month Change (January 2026 - February 2026):**

- West Sussex rose by 0.08%
- West Sussex (South West) rose by 0.13%
- West Sussex (North East) rose by 0.04%
- Adur rose by 0.05%
- Arun rose by 0.17%
- Chichester fell by 0.01%
- Crawley rose by 0.03%
- Horsham rose by 0.02%
- Mid Sussex rose by 0.06%
- Worthing rose by 0.25%
- South East rose by 0.09%
- UK rose by 0.07%

**Three Month Change (November 2025 - February 2026):**

- West Sussex rose by 0.19%
- West Sussex (South West) rose by 0.24%
- West Sussex (North East) rose by 0.14%
- Adur rose by 0.17%
- Arun rose by 0.23%
- Chichester rose by 0.37%
- Crawley rose by 0.07%
- Horsham saw no change
- Mid Sussex rose by 0.33%
- Worthing rose by 0.24%
- South East rose by 0.09%
- UK rose by 0.11%

Source: ONS - [Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, seasonally adjusted](#)

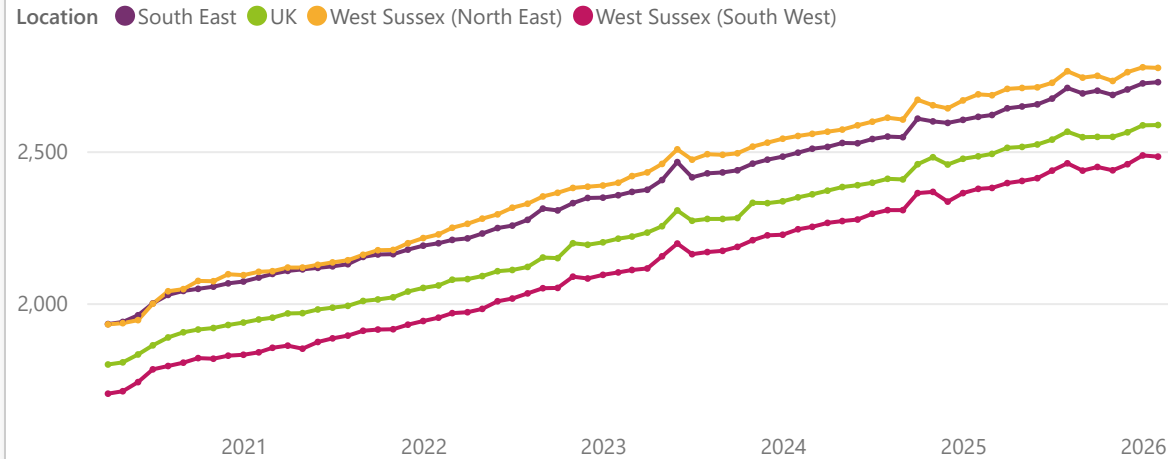
Released: 19 March 2026



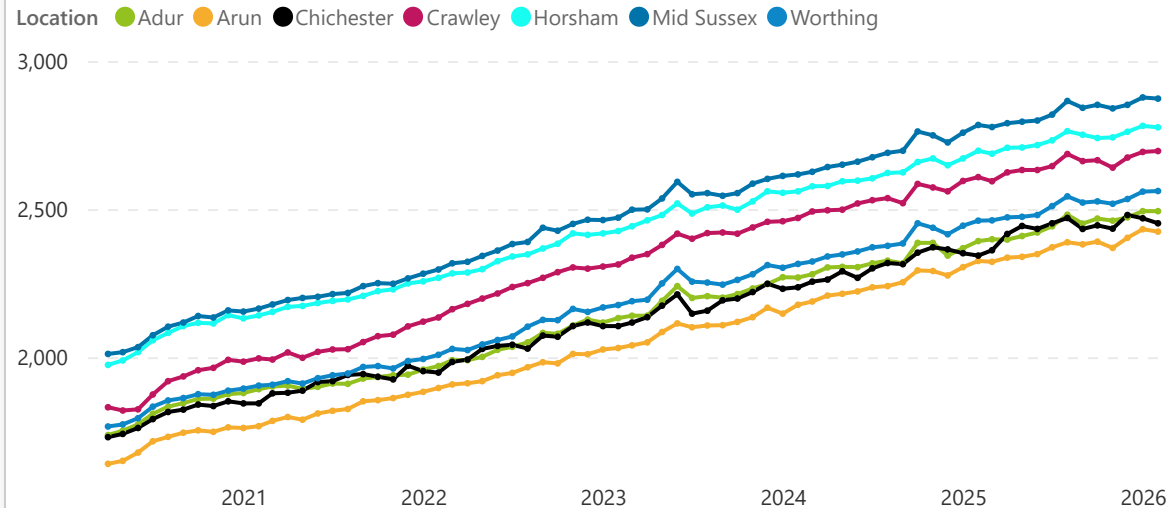
# Real Time Information Earnings and Employment



## Median Pay National and Regional Figures



## Median Pay in West Sussex



Summary of RTI median pay in West Sussex for February 2026.

### Overall:

- West Sussex (South West): 2,482
- West Sussex (North East): 2,774
- Adur: 2,493
- Arun: 2,424
- Chichester: 2,452
- Crawley: 2,696
- Horsham: 2,776
- Mid Sussex: 2,873
- Worthing: 2,561
- South East: 2,727
- UK: 2,586

### One Month Change (January 2026 - February 2026):

- West Sussex (South West) fell by 0.16%
- West Sussex (North East) fell by 0.07%
- Adur has not changed
- Arun fell by 0.33%
- Chichester fell by 0.69%
- Crawley rose by 0.11%
- Horsham fell by 0.18%
- Mid Sussex fell by 0.14%
- Worthing rose by 0.08%
- South East rose by 0.15%
- UK rose by 0.04%

### Three Month Change (November 2025

#### - February 2026):

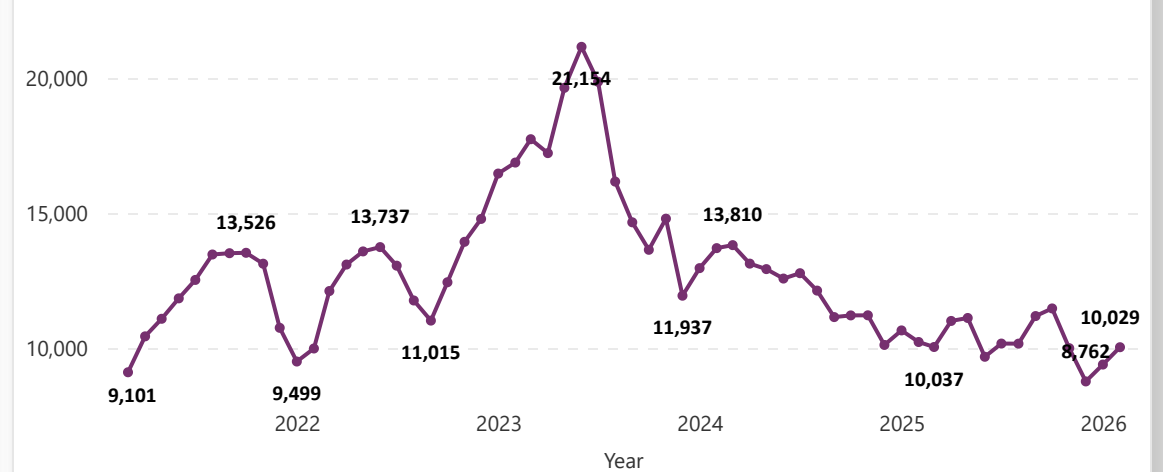
- West Sussex (South West) rose by 1.85%
- West Sussex (North East) rose by 1.57%
- Adur rose by 1.30%
- Arun rose by 2.32%
- Chichester rose by 0.74%
- Crawley rose by 2.12%
- Horsham rose by 1.24%
- Mid Sussex rose by 1.16%
- Worthing rose by 1.71%
- South East rose by 1.56%
- UK rose by 1.53%

# Job Postings

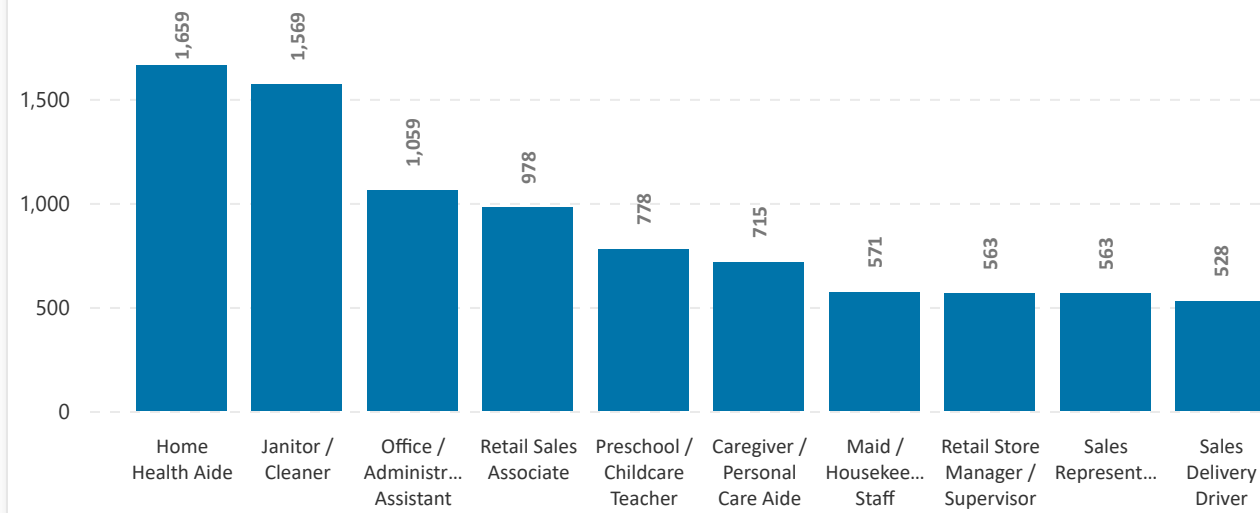
Specialised Job Postings September 2025 - February 2026



Unique Postings Over Time



Job Postings by Occupation September 2025 - February 2026



Summary of the job postings in West Sussex by Lightcast.

WSCC has access to Lightcast from which the numbers of job postings by occupation type, along with other information including skills requirements and job titles is available. In February 2026 there were 10,029 unique job postings in West Sussex, a significant reduction from the peak in June 2023 of 21,154 but still higher than the general levels seen pre-Covid. In terms of the top posted occupations over the last six months (September 2025 to February 2026), Home Health Aide is the most frequently posted role, making up the highest number of occupations followed by Janitor/Cleaner. The remaining occupations appear to be evenly distributed.

# House Prices

## House Price Data (ONS)

Area	Average First-time buyers	Average House Price	Average Monthly Rent	Average Mortgage Buyers
Adur	£316,000.0	£371,000.00	£1,374.00	£366,000.00
Arun	£257,000.0	£325,000.00	£1,211.00	£323,000.00
Chichester	£347,000.0	£441,000.00	£1,312.00	£441,000.00
Crawley	£302,000.0	£336,000.00	£1,463.00	£337,000.00
Horsham	£326,000.0	£441,000.00	£1,439.00	£430,000.00
Mid Sussex	£332,000.0	£437,000.00	£1,398.00	£443,000.00
Worthing	£254,000.0	£308,000.00	£1,306.00	£316,000.00

## Summary of House Price Data

### Average House Price Change from previous year December 2024 - December 2025

- Adur increased by 0.5%
- Arun decreased by 1.8%
- Chichester decreased by 0.1%
- Crawley increased by 6.7%
- Horsham increased by 4.1%
- Mid Sussex increased by 1.4%
- Worthing decreased by 3.0%

### Average Private Rent Change from previous year January 2025 - January 2026

- Adur's increased by 3.3%
- Arun increased by 4.4%
- Chichester increased by 3.8%
- Crawley increased by 4.2%
- Horsham increased by 4.0%
- Mid Sussex increased by 3.7%
- Worthing increased by 2.4%

### First Time Buyers Change from previous year December 2024 - December 2025

- Adur decreased by 0,6%
- Arun decreased by 1.9%
- Chichester increased 0.2%
- Crawley increased by 6.7%
- Horsham increased by 4.5%
- Mid Sussex increased by 1.5%
- Worthing decreased by 3.1%

### Average House Price for Mortgage Buyers Change from previous year December 2024 - December 2025

- Adur decreased by 0.2%
- Arun decreased by 1.2%
- Chichester decreased 0.2%
- Crawley increased by 7%
- Horsham increased by 4.4%
- Mid Sussex increased by 1.8%
- Worthing decreased by 2.8%

# Economic Activity

## Economic Activity by local authorities

Metric	Economic activity rate - aged 16-64		Employment rate - aged 16-64		% aged 16-64 who are self employed	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Location						
Adur	79.1%	81.7%	71.0%	78.5%	6.1%	14.3%
Arun	82.5%	79.0%	76.0%	77.2%	9.8%	7.6%
Chichester	76.3%	84.6%	76.3%	84.6%	14.9%	15.4%
Crawley	86.7%	79.5%	84.7%	78.5%	7.9%	13.4%
Horsham	85.2%	86.6%	83.7%	82.8%	15.3%	12.1%
Mid Sussex	83.7%	82.7%	82.1%	82.1%	15.7%	13.9%
Worthing	86.0%	86.3%	83.1%	85.7%	19.9%	13.3%
West Sussex	83.1%	82.9%	80.2%	81.4%	13.3%	12.6%
South East	81.5%	81.6%	78.6%	78.7%	9.7%	10.3%
England	78.7%	79.3%	75.6%	75.8%	9.3%	9.8%

## Summary of Economic Activity for Oct 2024 - Sep 2025

### Economic Activity

- West Sussex: 82.9%
- South East: 81.6%
- England: 79.3%

### Employment Rate

- West Sussex: 81.4%
- South East: 78.7%
- England: 75.8%

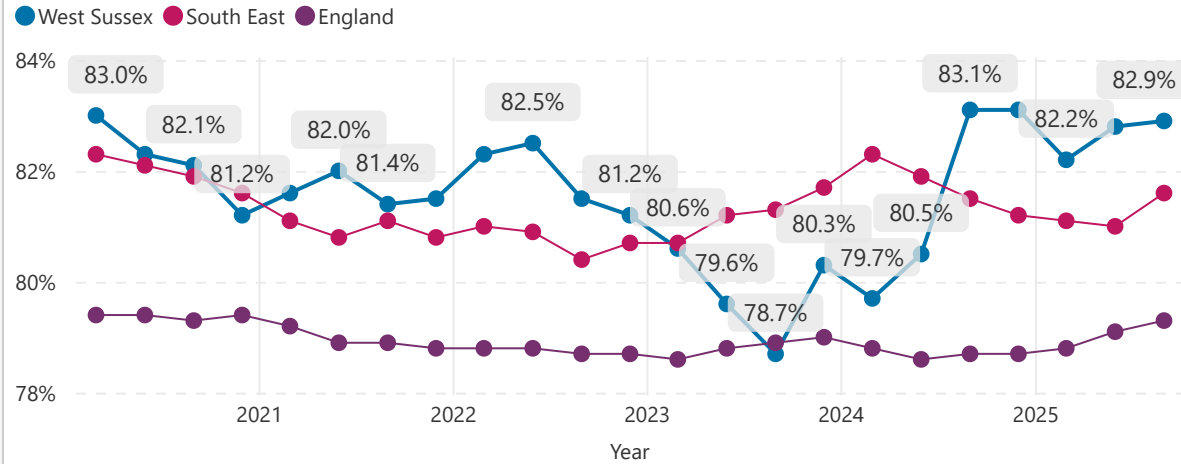
### Self Employed

- West Sussex: 12.6%
- South East: 10.3%
- England: 9.8%

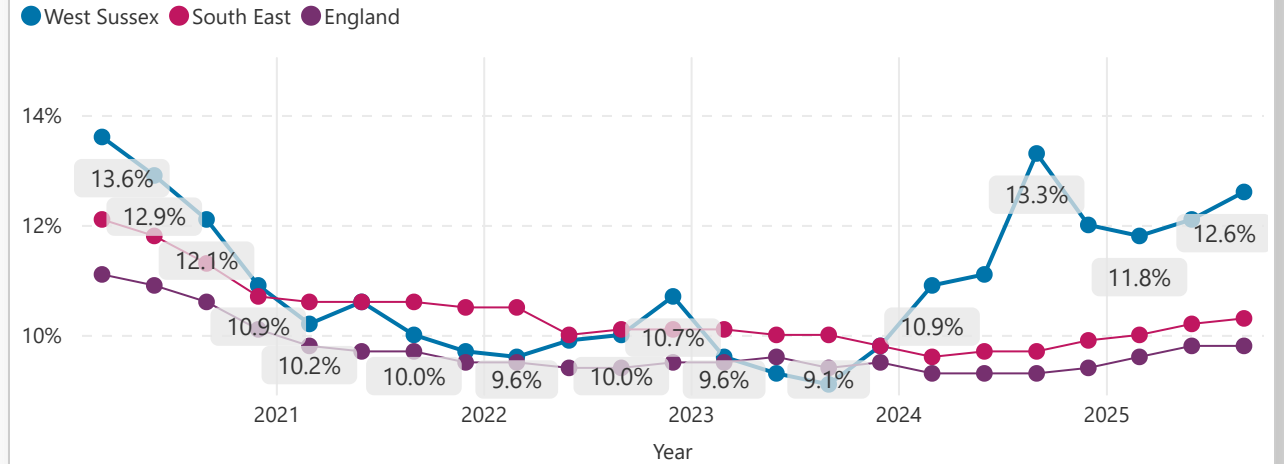
NB - The information on Economic Activity and Inactivity on the this slide and the next few slides is drawn from the Annual Population Survey and should be interpreted with some caution due to the APS's small sample size.

# Economic Activity

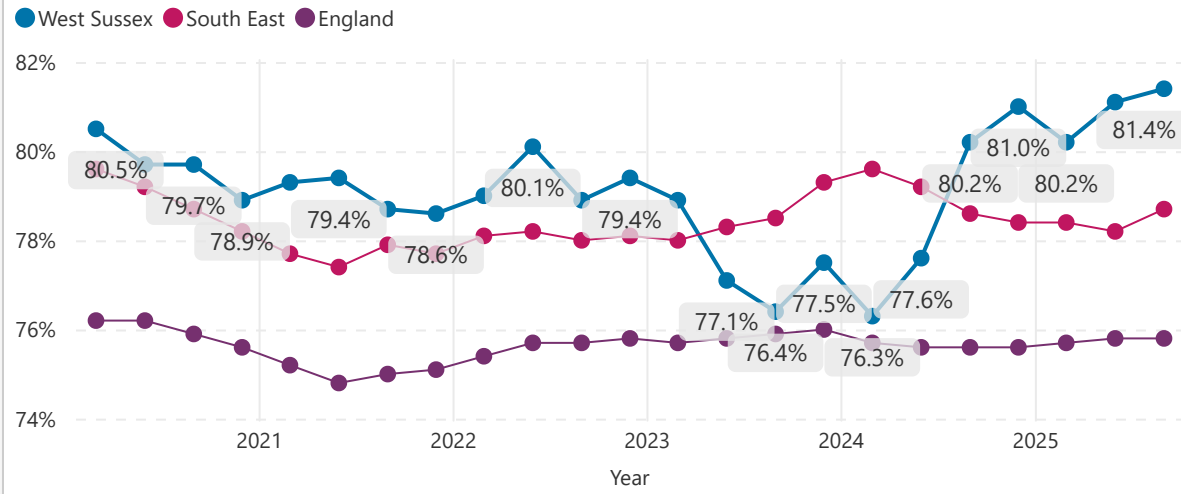
**Economic activity rate - aged 16-64**



**% aged 16-64 who are self employed**



**Employment rate - aged 16-64**



## Summary of Economic Activity for Oct 2024 - Sep 2025

### Three Month Change % (Jun 2025 - Sep 2025)

**Economic Activity**  
 West Sussex: 0.1%  
 South East: 0.6%  
 England: 0.2%

**Employment Rate**  
 West Sussex: 0.3%  
 South East: 0.5%  
 England: 0%

**Self Employed**  
 West Sussex: 0.5%  
 South East: 0.1%  
 England: 0%

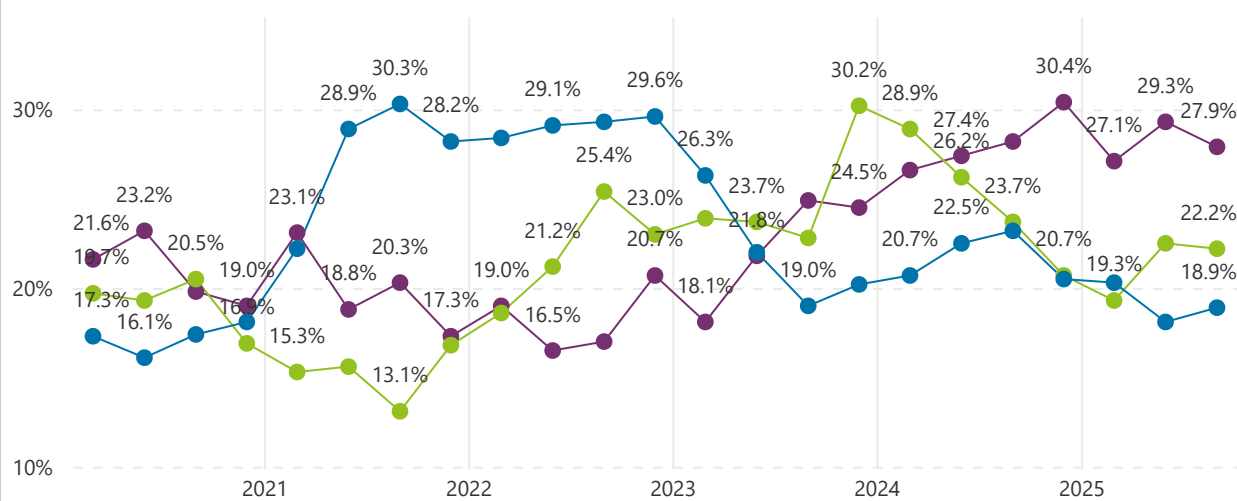
# Economic Inactivity

## Economically inactive by age (%)

Age	Aged 16-24		Aged 25-49		Aged 50+	
	Jul 2023- Jun 2024	Jul 2024- Jun 2025	Jul 2023- Jun 2024	Jul 2024- Jun 2025	Jul 2023- Jun 2024	Jul 2024- Jun 2025
West Sussex	34.50%	34.80%	6.90%	8.20%	55.50%	55.20%
South East	39.40%	40.60%	9.00%	8.80%	54.00%	53.40%
England	41.60%	40.90%	12.00%	11.70%	56.10%	55.20%

## Reasons for Economic Inactivity in West Sussex

● % of economically inactive long-term sick ● % of economically inactive retired ● % of economically inactive student



## Summary of Economic inactivity for Oct 2024 - Sep 2025

### Overall Economic Inactivity

- West Sussex: 17.1%
- South East: 18.4%
- England: 20.7%

### Economic Inactivity by Reason - Three Month Change (Jun-Sep)

- Long Term Sick: -1.4%
- Retired: -0.3%
- Student: 0.8%

Economic inactivity has remained stable over the past year in the age groups of 16-24 and 50+ but have slightly increased in the age group of 25-49.

- West Sussex 16-24 age group % change: 0.3%
- West Sussex 25-49 age group % change: 1.3%
- West Sussex 50+ age group % change: -0.3%

## Job Vacancies

- Estimated vacancies in December to February 2026 was 721,000.
- Decreasing 6,000 or 0.8% from September to November 2025.
- Total estimated vacancies were down by 76,000 (9.5%) in December 2025 to February 2026 from levels in the previous year.
- The number of unemployed people per vacancy was 2.6 in November 2025 to January 2025, up from 2.5 in the previous quarter and 1.9 in the previous year.

## Gross Domestic Product

- Monthly GDP is estimated to have grown by 0.2% in January 2026.

## Labour Market

- Early estimates for February 2026 indicate that the number of payrolled employees was 30.3 million which is a fall of 0.2% or 49,000 from the previous year.
- The largest increase was in the health and social work sector, with a rise of 42,000. The largest decrease was in the wholesale and retail sector, with a fall of 49,000 employees.
- UK payrolled employee growth for January 2026 compared with December 2025 has been revised from a decrease of 11,000 reported in the last bulletin to an increase of 6,000.
- Early estimates for February 2026 indicate that median monthly pay increased by 4.1% compared with February 2025.
- Annual growth in median pay in February 2026 was highest in the public administration and defence sector, with an increase of 8.3%. It was lowest in the finance and insurance sector, with an increase of 2.9%.

## Business Trading

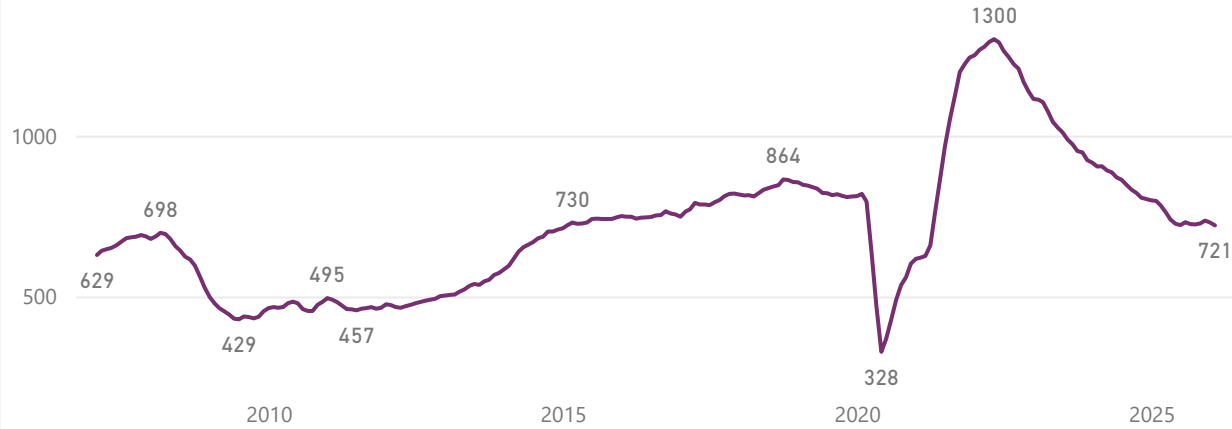
- 25% of trading businesses reported that their turnover had decreased in February 2026 compared with the previous month
- In early March 2026, economic uncertainty was the most commonly reported challenge affecting turnover for trading businesses at 32%.
- 29% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services bought in February 2026 when compared to the previous month.
- 11% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services they sell in February 2026.
- 22% of trading businesses expect the prices of goods or services they sell to increase in April 2026.
- 29% of trading businesses reported labour costs as a reason for considering raising their prices in April 2026.
- 14% of trading businesses reported falling demand of goods and services was the main concern for their businesses looking ahead to April 2026

## Business Closures

- Company insolvencies in England and Wales stood at 1,878 in February 2026, which was 7% higher than in January 2026 and 7% lower than in the same month of the previous year.
- Company insolvencies consisted of 249 compulsory liquidations, 1,473 creditors' voluntary liquidations (CVLs), 146 administrations and 10 company voluntary arrangements (CVAs).
- There were 11,609 individual insolvencies in England and Wales.
- Individual insolvencies consisted of 768 bankruptcies (lower than usual due to a temporary backlog of debtor bankruptcies), 4,210 debt relief orders (DROs) and 6,631 individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs).
- The number of DROs in February 2026 was a record high in the monthly time series going back to their introduction in 2009, exceeding the previous high of 4,185 in August 2025.
- Bankruptcy were 25% higher than in February 2025.

# Job Vacancies (UK)

Number of vacancies (Thousands) in the UK, seasonally adjusted, Jul to Sep 2005 to Jul to Sep 2024

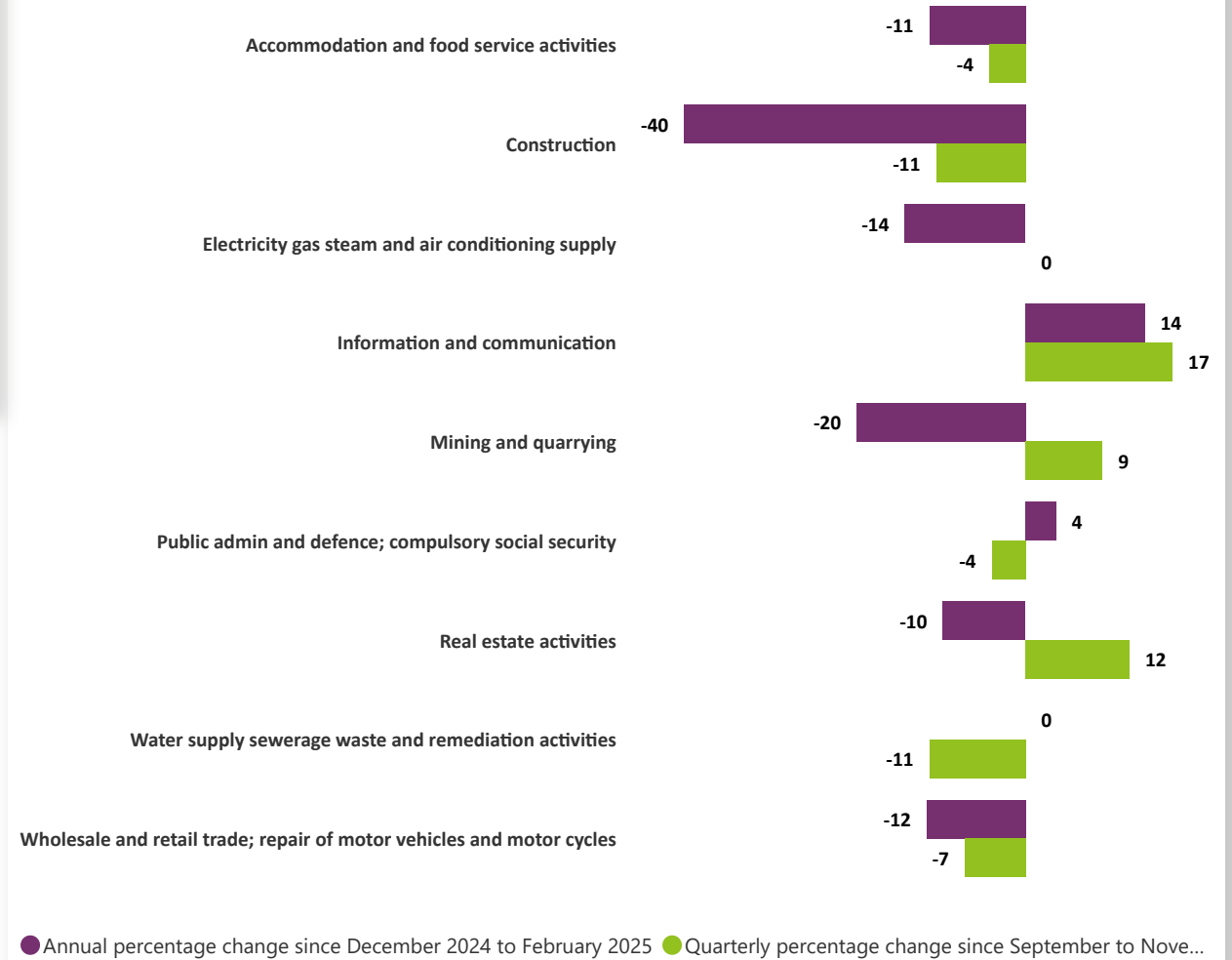


## Summary of job vacancies (UK).

### Overall:

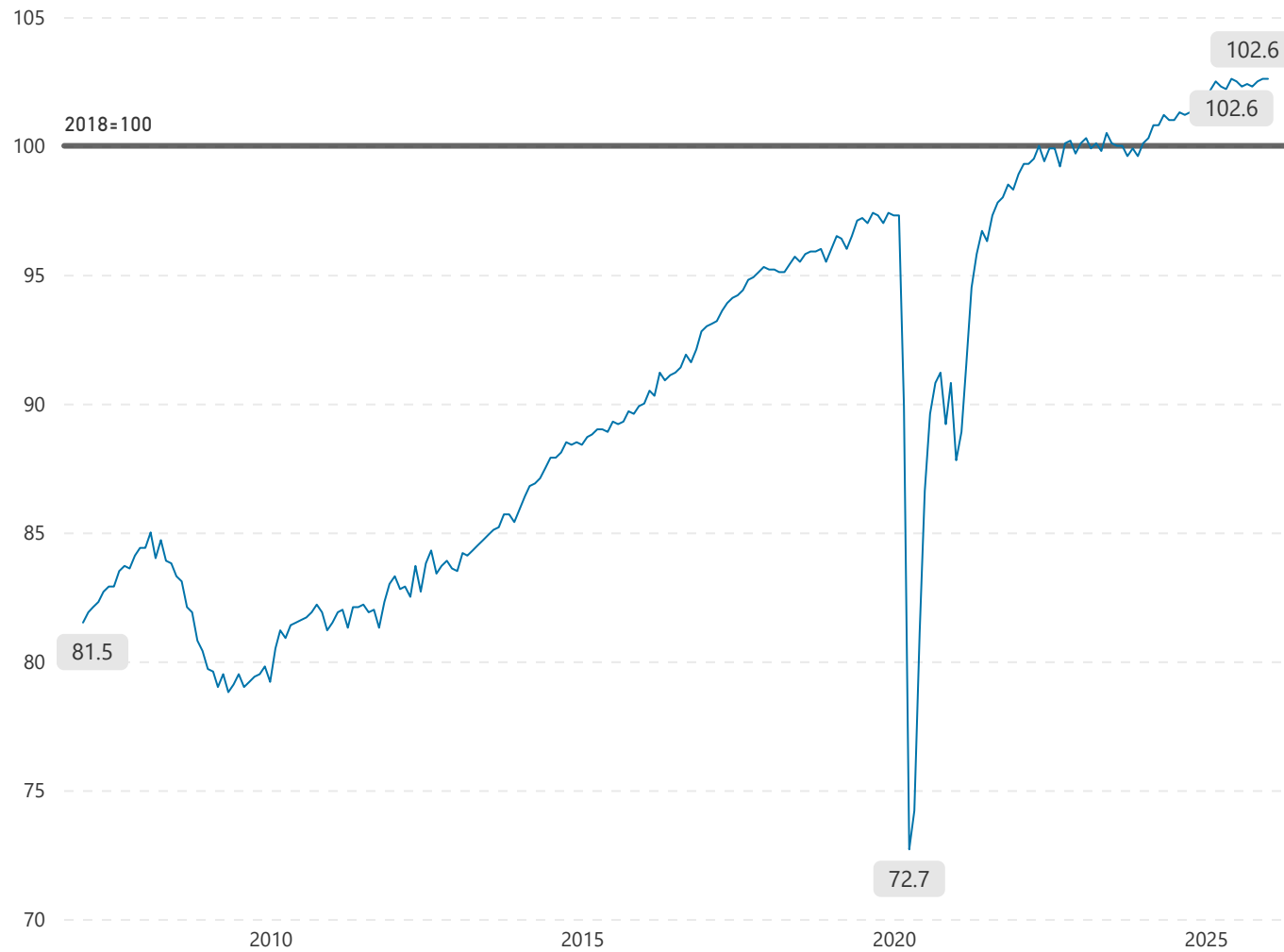
- Estimated vacancies in December to February 2026 was 721,000.
- Decreasing 6,000 or 0.8% from September to November 2025.
- Total estimated vacancies were down by 76,000 (9.5%) in December 2025 to February 2026 from levels in the previous year.
- The number of unemployed people per vacancy was 2.6 in November 2025 to January 2025, up from 2.5 in the previous quarter and 1.9 in the previous year.

% Change in Number of Vacancies in UK by Sectors



# Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

## Monthly index, UK



## Summary of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (UK).

### Overall:

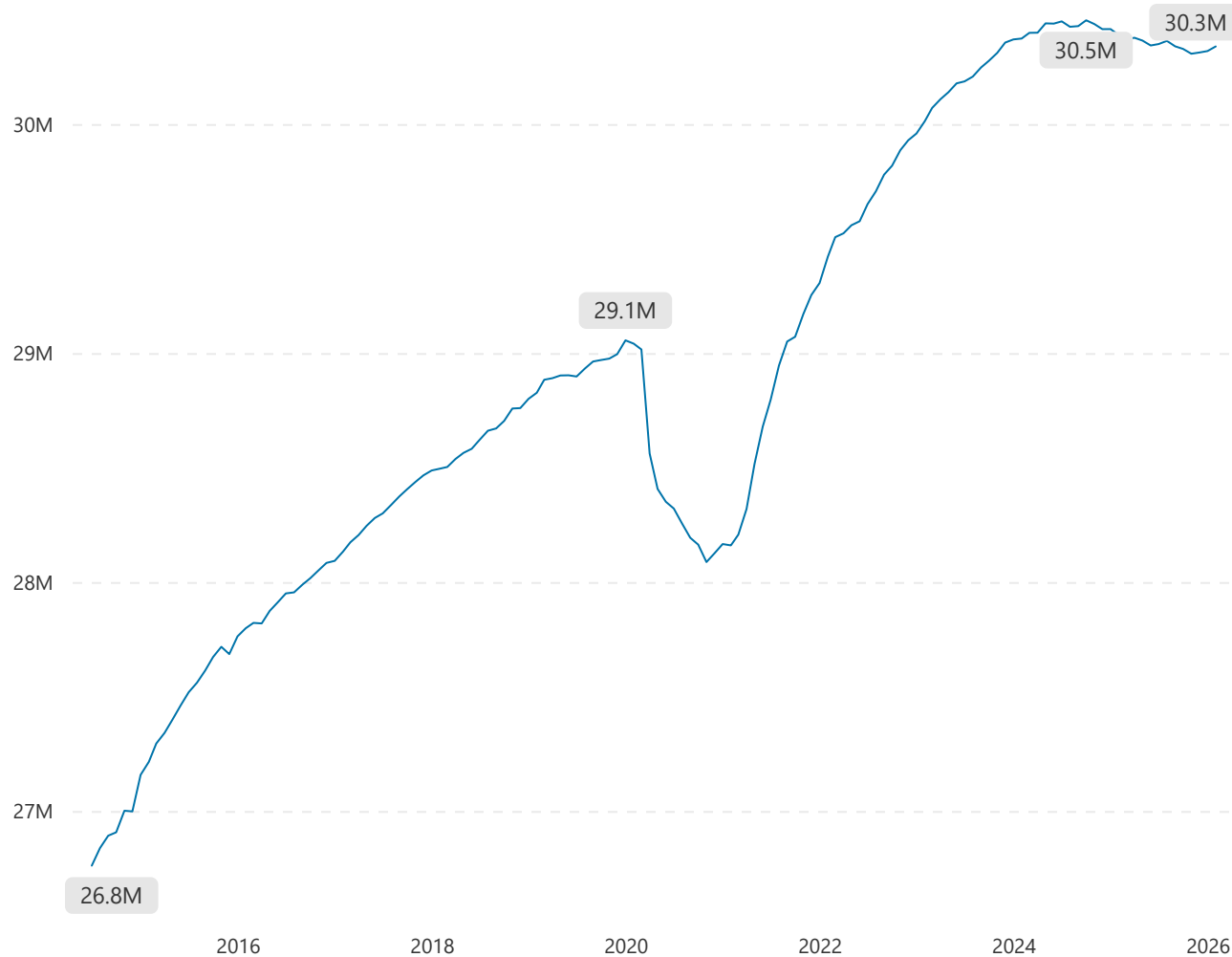
- Monthly GDP is estimated to have grown by 0.2% in January 2026.

### Output growth:

- Services grew 0.2% in the three months to January 2026
- Production grew by 1.3% in the three months to January 2026
- Construction fell by 2.0% in the three months to January 2026

# Labour Market

Payrolled employees, seasonally adjusted, UK



## Summary of Labour Market (UK).

### Overall:

- Early estimates for February 2026 indicate that the number of payrolled employees was 30.3 million which is a fall of 0.2% or 49,000 from the previous year.
- The largest increase was in the health and social work sector, with a rise of 42,000. The largest decrease was in the wholesale and retail sector, with a fall of 49,000 employees.
- UK payrolled employee growth for January 2026 compared with December 2025 has been revised from a decrease of 11,000 reported in the last bulletin to an increase of 6,000.
- Early estimates for February 2026 indicate that median monthly pay increased by 4.1% compared with February 2025.
- Annual growth in median pay in February 2026 was highest in the public administration and defence sector, with an increase of 8.3%. It was lowest in the finance and insurance sector, with an increase of 2.9%.

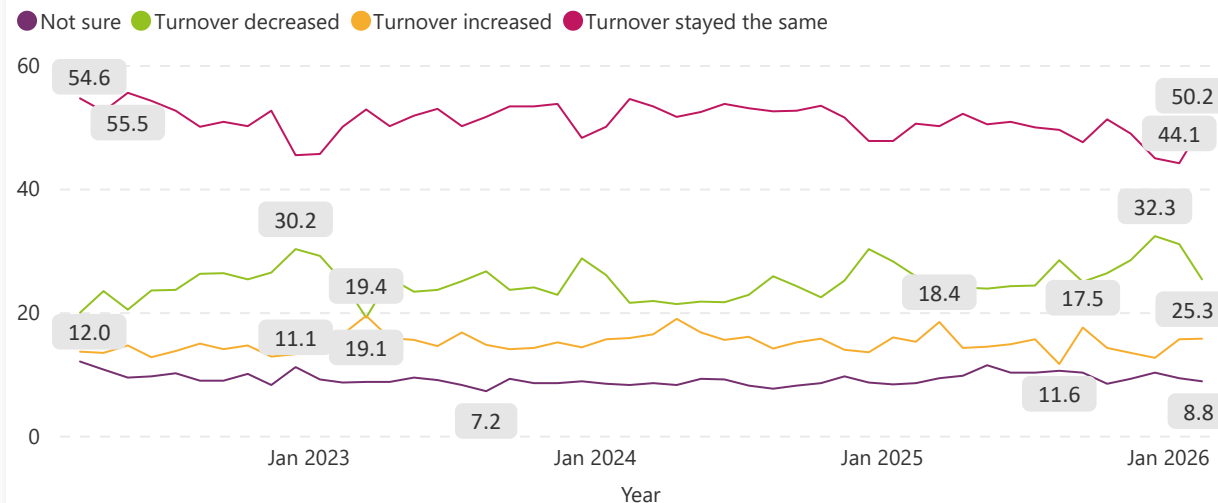
## Summary of business insights and impact on the UK economy.

This data is the final results from Wave 152 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) which was live 2 to 15 March 2026.

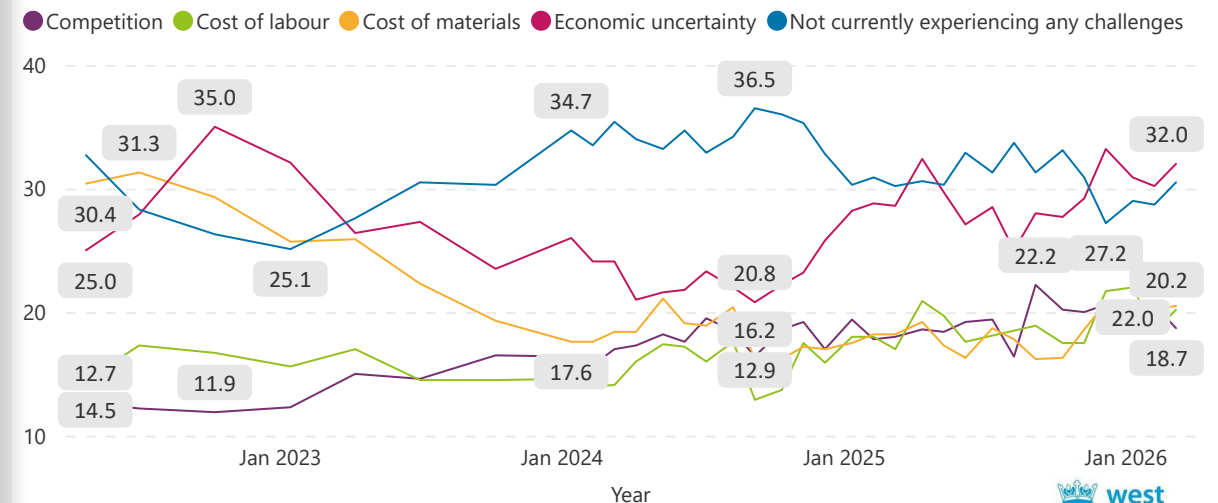
### Overall:

- 25% of trading businesses reported that their turnover had decreased in February 2026 compared with the previous month
- In early March 2026, economic uncertainty was the most commonly reported challenge affecting turnover for trading businesses at 32%.
- 29% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services bought in February 2026 when compared to the previous month.
- 11% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services they sell in February 2026.
- 22% of trading businesses expect the prices of goods or services they sell to increase in April 2026.
- 29% of trading businesses reported labour costs as a reason for considering raising their prices in April 2026.
- 14% of trading businesses reported falling demand of goods and services was the main concern for their businesses looking ahead to April 2026

### Turnover Comparison of Previous Month

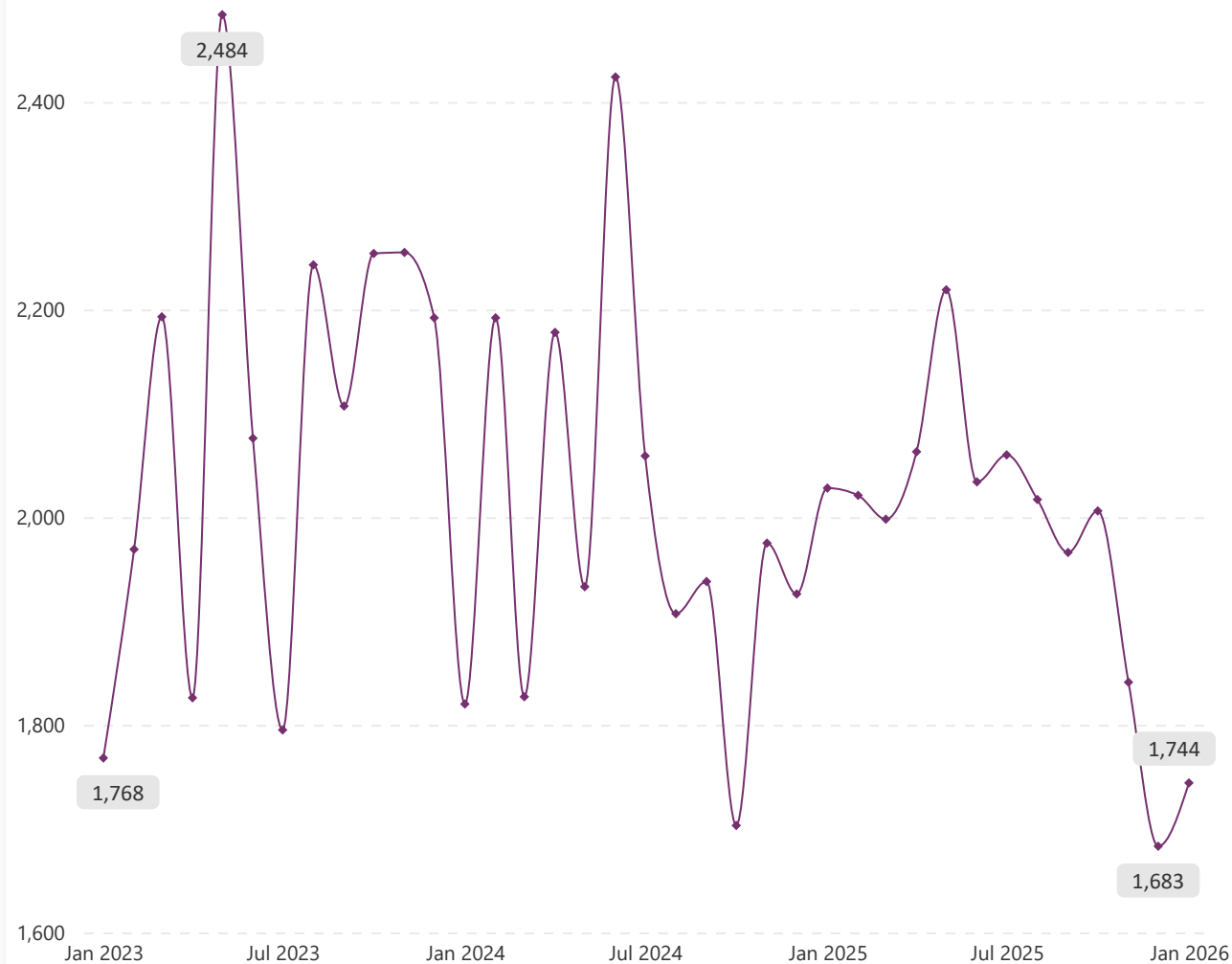


### Economic Uncertainty Reasons



# Business Closures (Company)

Company insolvencies in England & Wales



Summary of business closures (company) on the UK economy.

## Overall:

- Company insolvencies in England and Wales stood at 1,878 in February 2026, which was 7% higher than in January 2026 and 7% lower than in the same month of the previous year.
- Company insolvencies consisted of 249 compulsory liquidations, 1,473 creditors' voluntary liquidations (CVLs), 146 administrations and 10 company voluntary arrangements (CVAs).

# Business Closures (Individual)

## Individual insolvencies in England & Wales



Summary of business closures (individual) on the UK economy.

### Overall:

- There were 11,609 individual insolvencies in England and Wales.
- Individual insolvencies consisted of 768 bankruptcies (lower than usual due to a temporary backlog of debtor bankruptcies), 4,210 debt relief orders (DROs) and 6,631 individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs).
- The number of DROs in February 2026 was a record high in the monthly time series going back to their introduction in 2009, exceeding the previous high of 4,185 in August 2025.
- Bankruptcy were 25% higher than in February 2025.