

April 2026 (Issue 1)

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New Businesses March 2026

- 661 new businesses were incorporated (a **35% increase** from February 2026).
- 533 businesses were dissolved or liquidated (a **3% decrease** from February 2026).

There were 128 more new businesses than those that were dissolved or liquidated.

Claimants March 2026

- Claimant count increased by **2%** 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 March 2026

- Universal Credit claimants increased by **1%** 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 **19.4%**.

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

- West Sussex: 397,576 (increased by 0.06%)
- West Sussex (South West): 195,547 (increased by 0.09%)
- West Sussex (North East): 202,029 (increased by 0.04%)
- South East: 4,280,209 (decreased by 0.01%)
- UK: 30,313,223 (decreased by 0.04%)

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

- West Sussex (South West): 2,489 (increased by 0.04%)
- West Sussex (North East): 2,797 (increased by 0.47%)
- South East: 2,736 (increased by 0.04%)
- UK: 2,599 (increased by 0.12%)

Job Postings (Lightcast)

- In March 2026, there were **10,497** unique job postings in West Sussex, which is about **5%** higher than the same time last year.
- In terms of the top posted occupations over the last six months (October 2025 to March 2026), home health aide is the top posted followed closely by janitors/cleaners.

Average House Price January 2025

- Adur: £389,000
- Arun: £321,000
- Chichester: £441,000
- Crawley: £332,000
- Horsham: £448,000
- Mid Sussex: £439,000
- Worthing: £308,000

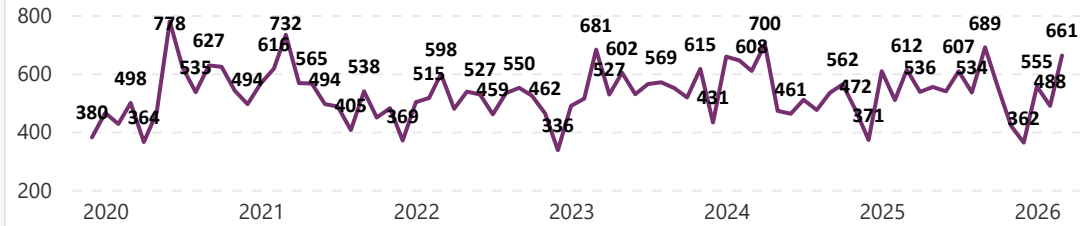
Average House Price Change from previous year February 2026 - March 2026

- Adur increased by 4.85%
- Arun decreased by 1.23%
- Chichester saw no change
- Crawley decreased by 1.19%
- Horsham increased by 1.59%
- Mid Sussex increased by 0.46%
- Worthing saw no change

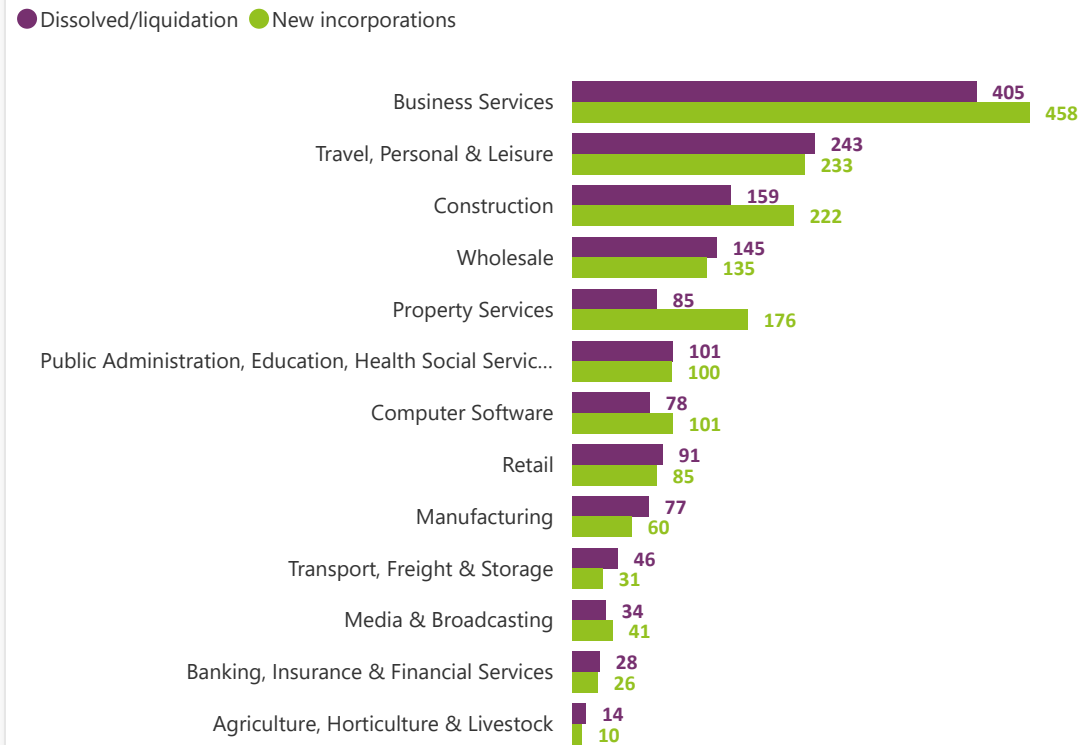
West Sussex: New Businesses



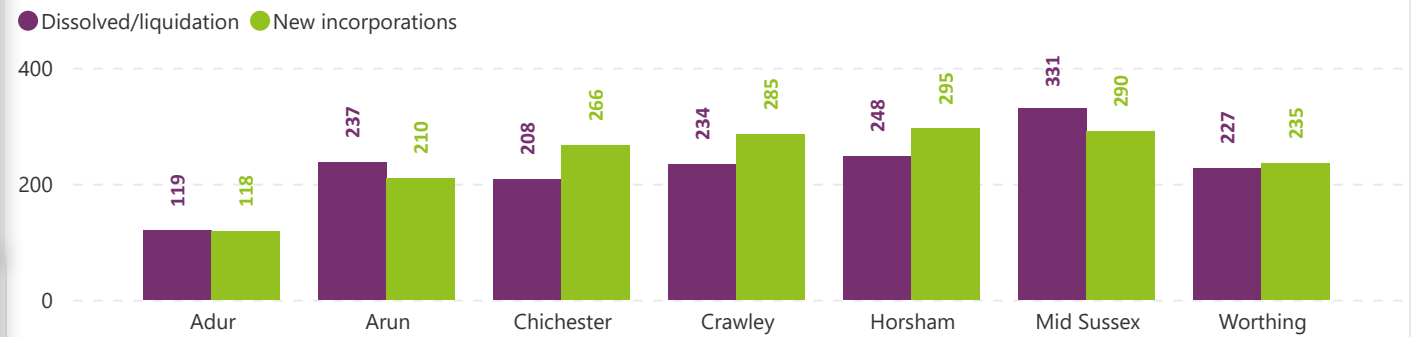
New business incorporations in West Sussex



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



Number of new business incorporations and businesses dissolved/in liquidation by local authority (Jan'26-Mar'26)



Summary of Business Formation Trends in West Sussex

Overall trend: Over the past three months, a generally positive trend has been observed across most districts and boroughs. Mid Sussex was the main exception, recording an increase in the number of businesses that dissolved, while Adur remained unchanged. Most sectors experienced growth in new business registrations during this period, with the exception of Manufacturing and Transport, including Freight, Storage, and Wholesale. A similar pattern has been observed in previous years during the same time period.

Last 12 months:

- 6,949 new businesses incorporated.
- 6,597 - businesses dissolved or liquidated.
- Net gain of 352 businesses.

Last 3 months:

- 1,699 new businesses incorporated.
- 1,604 businesses dissolved or liquidated.
- Net increase of 95 businesses.

March 2026:

- 661 new businesses incorporated. (35% increase from February 2026)
- 533 businesses dissolved or liquidated. (3% decrease from February 2026)
- Net increase of 128 businesses.



West Sussex: Claimant Count



17,000

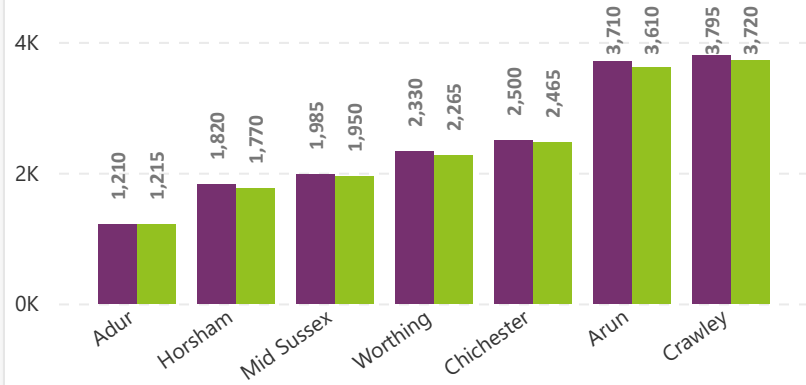
Feb'26

17,350

Mar'26

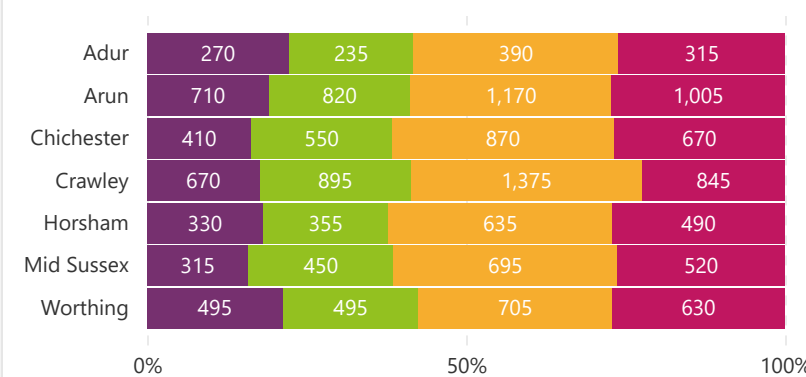
Total Number of Claimants by Local Authority

March 2026 February 2026

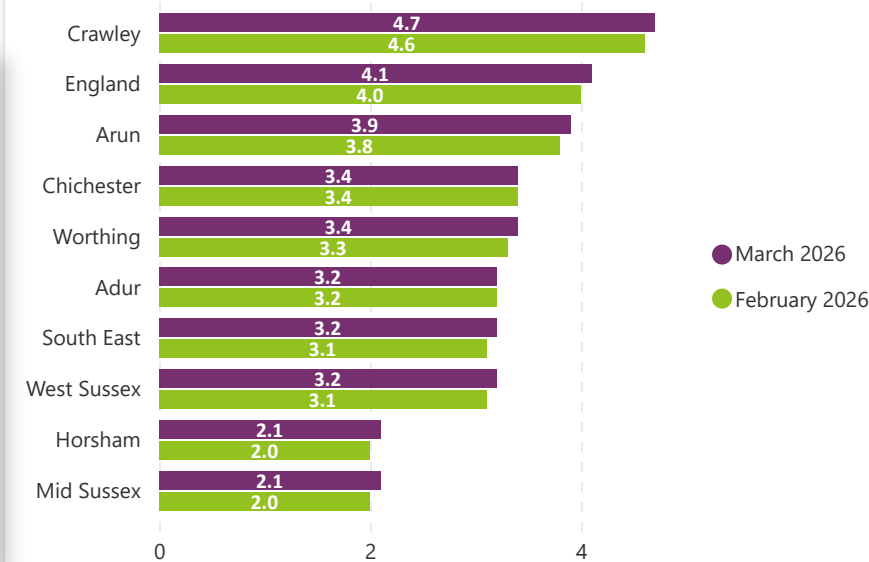


Distribution of claimants by age band

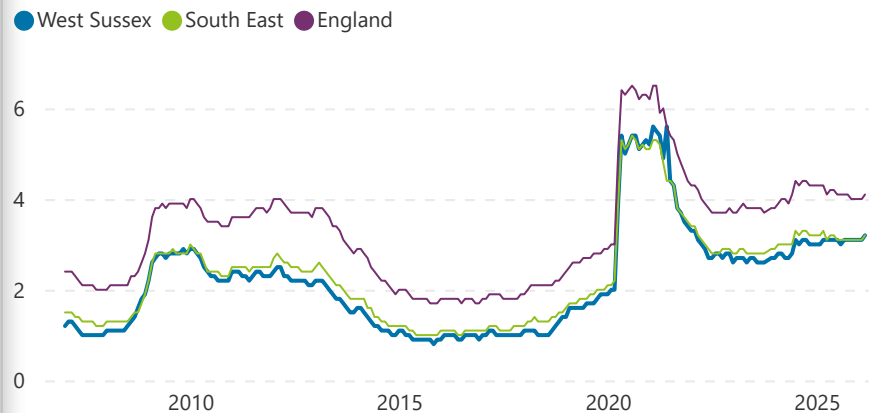
Aged 18-24 Aged 25-34 Aged 35-49 Aged 50+



Claimant count rate change



Claimant count rate



Summary of Claimant Count Changes in West Sussex, March 2026

Overall:

- Claimant count has increased over the last month by **2%** (17,350) 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 (Feb'26 - Mar'26):

Increases:

- Arun (**2.8%**)
- Chichester (**1.4%**)
- Crawley (**2%**)
- Horsham (**2.8%**)
- Mid Sussex (**1.8%**)
- Worthing (**2.9%**)

Decrease:

- Adur (**0.4%**)

Specifics (Mar'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](#)

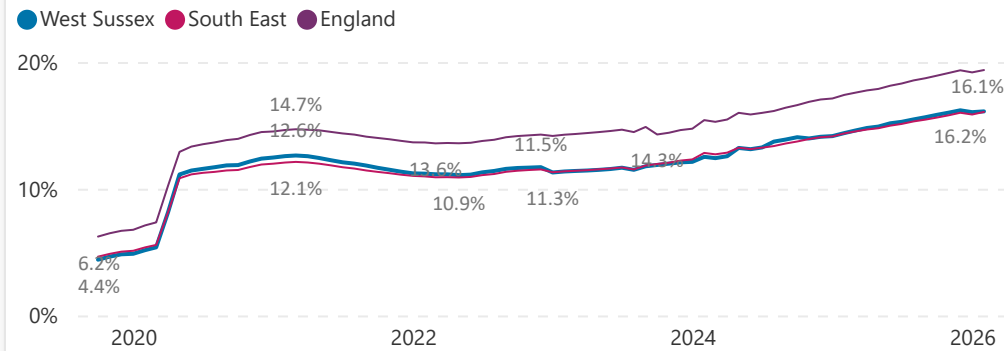
Released: 21 Apr 2026 (Mar 2026 Figures are provisional)

*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.

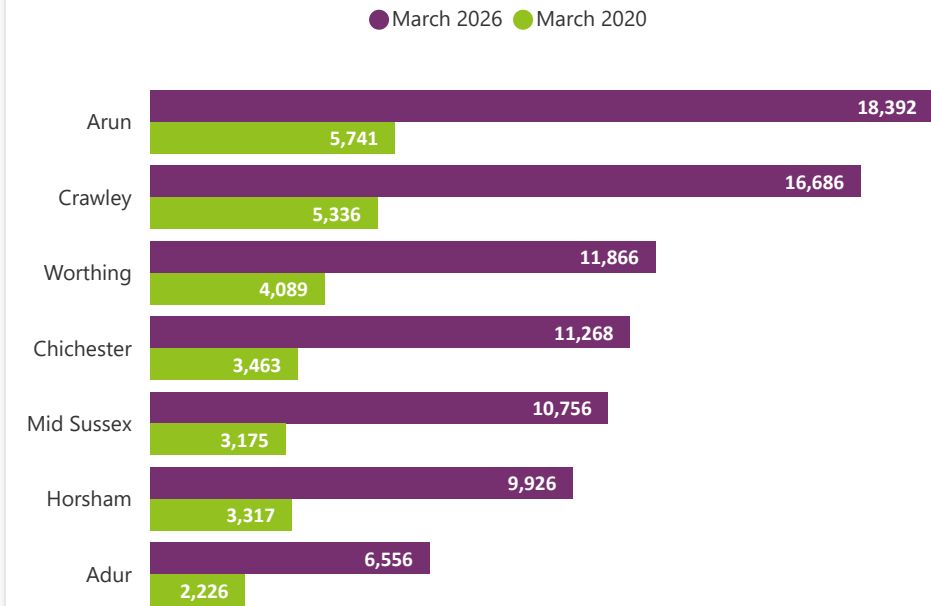
West Sussex: Universal Credit Claimants



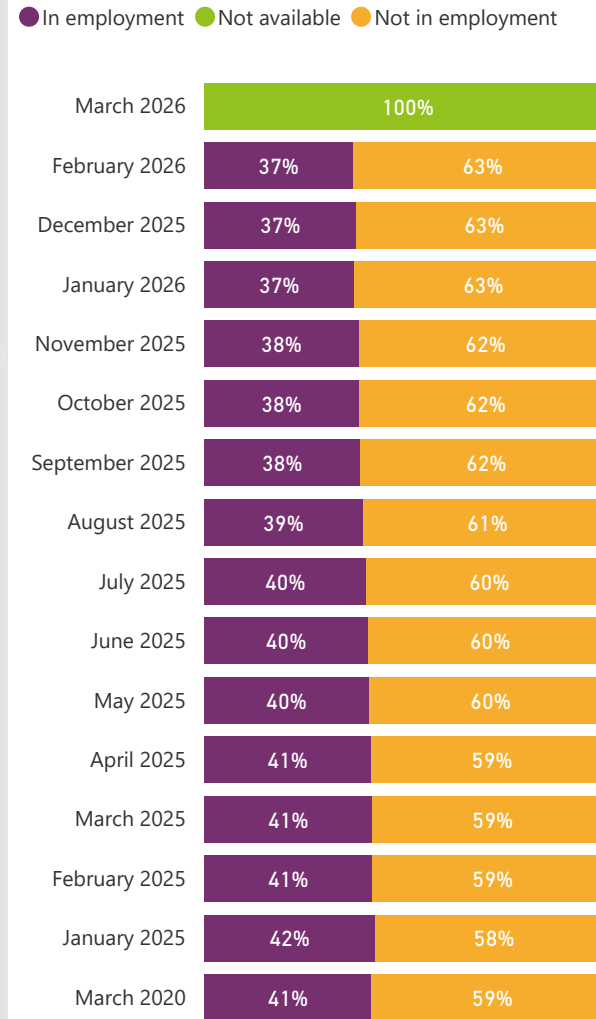
Percentage of people aged 16-64 years claiming Universal Credit



Universal Credit claimants in West Sussex change



Universal Credit claimants in West Sussex by employment status



Summary of Universal Credit Claimants in West Sussex, March 2026

Overall:

- In March 2026, numbers of Universal Credit claimants increased by almost 1% (85,450 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 (February 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 19.4% for the last month.

Employment status:

- 37% of claimants were in employment in February 2026. Higher than national (31%) or regional (34%) average.
- Mid Sussex and Horsham had the highest percentage of employed claimants (39%).

District-specific:

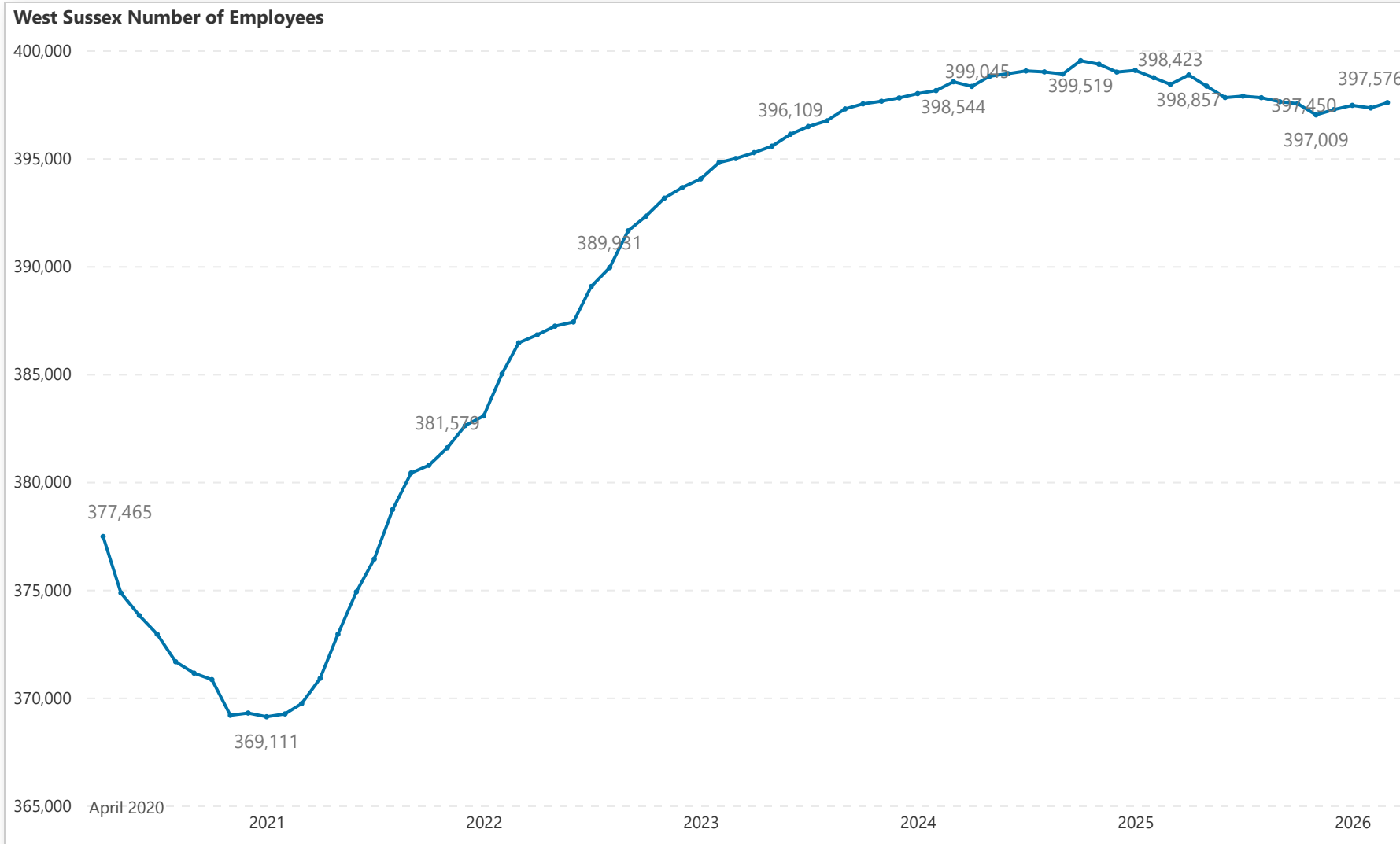
- Mid Sussex had the highest percentage increase in claimants (238%) since March 2020.
- At March 2026, Arun had the highest number of claimants at 18,392.

Note: Employment/not in employment breakdown for March 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.



Real Time Information Earnings and Employment



Summary of RTI employees in West Sussex for March 2026.

Overall:

- West Sussex: 397,576
- West Sussex (South West): 195,547
- West Sussex (North East): 202,029
- South East: 4,280,209
- UK: 30,313,223

One Month Change (February 2026 - March 2026):

- West Sussex rose by 0.06%
- West Sussex (South West) rose by 0.09%
- West Sussex (North East) rose by 0.04%
- South East fell by 0.01%
- UK fell by 0.04%

Three Month Change (December 2025 - March 2026):

- West Sussex rose by 0.08%
- West Sussex (South West) rose by 0.19%
- West Sussex (North East) fell by 0.03%
- South East rose by 0.01%
- UK fell by 0.03%

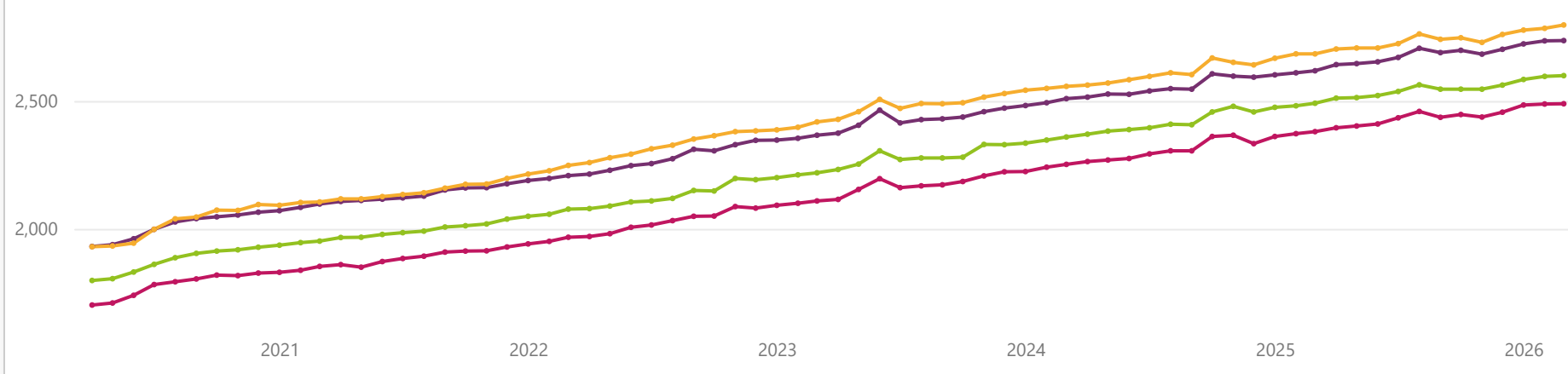


Real Time Information Earnings and Employment



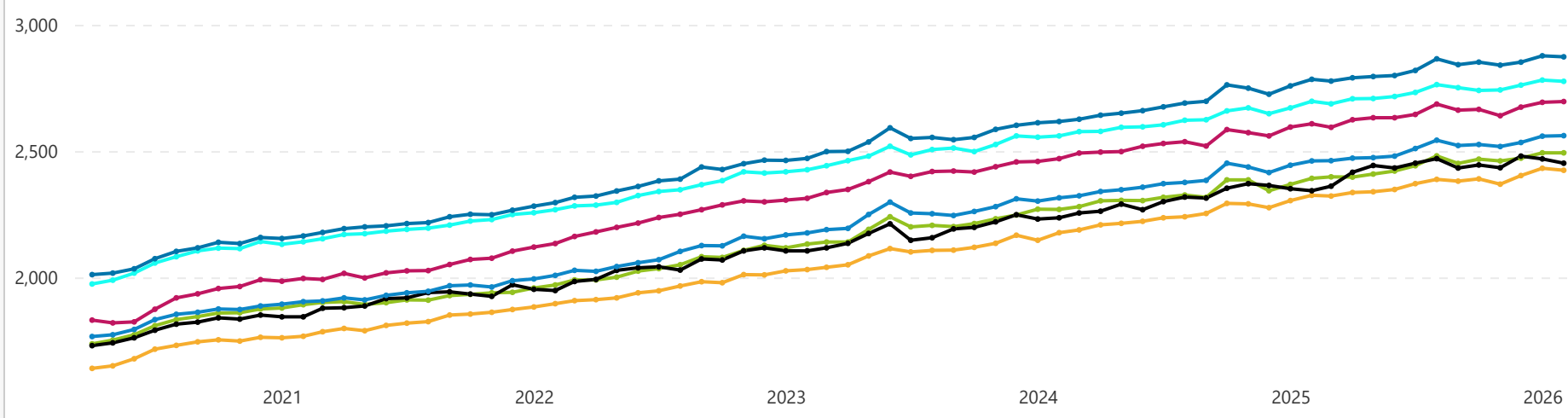
Median Pay National and Regional Figures

Location ● South East ● UK ● West Sussex (North East) ● West Sussex (South West)



Median Pay in West Sussex

Location ● Adur ● Arun ● Chichester ● Crawley ● Horsham ● Mid Sussex ● Worthing



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

Overall:

- West Sussex (South West): 2,489
- West Sussex (North East): 2,797
- South East: 2,736
- UK: 2,599

One Month Change (February 2026 - March 2026):

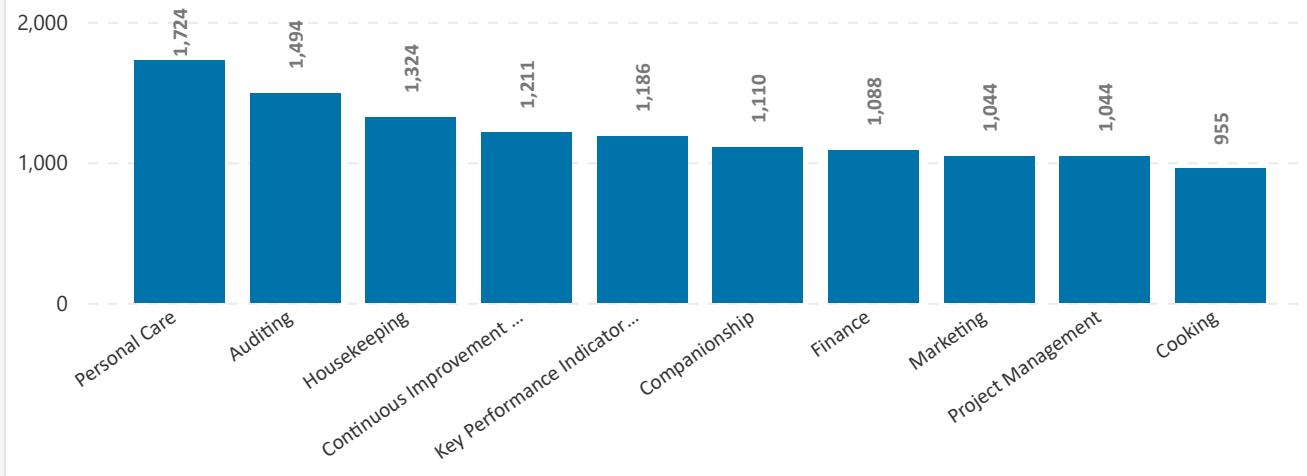
- West Sussex (South West) rose by 0.04%
- West Sussex (North East) rose by 0.47%
- South East rose by 0.04%
- UK rose by 0.12%

Three Month Change (December 2025 - March 2026):

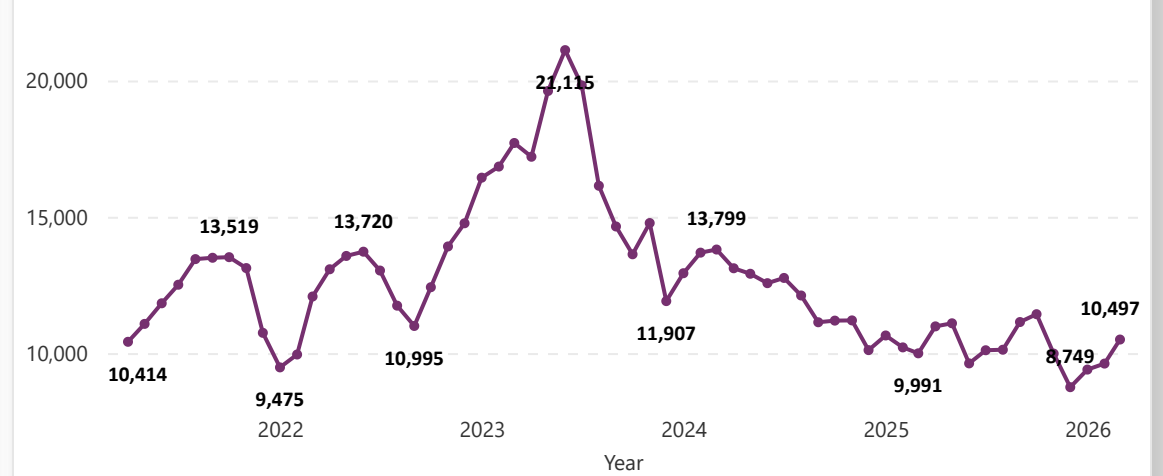
- West Sussex (South West) rose by 1.34%
- West Sussex (North East) rose by 1.34%
- South East rose by 1.26%
- UK rose by 1.44%

Job Postings

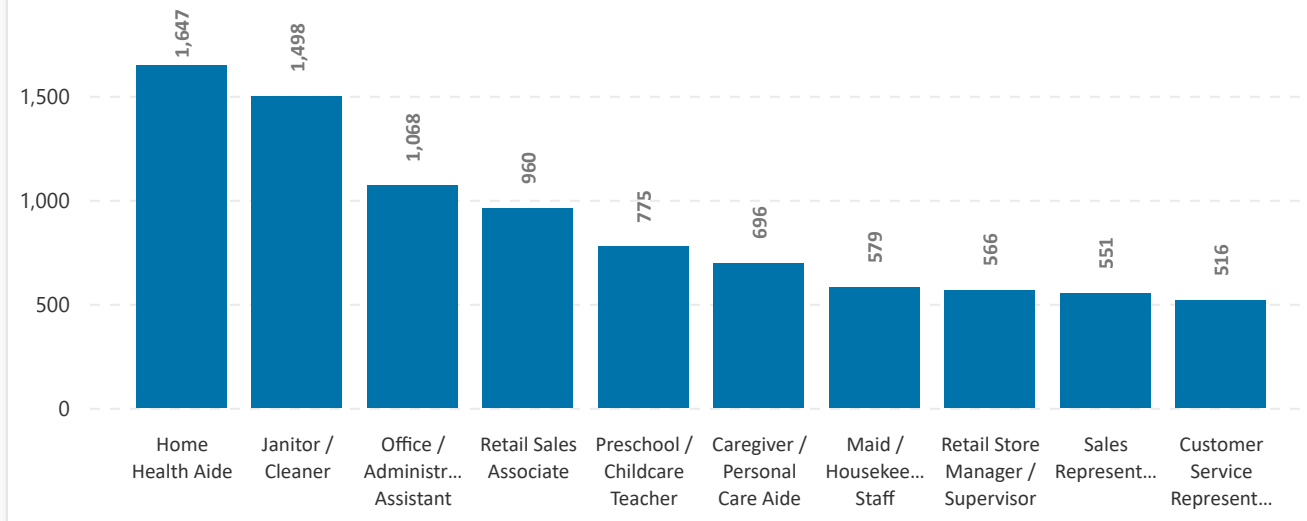
Specialised Job Postings October 2025 - March 2026



Unique Postings Over Time



Job Postings by Occupation October 2025 - March 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 March 2026 there were 10,497 unique job postings in West Sussex, a significant reduction from the peak in June 2023 of 21,115 but still higher than the general levels seen pre-Covid. In terms of the top posted occupations over the last six months (October 2025 to March 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 (January 2026 ONS)

Area	Average First-time buyers	Average House Price	Average Monthly Rent	Average Mortgage Buyers
Adur	£331,000.0	£389,000.00	£1,377.00	£385,000.00
Arun	£254,000.0	£321,000.00	£1,215.00	£318,000.00
Chichester	£347,000.0	£441,000.00	£1,316.00	£440,000.00
Crawley	£298,000.0	£332,000.00	£1,470.00	£332,000.00
Horsham	£330,000.0	£448,000.00	£1,442.00	£436,000.00
Mid Sussex	£333,000.0	£439,000.00	£1,401.00	£445,000.00
Worthing	£254,000.0	£308,000.00	£1,309.00	£315,000.00

House Price Data (ONS) Change from Previous Month (December 2025)

Area	Average First-time buyers	Average House Price	Average Monthly Rent	Average Mortgage Buyers
Adur	4.75%	4.85%	0.22%	5.19%
Arun	-1.17%	-1.23%	0.33%	-1.55%
Chichester	0.00%	0.00%	0.30%	-0.23%
Crawley	-1.32%	-1.19%	0.48%	-1.48%
Horsham	1.23%	1.59%	0.21%	1.40%
Mid Sussex	0.30%	0.46%	0.21%	0.45%
Worthing	0.00%	0.00%	0.23%	-0.32%

National Summary



Job Vacancies

- Estimated vacancies in January to March 2026 was 711,000.
- Decreasing 29,000 or 3.9% from October to December 2025.
- Total estimated vacancies were down by 65,000 (8.3%) in January to March 2026 from levels in the previous year.
- The number of unemployed people per vacancy was 2.5 in December 2025 to February 2026, this has remained unchanged since July to September 2025.

Gross Domestic Product

- Monthly GDP is estimated to have grown by 0.5% in February 2026.

Labour Market

- Early estimates for March 2026 indicate that the number of payrolled employees was 30.3 million which is a fall of 0.2% or 65,000 from the previous year.
- The largest increase was in the health and social work sector, with a rise of 41,000. The largest decrease was in the wholesale and retail sector, with a fall of 57,000 employees.
- UK payrolled employee growth for February 2026 compared with January 2026 has been revised from a increase of 20,000 reported in the last bulletin to a decrease of 6,000.
- Early estimates for March 2026 indicate that median monthly pay increased by 4.3% compared with March 2025.
- Annual growth in median pay in March 2026 was highest in the public administration and defence sector, with an increase of 7.5%. it was lowest in the professional scientific, and technical sector, with a increase of 2.9%.

Business Trading

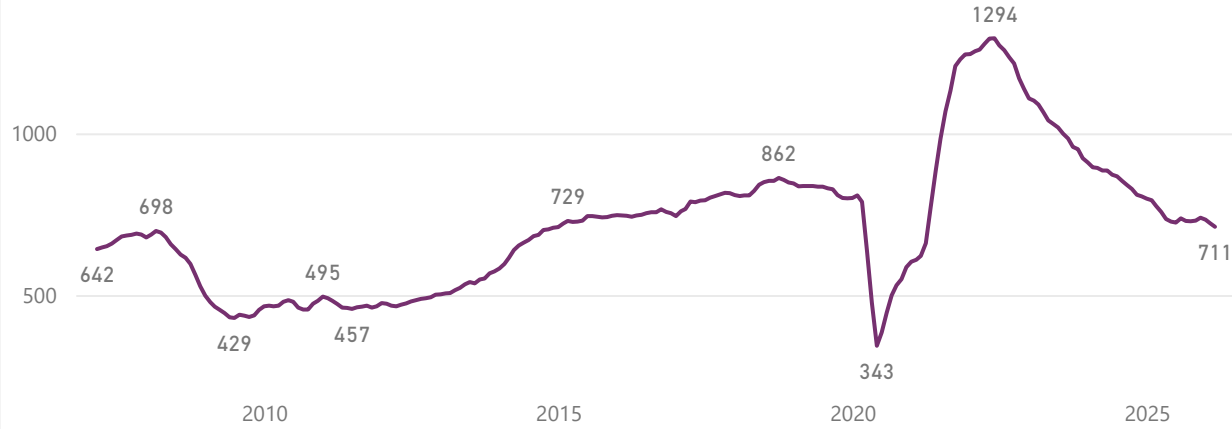
- 23% of trading businesses reported that their turnover had decreased in March 2026 compared with the previous month
- In early April 2026, economic uncertainty was the most commonly reported challenge affecting turnover for trading businesses at 35%.
- 40% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services bought in March 2026 when compared to the previous month.
- 15% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services they sell in March 2026.
- 28% of trading businesses expect the prices of goods or services they sell to increase in May 2026.
- 66% of businesses reported at least some level of concern about energy prices in early April 2026.
- 9% of businesses experienced global supply chain disruption in March 2026. Of these businesses, 46% cited conflict in the middle east as a reason for experiencing global supply chain disruption.

Business Closures

- Company insolvencies in England and Wales stood at 2,022 in March 2026, which was 7% higher than in February 2026 and similar to the values seen the same month of the previous year.
- Company insolvencies consisted of 299 compulsory liquidations, 1468 creditors' voluntary liquidations (CVLs), 235 administrations and 20 company voluntary arrangements (CVAs).
- There were 12,252 individual insolvencies in England and Wales.
- Individual insolvencies consisted of 654 bankruptcies, 4,523 debt relief orders (DROs) and 7,7075 individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs).
- The number of DROs in March 2026 was a record high in the monthly time series going back to their introduction in 2009.

Job Vacancies (UK)

Number of vacancies (Thousands) in the UK, seasonally adjusted, Jan to Mar 2007 to Jan to Mar 2026

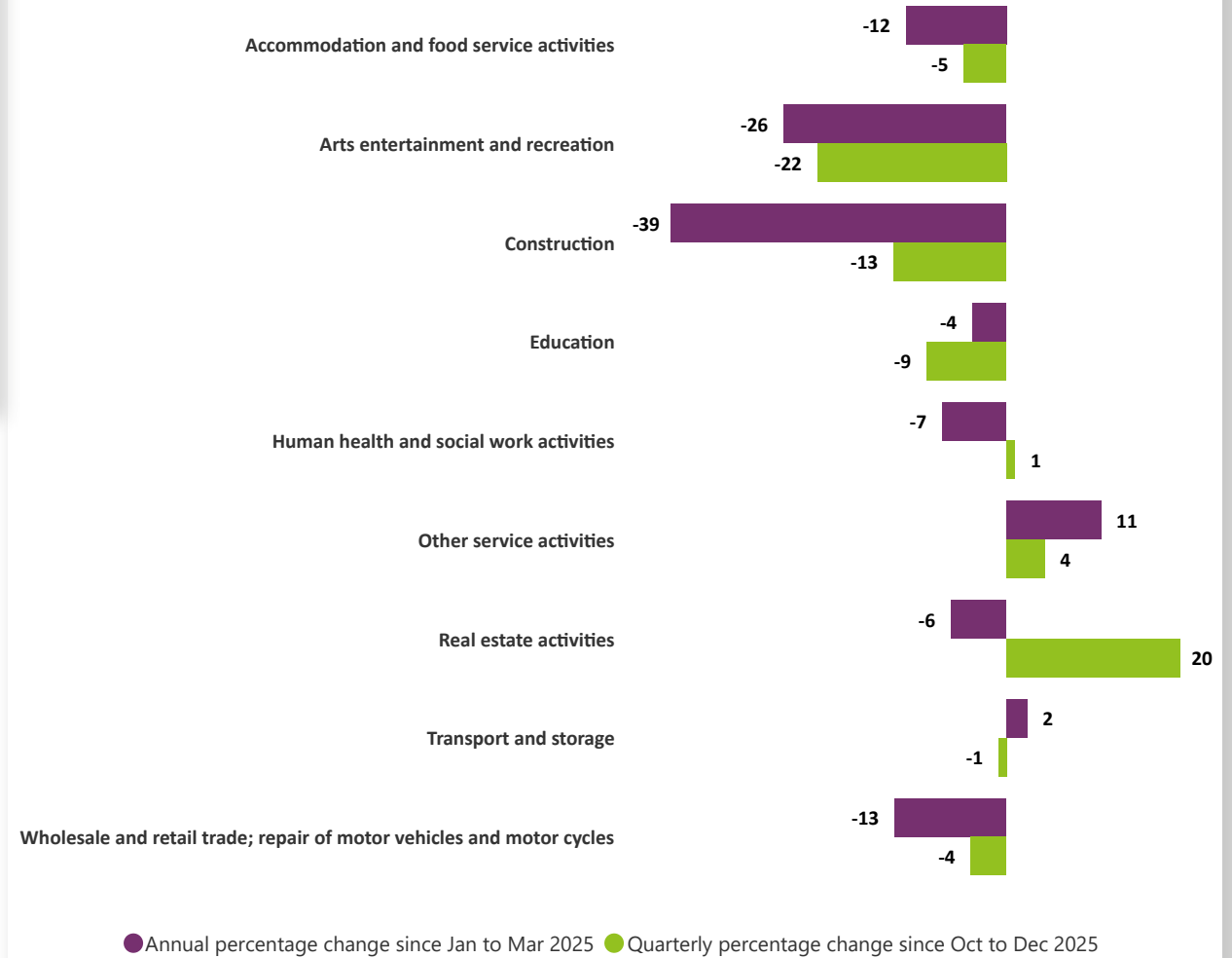


Summary of job vacancies (UK).

Overall:

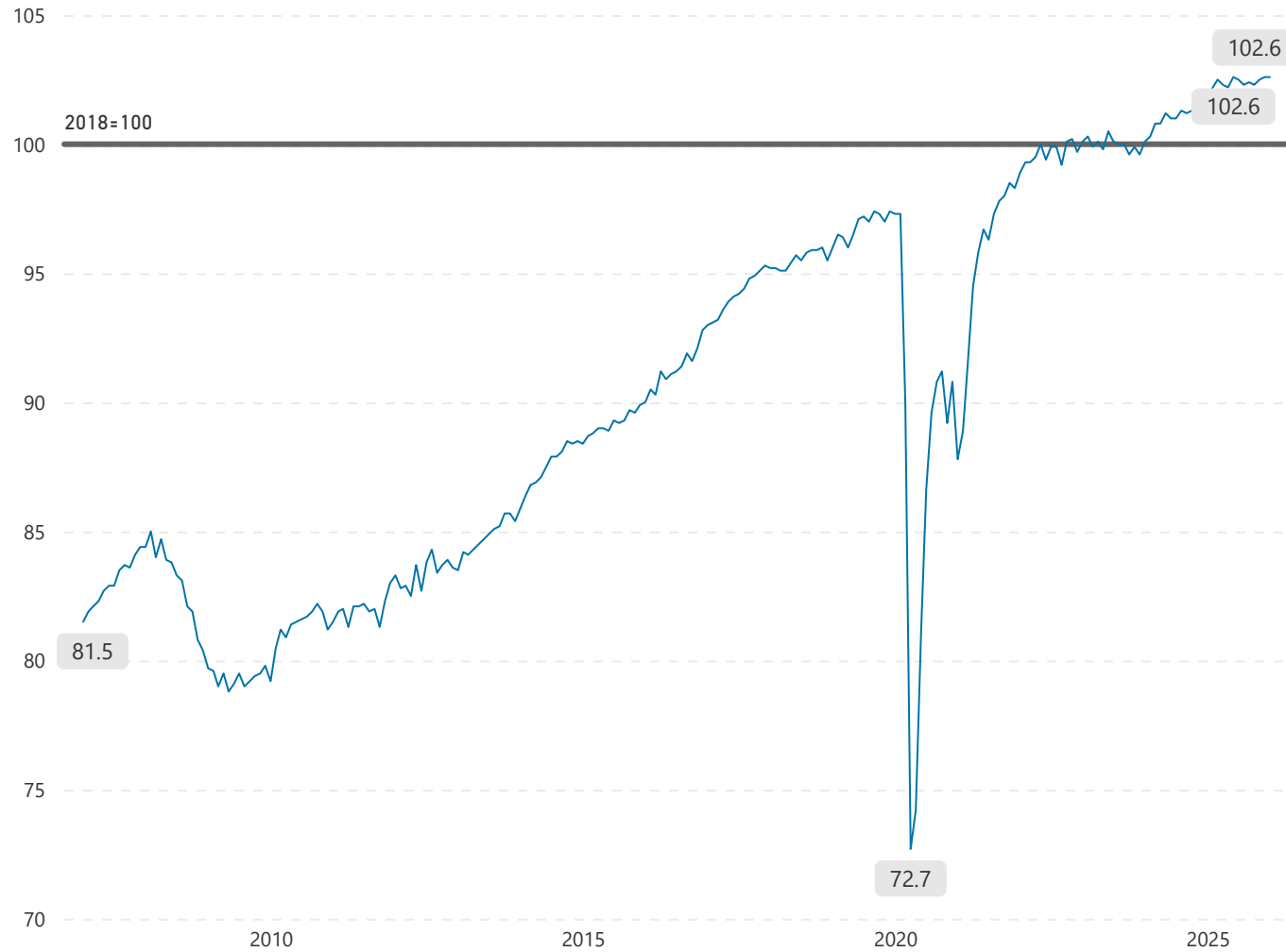
- Estimated vacancies in January to March 2026 was 711,000.
- Decreasing 29,000 or 3.9% from October to December 2025.
- Total estimated vacancies were down by 65,000 (8.3%) in January to March 2026 from levels in the previous year.
- The number of unemployed people per vacancy was 2.5 in December 2025 to February 2026, this has remained unchanged since July to September 2025.

% Change in Number of Vacancies in UK by Sectors



Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Monthly index, UK



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

Overall:

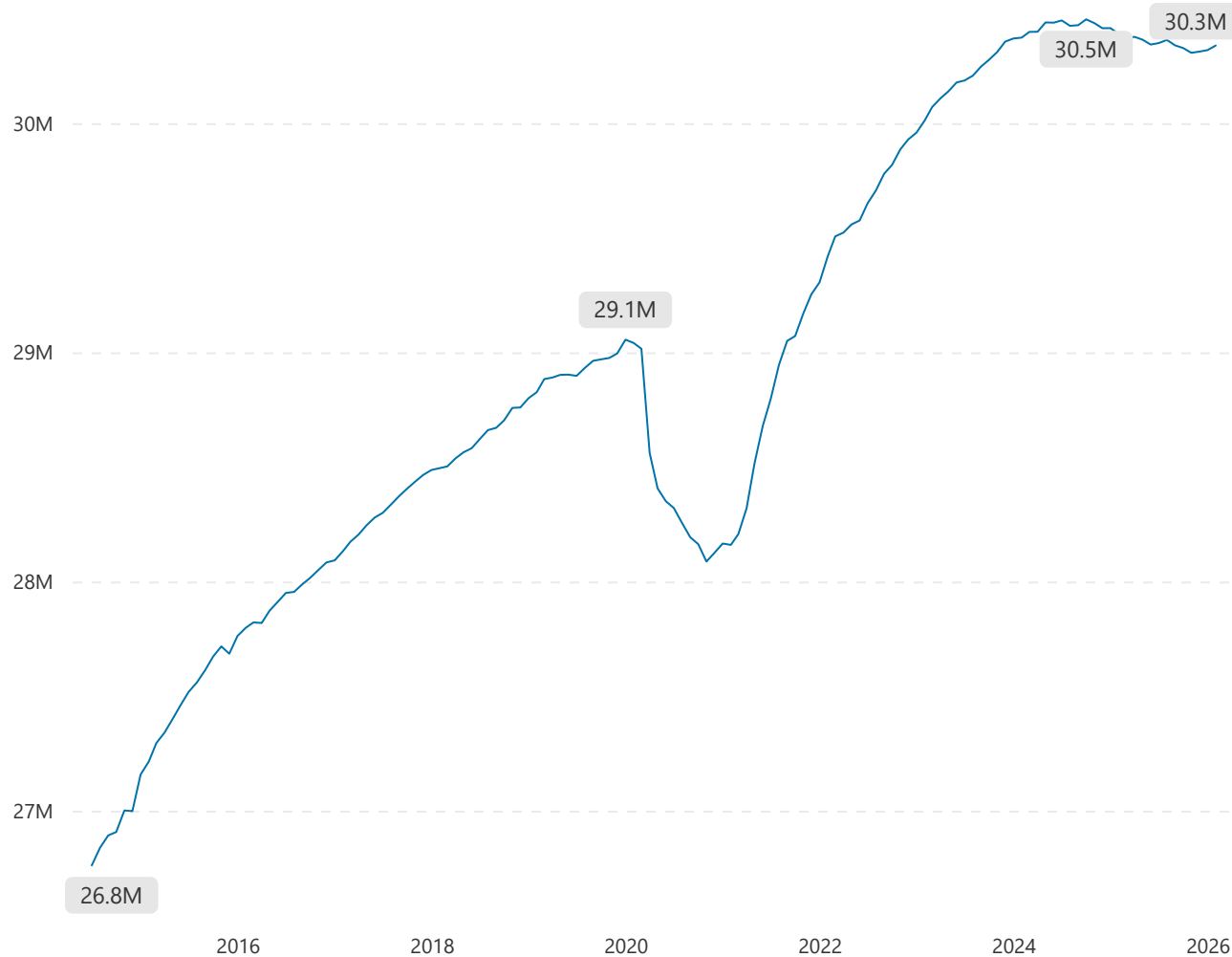
- Monthly GDP is estimated to have grown by 0.5% in February 2026.

Output growth:

- Services grew 0.5% in the three months to February 2026
- Production grew by 1.2% in the three months to February 2026
- Construction fell by 2.0% in the three months to February 2026

Labour Market

Payrolled employees, seasonally adjusted, UK



Summary of Labour Market (UK).

Overall:

- Early estimates for March 2026 indicate that the number of payrolled employees was 30.3 million which is a fall of 0.2% or 65,000 from the previous year.
- The largest increase was in the health and social work sector, with a rise of 41,000. The largest decrease was in the wholesale and retail sector, with a fall of 57,000 employees.
- UK payrolled employee growth for February 2026 compared with January 2026 has been revised from an increase of 20,000 reported in the last bulletin to a decrease of 6,000.
- Early estimates for March 2026 indicate that median monthly pay increased by 4.3% compared with March 2025.
- Annual growth in median pay in March 2026 was highest in the public administration and defence sector, with an increase of 7.5%. It was lowest in the professional scientific, and technical sector, with an increase of 2.9%.

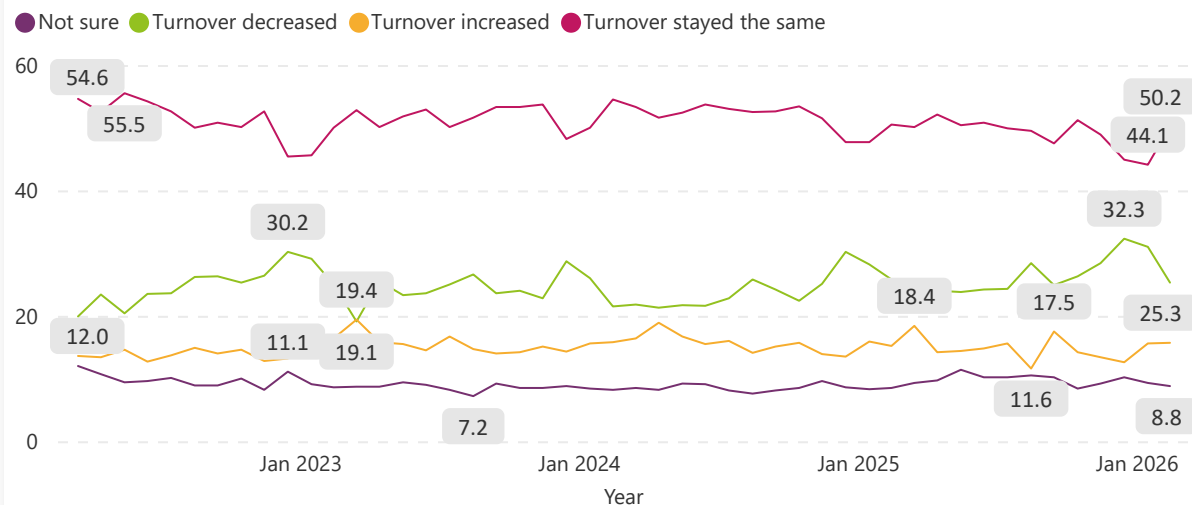
Summary of business insights and impact on the UK economy.

This data is the final results from Wave 154 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) which was live 6 to 19 April 2026.

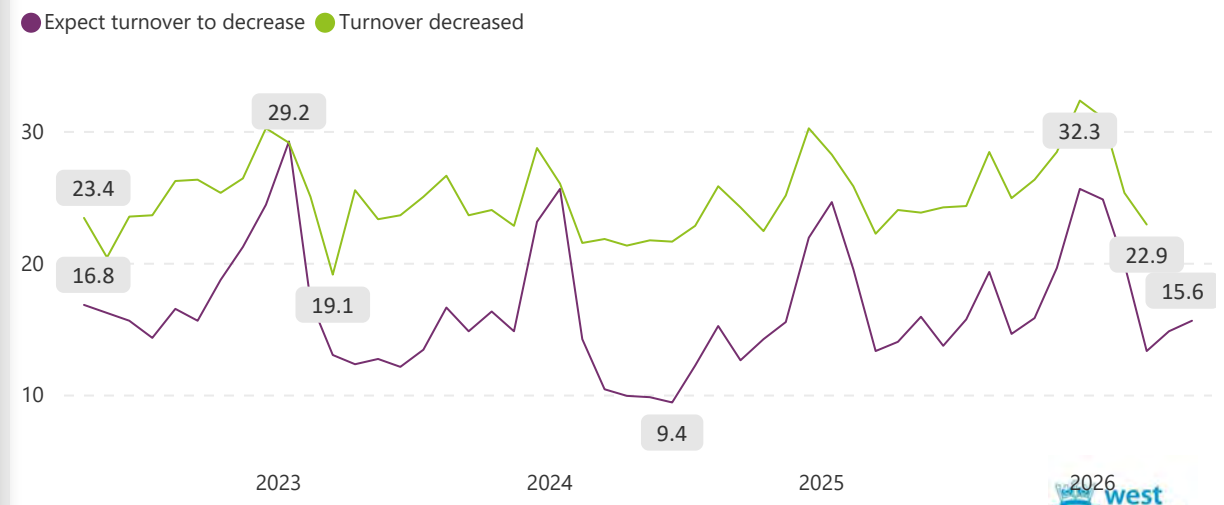
Overall:

- 23% of trading businesses reported that their turnover had decreased in March 2026 compared with the previous month
- In early April 2026, economic uncertainty was the most commonly reported challenge affecting turnover for trading businesses at 35%.
- 40% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services bought in March 2026 when compared to the previous month.
- 15% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods and services they sell in March 2026.
- 28% of trading businesses expect the prices of goods or services they sell to increase in May 2026.
- 66% of businesses reported at least some level of concern about energy prices in early April 2026.
- 9% of businesses experienced global supply chain disruption in March 2026. Of these businesses, 46% cited conflict in the middle east as a reason for experiencing global supply chain disruption.

Business Turnover

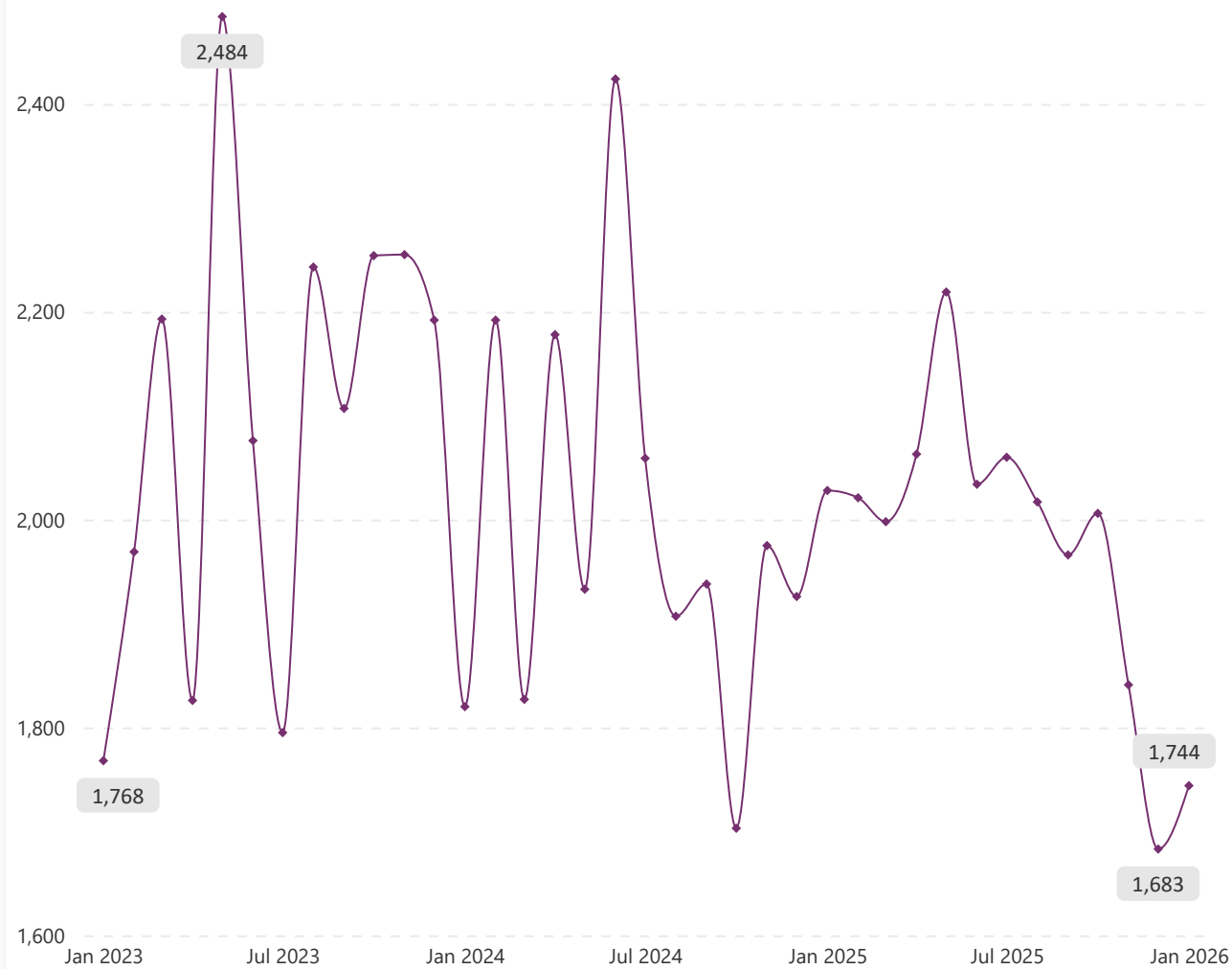


Economic Uncertainty Reasons



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 2,022 in March 2026, which was 7% higher than in February 2026 and similar to the values seen the same month of the previous year.
- Company insolvencies consisted of 299 compulsory liquidations, 1468 creditors' voluntary liquidations (CVLs), 235 administrations and 20 company voluntary arrangements (CVAs).

Business Closures (Individual)

Individual insolvencies in England & Wales



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

Overall:

- There were 12,252 individual insolvencies in England and Wales.
- Individual insolvencies consisted of 654 bankruptcies, 4,523 debt relief orders (DROs) and 7,7075 individual voluntary arrangements (IVAs).
- The number of DROs in March 2026 was a record high in the monthly time series going back to their introduction in 2009.

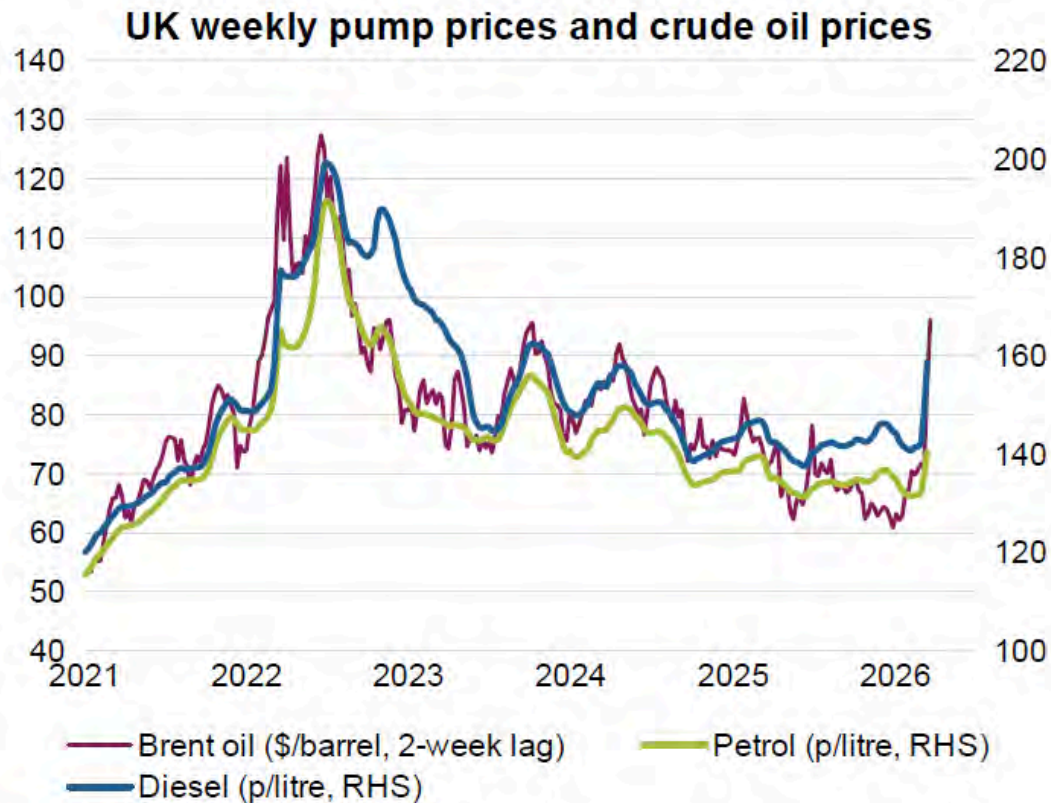
Source: Gov.uk, [Monthly Insolvency Statistics \(Individual\)](#)

Released: 17 April 2026

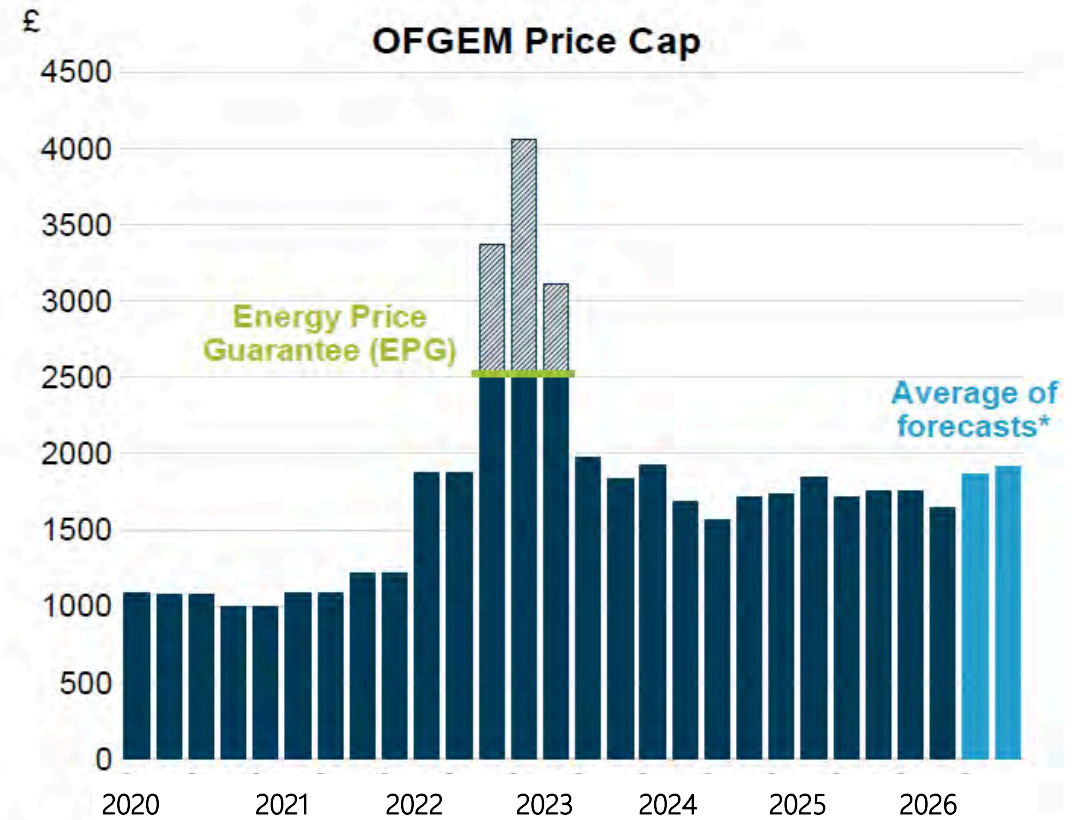
Crude Oil and Wholesale Retail Gas

Summary of Crude Oil and Wholesale Gas Prices March 2026

The following data was presented at the ONS economic forum in March 2026 which gave some initial data into the current and predicted prices of crude oil and wholesale gas going to the future. Currently, higher crude oil and wholesale gas prices are predicted to push up retail energy prices.



Notes: Prices as of week ending 20 March;
 Source: EIA, DESNZ, ONS



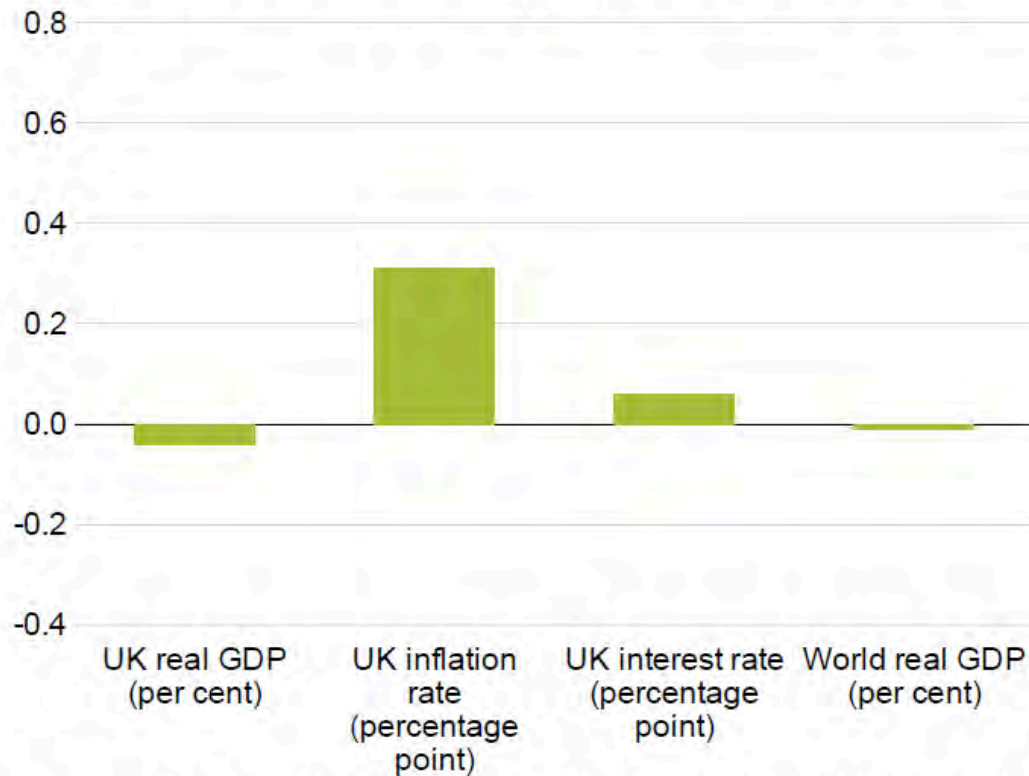
Notes: Average of EDF, British Gas and E.on forecasts as of 16 March;
 Source: Ofgem, ONS

Impact of a Rise in Oil and Gas Prices

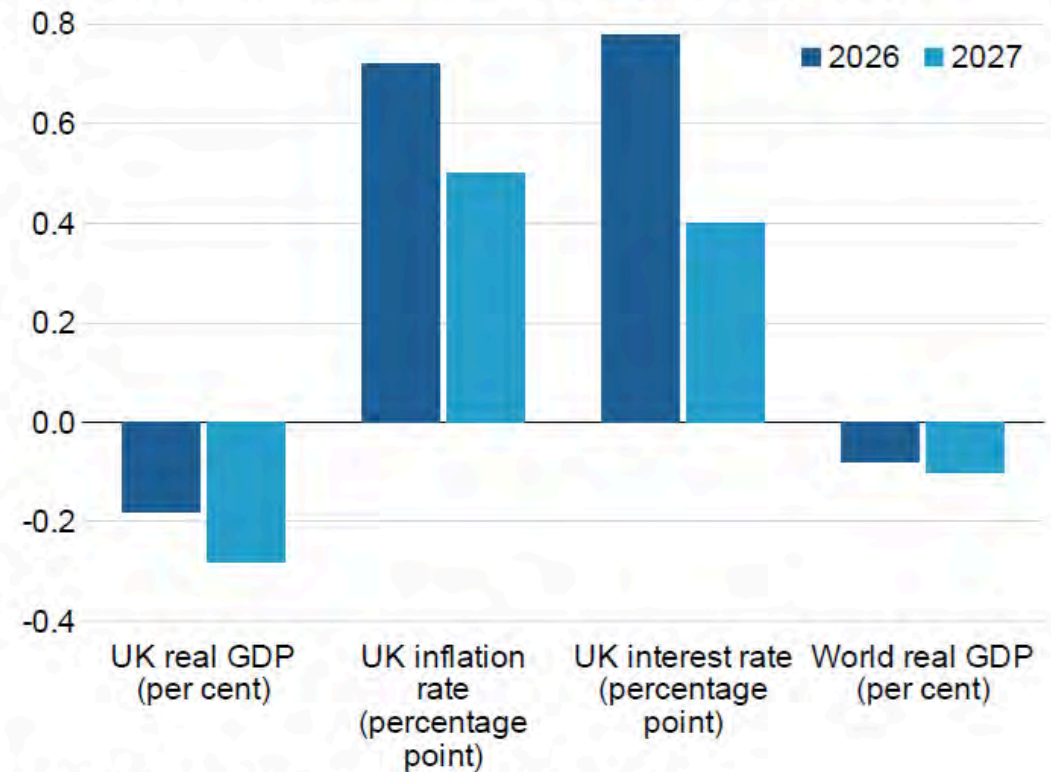
Summary of Crude Oil and Wholesale Gas Prices March 2026

The following data was presented at the ONS economic forum in March 2026 which gave some initial data into the current and predicted prices of crude oil and wholesale gas going to the future. The impact on the UK economy will be determined by the size and duration of the energy shock.

Impact of a rise in oil and gas prices over 1 quarter



Impact of a rise in oil and gas prices over 1 year



Notes: NiGEM simulation assuming oil prices around USD 100 per barrel, and gas prices equivalent to around USD 70 per barrel;
Source: NIESR, ONS