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South West RDA

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INTRODUCTION

This is the latest report in a series of monthly Recession Briefings produced by SLIM at the request of the People, Employment and Skills sub-group of the Regional Economic Task Group. It is also available for general circulation and use by partners within the South West region.

The report sets out the latest data on the employment and skills impacts of the recession. Although the focus is on recent change, it is often necessary to set these changes in context, drawing out longer-term trends and other factors, such as seasonal influences. The two main datasets analysed in this report are: Jobcentre Plus administrative data to October 2009 and Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for the quarter from August to September 2009.

SUMMARY

Employment / unemployment

Recent data on employment and unemployment is slightly contradictory, showing both a decline in employment and unemployment.

In the latest month, the regional working age population in employment fell by 12,000, following a rise of 2,000 a month earlier.

The results from the LFS and Claimant Count both suggest that regional unemployment has remained stable over recent months. Latest LFS data shows regional unemployment at 6.6%, effectively stable since June 2009.

The Claimant Count continues to show a healthy position, with the number of claimants in the South West stable for eight months, and even down slightly from 3.0% to 2.9% on levels seen from March to May 2009 (see Figure 6).

While rates of change are useful in indicating whether the recession is easing or not, the number of people affected is perhaps a more important consideration. By this measure the South West has fared reasonably well over the recession, so far, experiencing a lower Claimant Count rate than any other region (see Figure 9).

However the regional picture disguises very different local effects. Over the last year 2.5% of the working age population of Swindon has been added to the Claimant Count. This increase is well above that for the next most affected Local Authorities and contrasts dramatically with Devon, which has seen an additional 0.75% of the population added to the Claimant Count in the last year (see Figure 11).

The composition of claimants by duration of claim has changed considerably during the recession. The number of people who have been claiming benefits for six months or less has been falling since February 2009. While the number of people who have been claiming for six months has been rising rapidly over this same period. In recent months the number of people claiming for one year or longer has also seen a rapid rise (see Figure 13). Thus, while overall claimant numbers may be static in the region, we are seeing a shift towards long-term unemployment, a process sometimes referred to as 'hardening'. This shift towards long-term unemployment is being seen in all parts of the region, with Local Authority / Unitaries that had

the lowest levels of long-term unemployment prior to the recession seeing the largest proportionate rises.

While the proportion of people leaving JSA benefits each month has been rising since the start of the year, this welcome trend has not been seen among the long-term unemployed (see Figure 14).

Vacancies

The number of live unfilled vacancies available through Jobcentre Plus halved in the three months from Oct 2008 to January 2009. This sharp, part seasonal, decline reversed briefly in February and March, since when numbers have recovered to roughly 80% of pre-recession levels. The three months to October saw a welcome jump of c.6,000 new vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus (see Figure 15).

The number of claimants per vacancy rose dramatically from around 1.5 at the start of the recession, to a high of 5.5 in April 2009. It has since declined, dropping from 4.7 to 3.5 between August and October 2009. This is due to both the slight drop in claimants and the significant rise in the number of unfilled vacancies in recent months.

The number of redundancies notified to Jobcentre Plus continued to decline gradually to the end of August 2009. LFS redundancy figures remain high, although the latest available data suggests that the number of redundancies per 1,000 members of the working age population has also declined, from 11.2 to 9.4 in the last quarter 2009 (see Figure 19).

Impact on different groups

LFS data suggests that the recession is having a bigger impact on male than female employment, due to differences in the sectors and jobs in which men and women are employed. Male employment rates fell to around 96% of pre-recession levels between February and July, while female employment rates have remained fairly static. Claimant count growth rates are not dramatically different for the sexes. Male Claimant Count growth was faster during the early stages of the recession. However, growth in female claimant numbers in recent months brought the two figures together in October 2009, (see Figure 25).

Looking at age, although the rate of Claimant Count growth has been broadly similar for all age bands (see Figure 26), differences in the baselines for different groups has resulted in a widening of the 'gap' between the proportion of young people claiming JSA and the proportion of those in older age groups. The proportion of young people aged 20 to 24 on JSA reached 5.6% in October 2009, compared to 3.2% in October 2008. This is significantly above the 2.5% for those aged between 35 and 59, (see Figure 29).

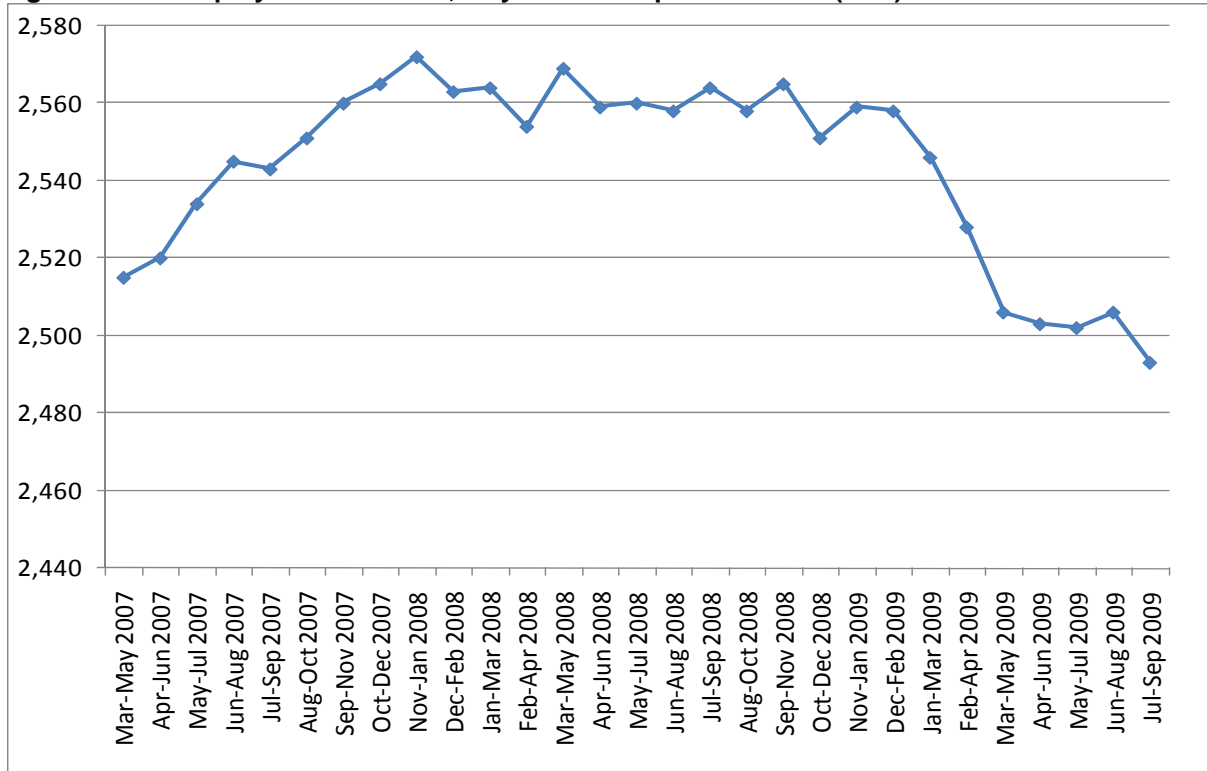
Occupational Analysis

Unemployment rates for people in lower skilled occupations continue to be significantly higher than those for more skilled occupations (see Table 2). However, the recession appears to have had some 'levelling' effect, with Managers, Senior Officials, Professionals and Associate Professionals making up a growing proportion of the Claimant Count over the year.

1. EMPLOYMENT / UNEMPLOYMENT

Before the recession, the South West economy had been successful in creating large numbers of jobs. The number of people in employment remained fairly constant through 2008, including through the early part of the recession, but has declined since, in early 2009.

Figure 1: SW Employment volumes, May 2007 to September 2009 ('000)

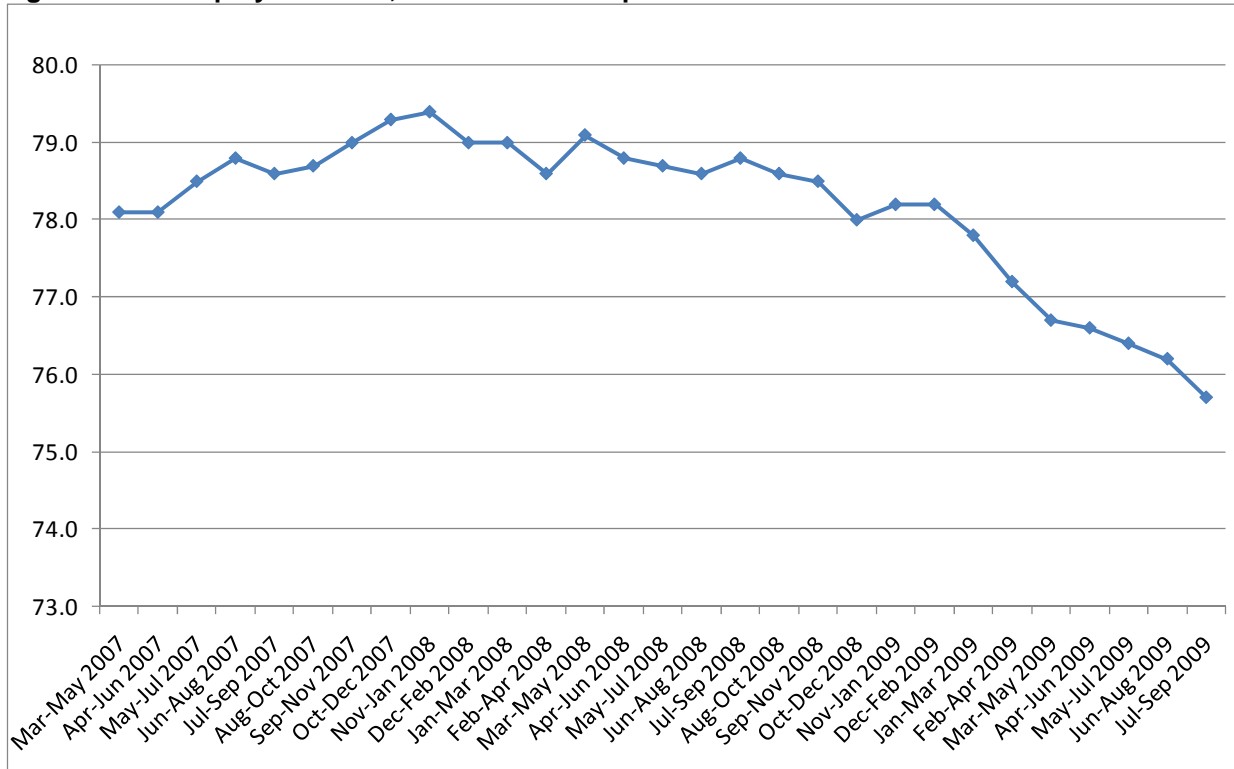


Source: LFS, ONS

There are currently an estimated 71,000 fewer people in employment in the South West region than there were one year ago. The decline in employment was fastest during the initial months of 2009, before levelling out from May to August. There has however been an apparent decline of 13,000 jobs in the latest period (see Figure 1).

The proportion of the working age population of the South West that was employed declined sharply in the latest period by 0.5%, from 76.2% to 75.7%, following a 0.2% decline in the previous period.

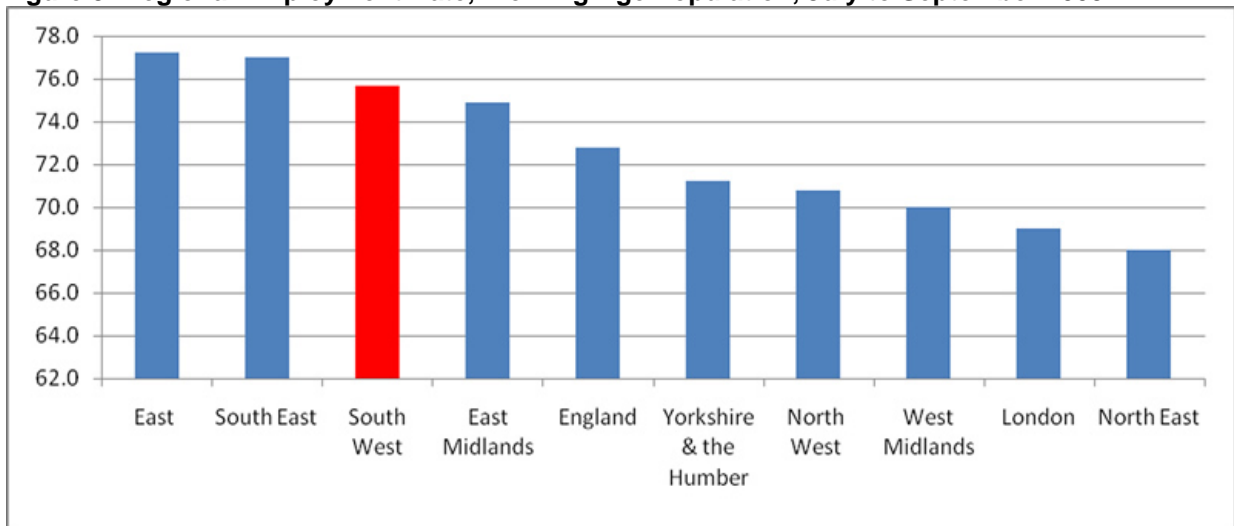
Figure 2: SW Employment rate, March 2007 to September 2009



Source: LFS, ONS

Although employment rates have fallen considerably in the region, the South West remains one of the three regions with the highest employment rates in the country (see Figure 3).

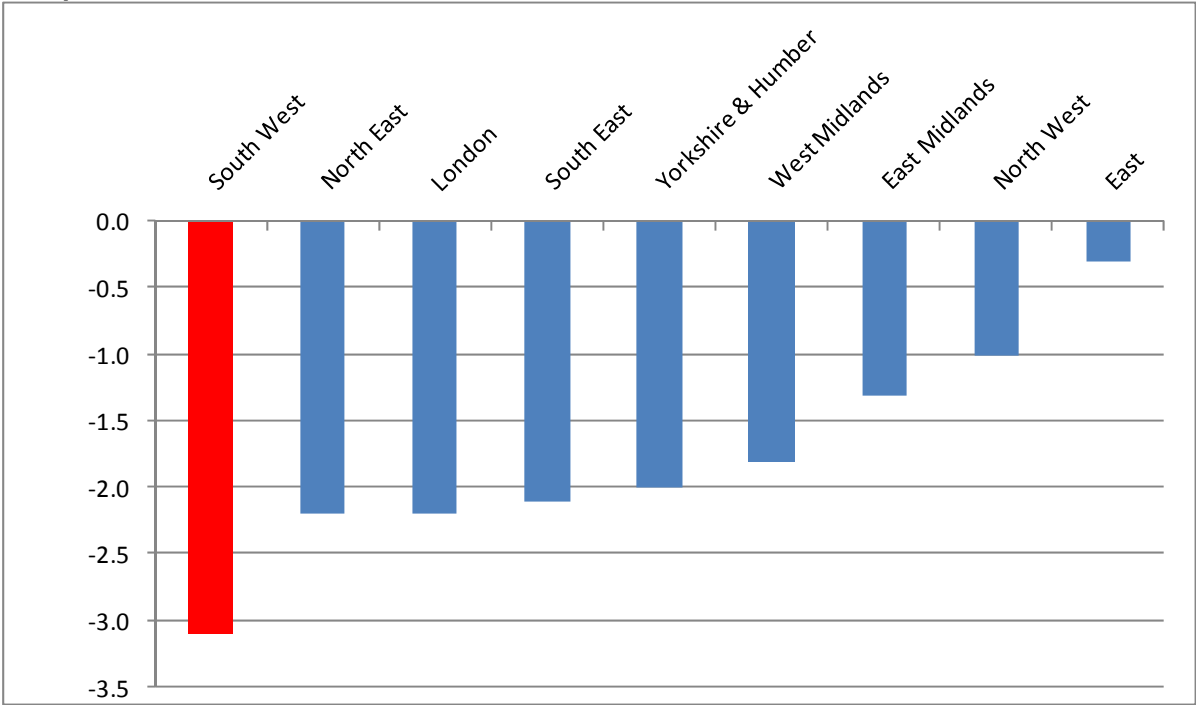
Figure 3: Regional Employment Rate, Working Age Population, July to September 2009



Source: LFS, ONS

Prior to the recession the South West and South East were the two regions with the highest national employment rates, followed fairly closely by the Eastern region. Employment rates in the East have held up well during the recession, falling by only -0.3% over the last year. By contrast, the employment rate in the South West has fallen 3.1%, the fastest rate of decline in any English region (see Figure 4).

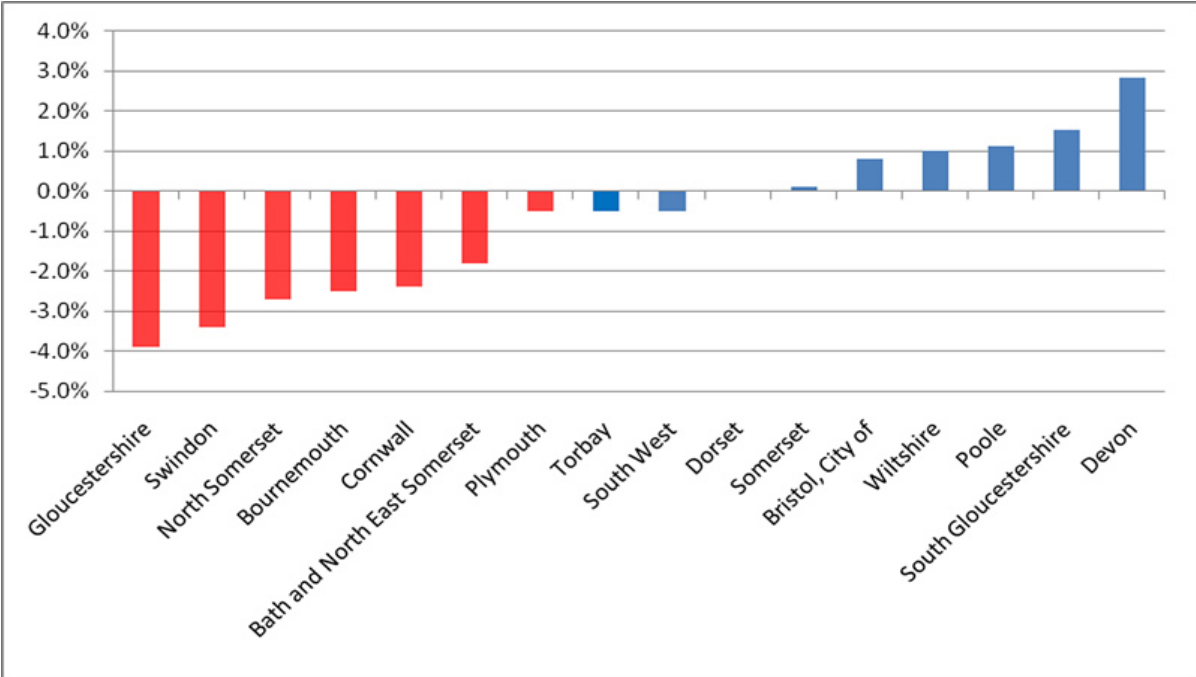
Figure 4: Annual Change in Regional Employment Rate, Working Age Population, On Year; July to September 2009



Source: LFS, ONS

This decline is not evenly distributed across the region. Unfortunately sub-regional LFS data is only available on an annualised basis, which means that only the early phases of the recession are captured in Figure 5. Further caution is needed as significant confidence intervals of around +/- 2.5% apply to this data. Nonetheless, a comparison of employment rates from July to September 2008 with July to September 2009 suggests there was a rapid decline in Gloucestershire, Swindon, North Somerset and Bournemouth contrasting with gains in areas such as Devon, South Gloucestershire and Poole.

Figure 5: Change in Employment Rate, April 2007 – March 2008 to April 2008 – March 2009, SW Local Authorities



Source: LFS, ONS

2. CLAIMANTS

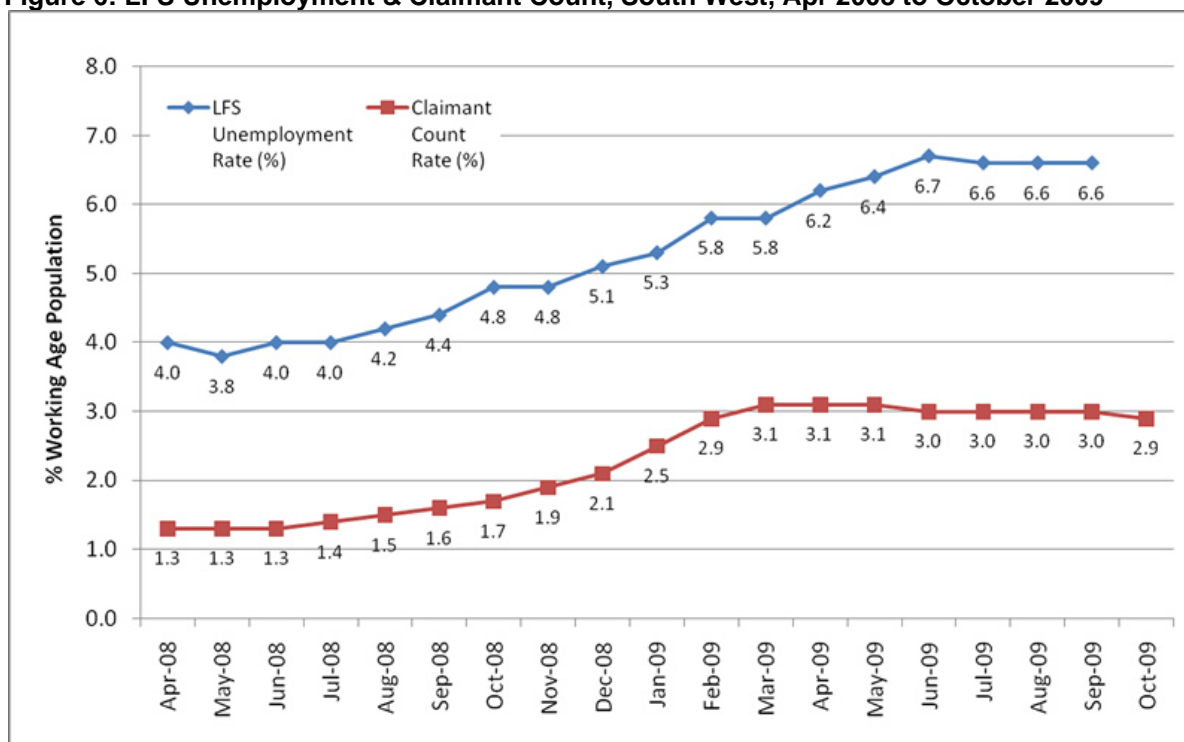
2.1 South West

Unemployment is normally assessed using two measures - the Claimant Count and Labour Force Survey. The Claimant Count is a precise count of the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) in any single month. LFS unemployment is derived from survey responses, based on the number of people who state that they are actively seeking employment, but are not actually in employment.

Normally the two measures move in concert, with the Claimant Count significantly below the LFS measure due to factors such as people with savings or working partners deciding that it is not worth 'signing on' once their entitlement to benefits based on National Insurance contributions has lapsed.

Figure 6 (below) shows that in the South West the regional Claimant Count doubled between August 2008 and March 2009, from 1.5% to 3.1%, before levelling off at around 3% where it has remained for the last eight months. LFS unemployment showed steady growth, from around 4% before the recession to 6.7% in June. It too has levelled out and has remained steady at around 6.6% since the early summer.

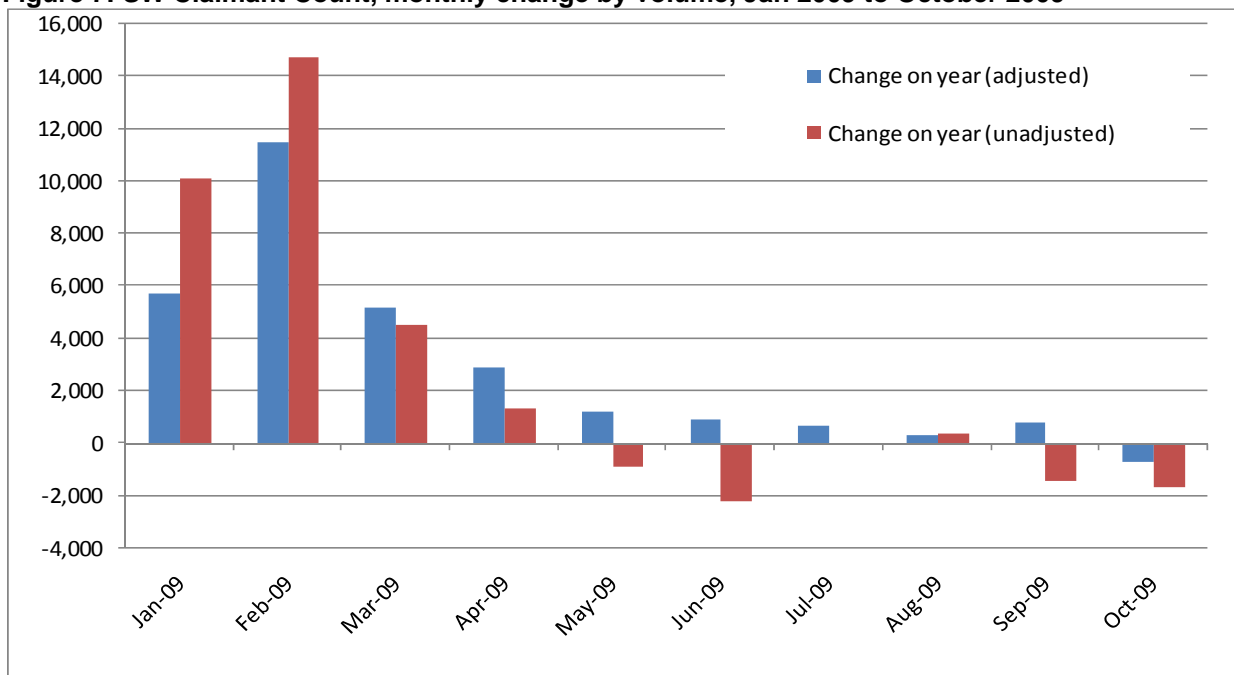
Figure 6: LFS Unemployment & Claimant Count, South West, Apr 2008 to October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS and LFS

There is a seasonal element to the data. Seasonally adjusted data (see Figure 7) suggests that the Claimant Count has risen every month this year until October, where it fell by 700. The unadjusted figure fell by 1,429 in September and 1,670 in October.

Figure 7: SW Claimant Count, monthly change by volume, Jan 2009 to October 2009

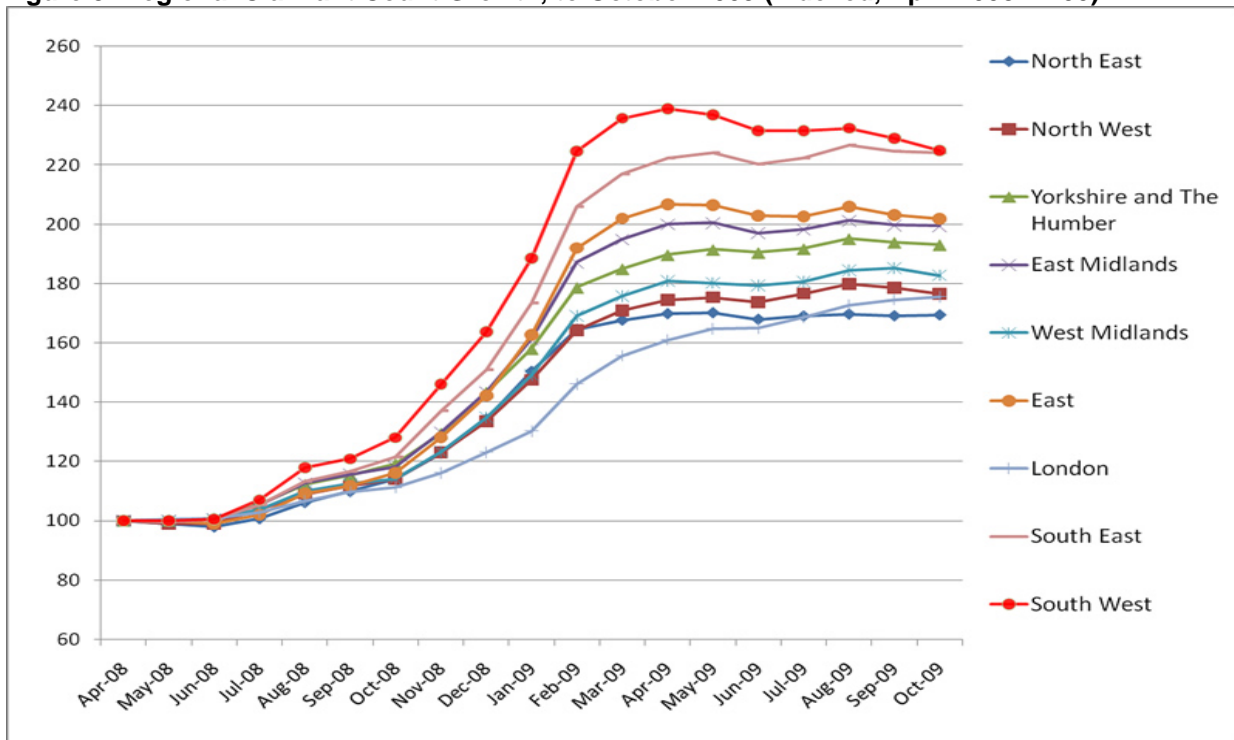


Source: JC+ / NOMIS

2.2 Inter-regional comparisons

It has been argued that the South West was hit early and hit hard by the recession¹. To an extent this is true. Figure 8 shows that the number of people claiming JSA in the region grew by 233% between April 2008 and August 2009 - a faster rate of growth than any other region.

Figure 8: Regional Claimant Count Growth, to October 2009 (indexed, April 2008 = 100)

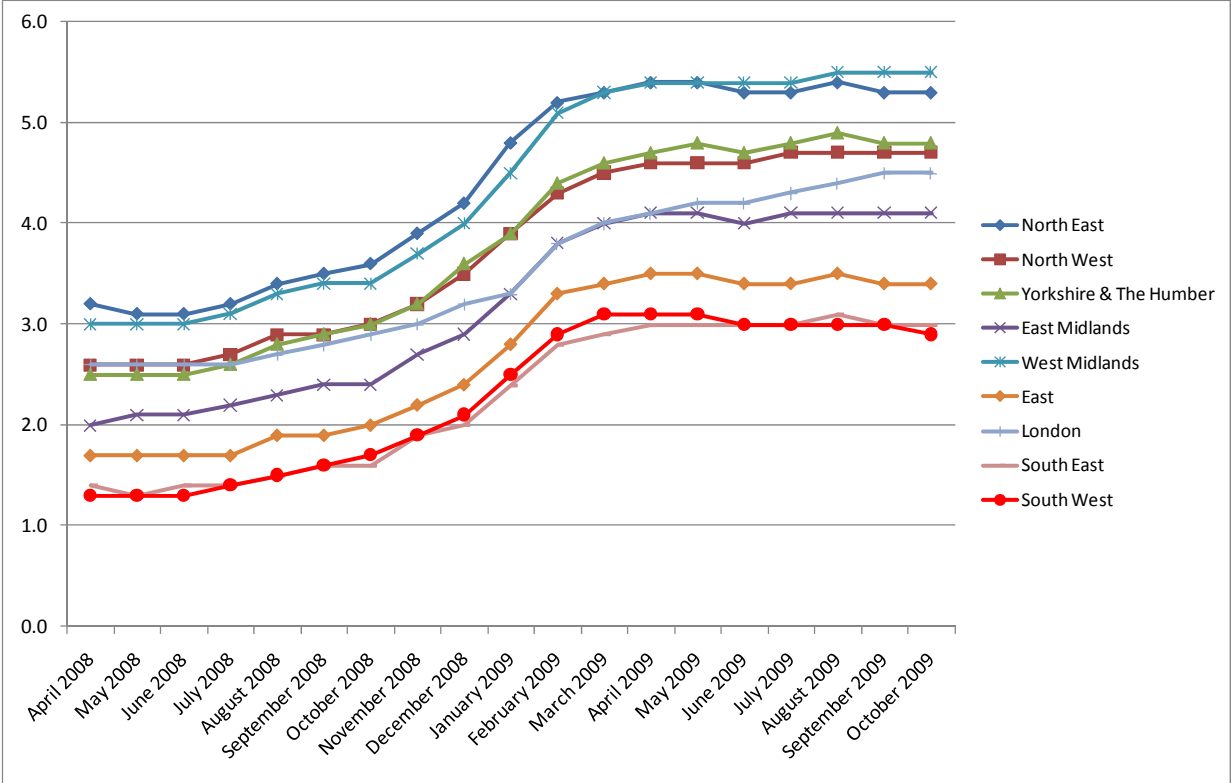


Source: JC+ / NOMIS

¹ Jobcentre Plus – Performance Monitoring Report to SW RESP Board, July 2009.

However, the South West also started from a lower baseline than any other region, resulting in a higher proportionate effect for each additional person added to the Claimant Count. Figure 9 shows that the proportion of the South West's working age population that is claiming JSA continues to remain below that for any other region. It is consequently hard to argue, on a regional basis, that the South West has been worse affected than other regions.

Figure 9: Regional Claimant Count, % working age pop'n, April 08 – October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

2.3 Unemployment - Local Authority Level

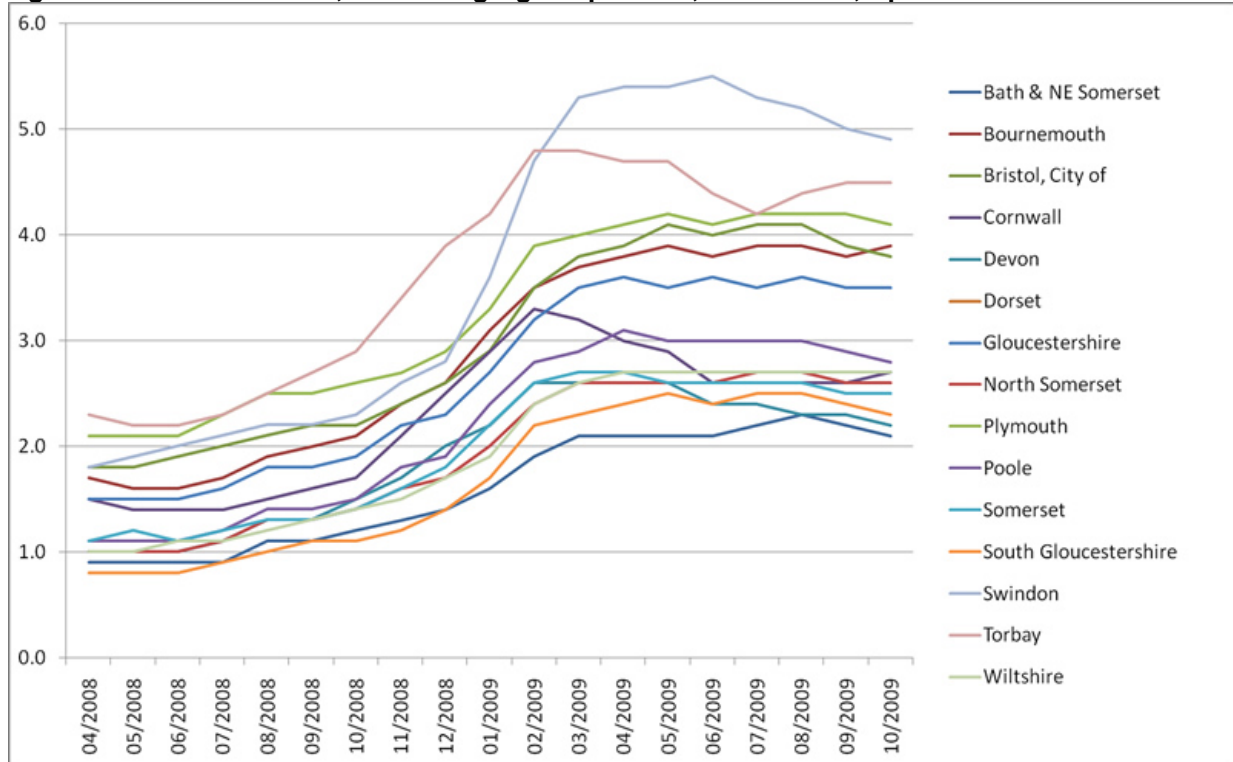
The regional averages shown in the charts above disguise a range of different employment effects that the recession has had at the Local Authority level.

Unfortunately, due to large confidence intervals (typically +/- 1.5%) and major lags in time periods covered, LFS data on unemployment is not very helpful at Local Authority level.

Claimant count rates have grown in all Local Authority areas, but by very different amounts. As a result we have seen a considerable increase in the 'range', between the Local Authority with the highest and lowest Claimant Count.

In April 2008 this range was 1.5%, between Torbay's Claimant Count rate of 2.3% and Dorset's of 0.8%. By October 2009 this range had almost doubled to 2.9%, with Claimant Count rates now ranging from 4.9% in Swindon to 2.0% in Dorset (see Figure 10).

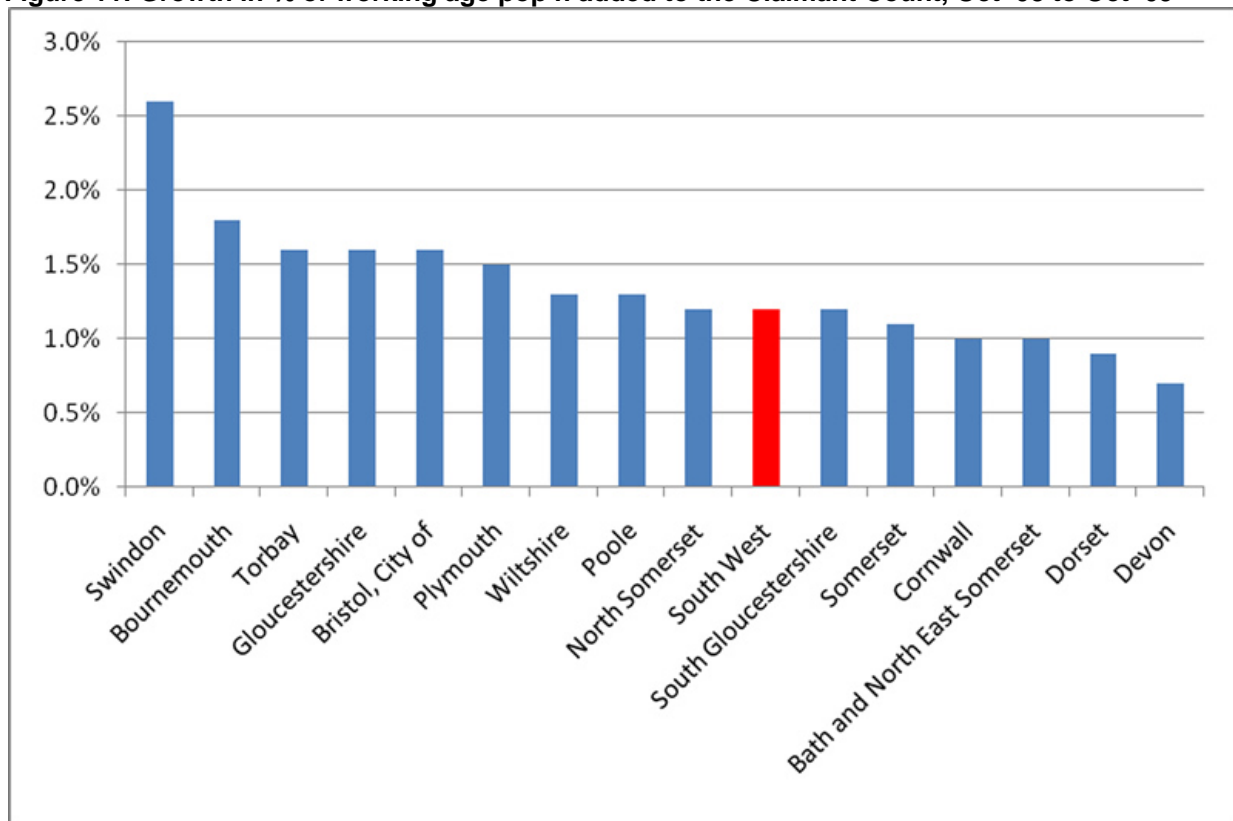
Figure 10: Claimant Count, % Working Age Population, South West, April 2008 to October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

Figure 11 shows the proportion of the working age population that has been added to the Claimant Count in each Local Authority area during the year to October 2008, which coincides roughly with the duration of the recession.

Figure 11: Growth in % of working age pop'n added to the Claimant Count, Oct '08 to Oct '09



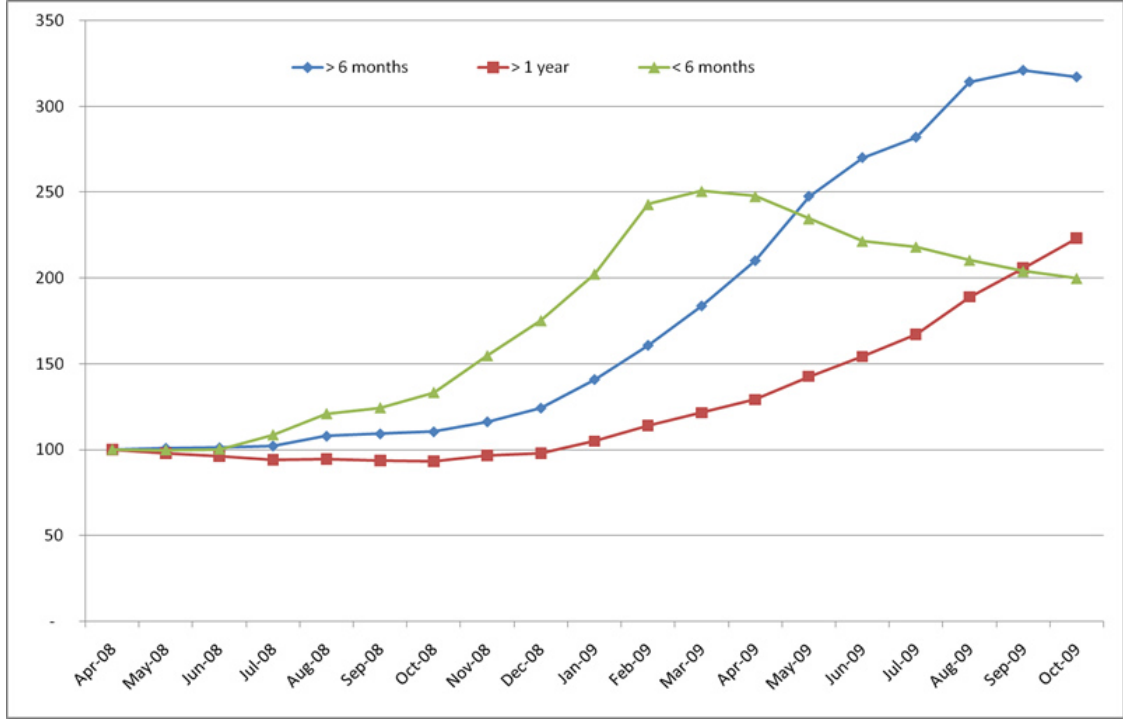
Source: JC+ / NOMIS

The clear feature from this analysis is the impact of the recession on Swindon, where 2.6% of the working age population have been added to the Claimant Count over the last year, to October 2009. Urban areas such as Bournemouth, Bristol, Torbay, Gloucestershire, Bristol and Plymouth have all experienced rates of Claimant Count growth above the regional average. The rural South West peninsula has seen growth rates below the regional average.

2.4 Claim duration

Figure 12 shows changes in the duration over which South West JSA claimants have been in receipt of benefits.

Figure 12: South West Claimant Count by duration of claim, to October 2009 (indexed, April 2008 = 100)



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

At the outset of recession, from October 2008 to February 2009, there was a sharp rise in the number of new claimants (those claiming for 6 months or less). By January 2009 there were twice as many new claimants (<6 months) as there had been in April 2008.

The rise in the number of long-term claimants lagged at first, before picking up from January 2009 onwards. While the number of short-term claimants started falling from March 2009 (79,640) to October 2009 (63,480), the number of long-term unemployed has continued to rise sharply, from 16,180 in March 2009 to 27,920 in October 2009. More recently the number of very long-term (>12 months) claimants has almost doubled, from 4,140 in February 2009 to 8,115 in October 2009. This shift, sometimes referred to as a 'hardening' of unemployment, is a cause for concern as long-term unemployment leads to loss of skills and alienation from the labour market.

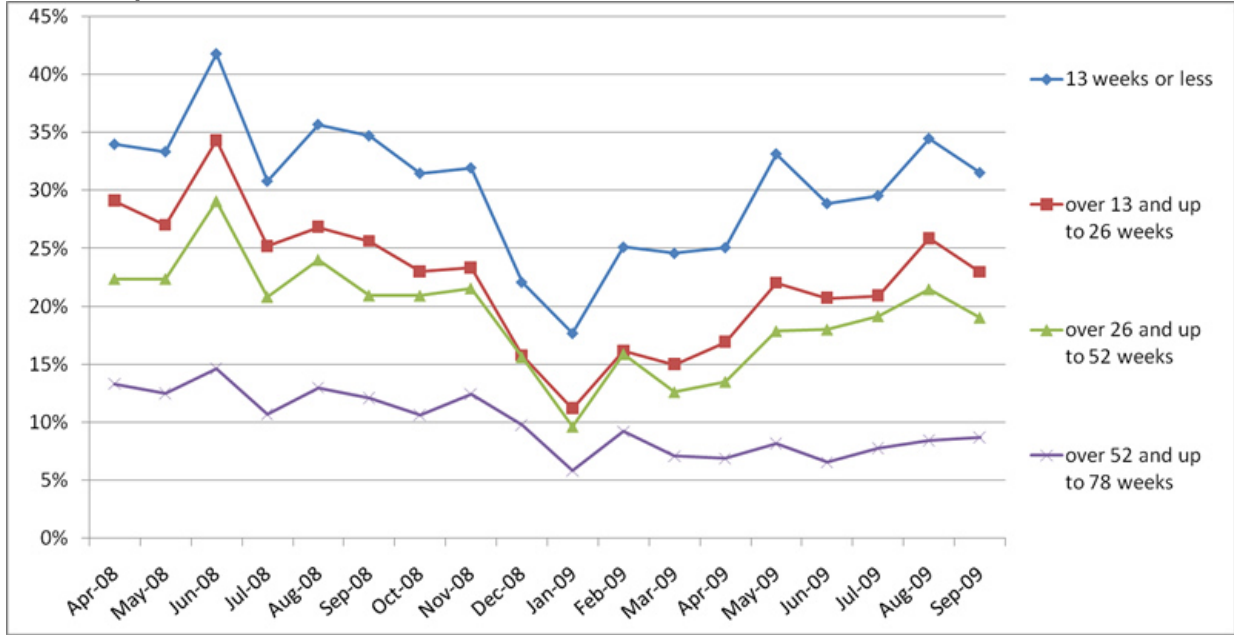
This shift to long-term unemployment is largely a consequence of the fact that recent claimants tend to be more successful at finding new jobs than the longer-term unemployed, and are therefore 'over-represented' amongst off-flows, which rose in the last month.

Figure 13 shows that although the proportion of people leaving JSA varies each month, recent claimants are consistently much more likely to leave the Claimant Count than those who have

been unemployed for longer. Broadly speaking, about 30% to 35% of people who had been claiming JSA for less than 13 weeks leave the Claimant Count each month, compared to about 15% to 20% of those claiming between 26 weeks and 52 weeks, and 5% to 10% of those claiming for over one year.

The proportion of people leaving JSA benefits each month has been rising since the start of the New Year. This is good news, though the fact that a similar upturn has not been seen among the long-term unemployed (> 52 weeks) remains a concern, and also a rationale for interventions aimed at this group, e.g. via the Future Jobs Fund.

Figure 13: Proportion of claimants leaving JSA each month, by duration of unemployment, April 2008 to September 2009

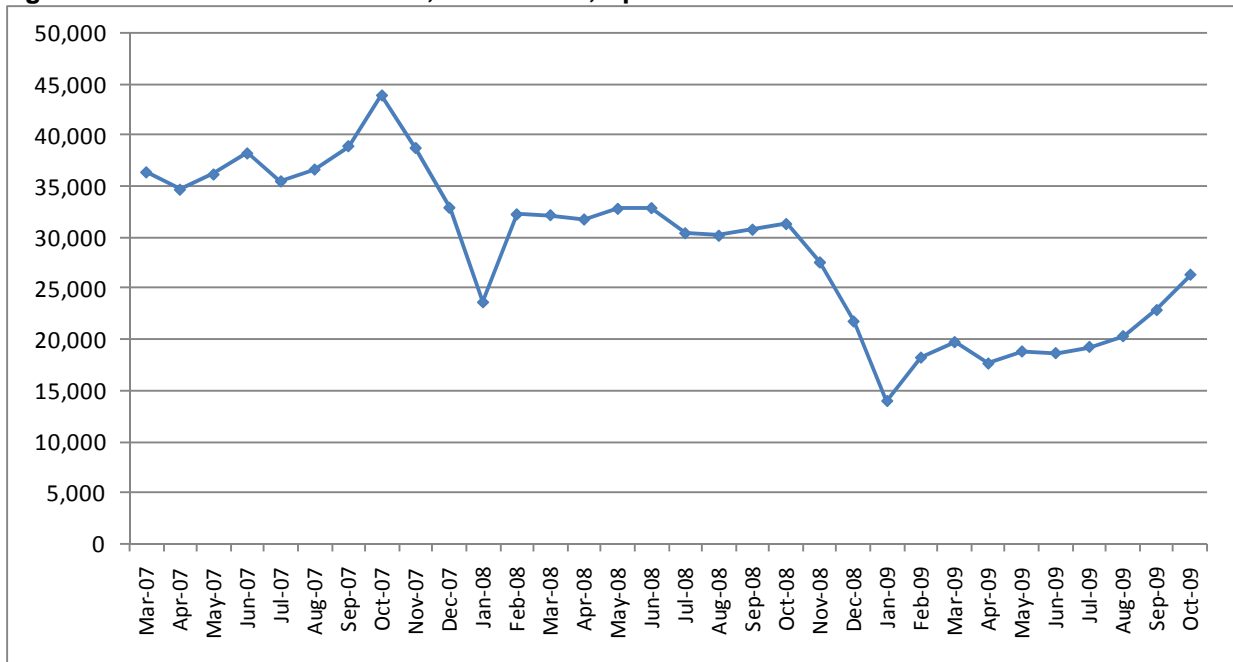


Source: JC+ / NOMIS

3. VACANCIES

The number of live unfilled vacancies available through Jobcentre Plus halved in three months between Oct 2008 and Jan 2009. Since January 2009 the number of notified vacancies has recovered considerably. By October 2009 notified vacancies had recovered to the point of being only 20% lower than pre-recession levels seen from February and September 2008.

Figure 14: Live unfilled vacancies, South West, April 2008 to October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

If unfilled vacancy numbers are broadly indicative of job availability, newly notified vacancies measure the extent to which vacancies are being created by the regional economy, or at least notified to Jobcentre Plus. The fact that both the number of notified vacancies and unfilled vacancies has been rising gradually over the last six months is very encouraging.

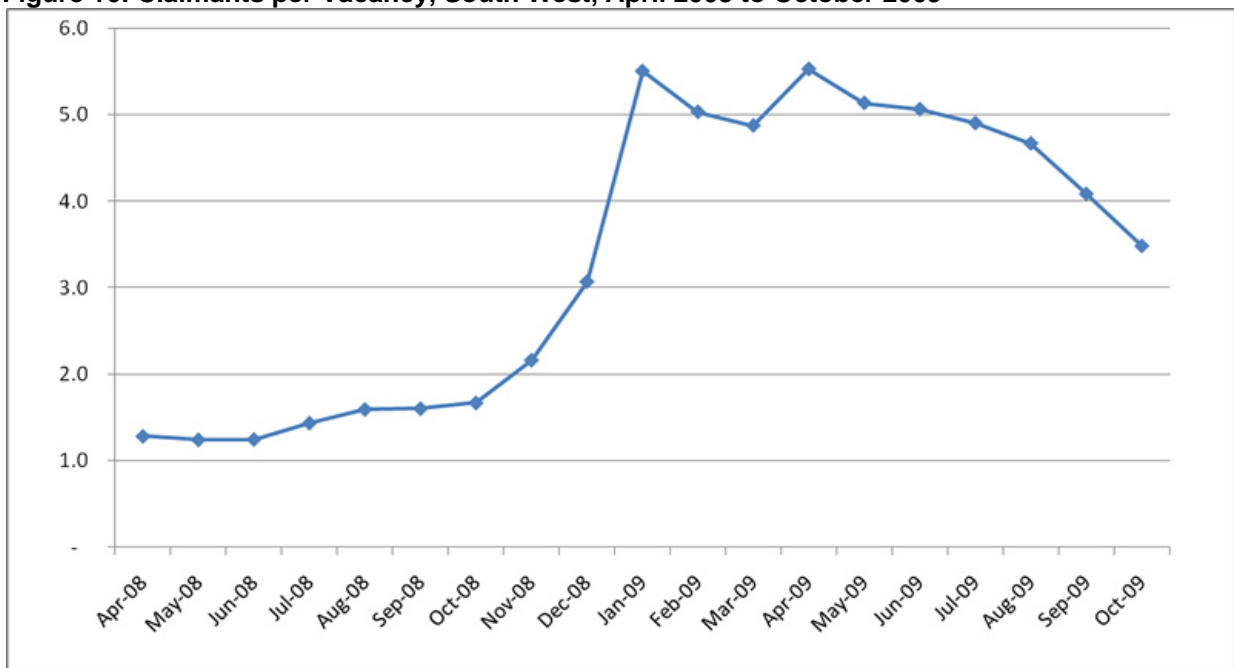
Figure 15: Notified & Unfilled Vacancies, South West, Oct 08 to October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

Data on the number of claimants per live unfilled vacancy provides a further, if rough, measure of the level of competition for jobs or the difficulty that claimants will have finding work.

Figure 16: Claimants per Vacancy, South West, April 2008 to October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

Figure 16 shows that in October 2009 there were 3.5 claimants per vacancy in the region, a sustained decline since April 5.5. Though welcome, there remains a three-fold rise, from the levels of around 1.2 claimants per vacancy, seen from April to June 2008.

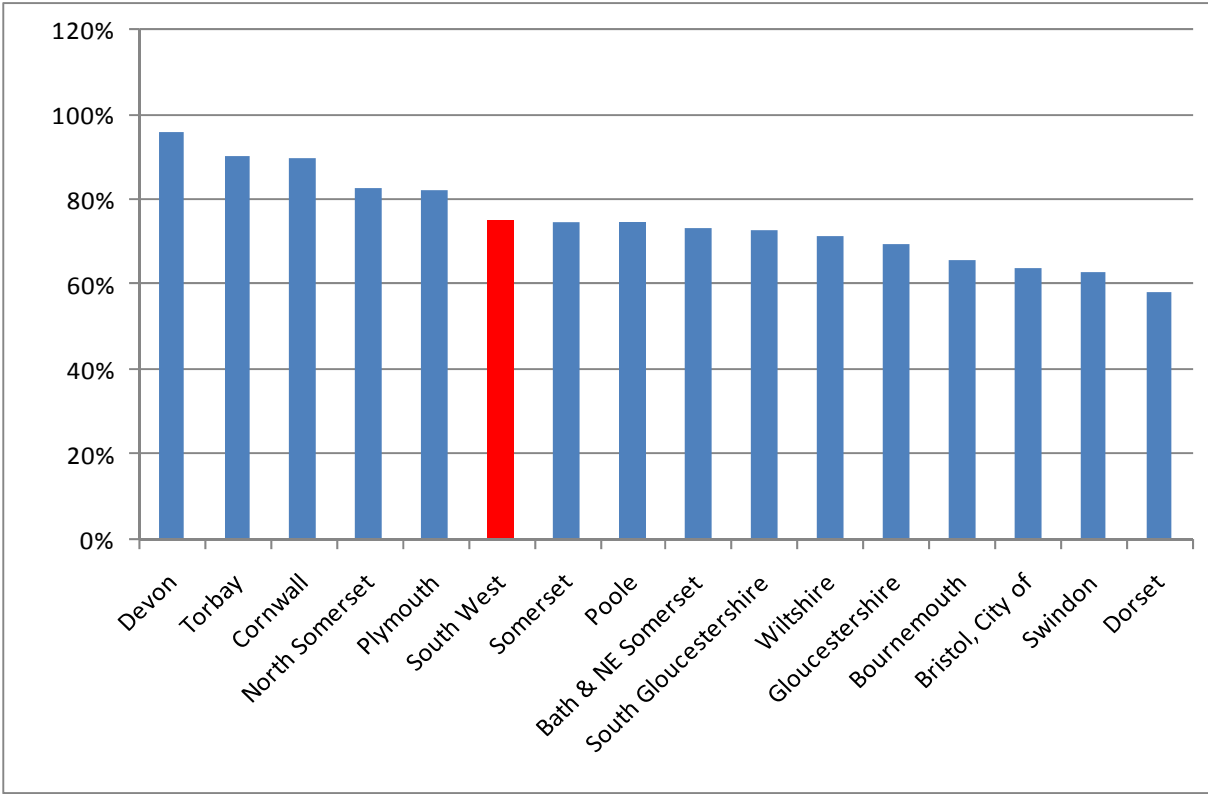
Figure 17 shows the extent to which vacancy levels have declined in different Local Authority areas in the South West. Due to data volatility the comparison is between volumes of vacancies over a three month period, from July to September 2009, compared to the same period in 2008.

Logic would suggest that a relationship should exist between this data and that for unemployment – a significant reduction in vacancies might be expected to contribute to unemployment growth, while large numbers of unemployed people could be expected to fill available vacancies more quickly.

To an extent this holds true. Swindon has experienced the largest rise in unemployment and one of the largest reductions in the number of vacancies. Bristol likewise appears at the top of both lists, while Devon and Cornwall appear towards the bottom of both lists.

However, the relationship is weak. There are areas such as Plymouth and Torbay, where the decline in the number of unfilled vacancies has not been great, despite high levels of unemployment. This would support the contention, particularly in Torbay, that the availability of work is not the only determinant of employment, and that the employability of resident populations, combined with competition for employment from people in neighbouring geographies, are further important factors.

Figure 17: Live Unfilled Vacancy, July-Sep 2009 (vacancies as a % of July-Sep 2008), SW Local Authorities

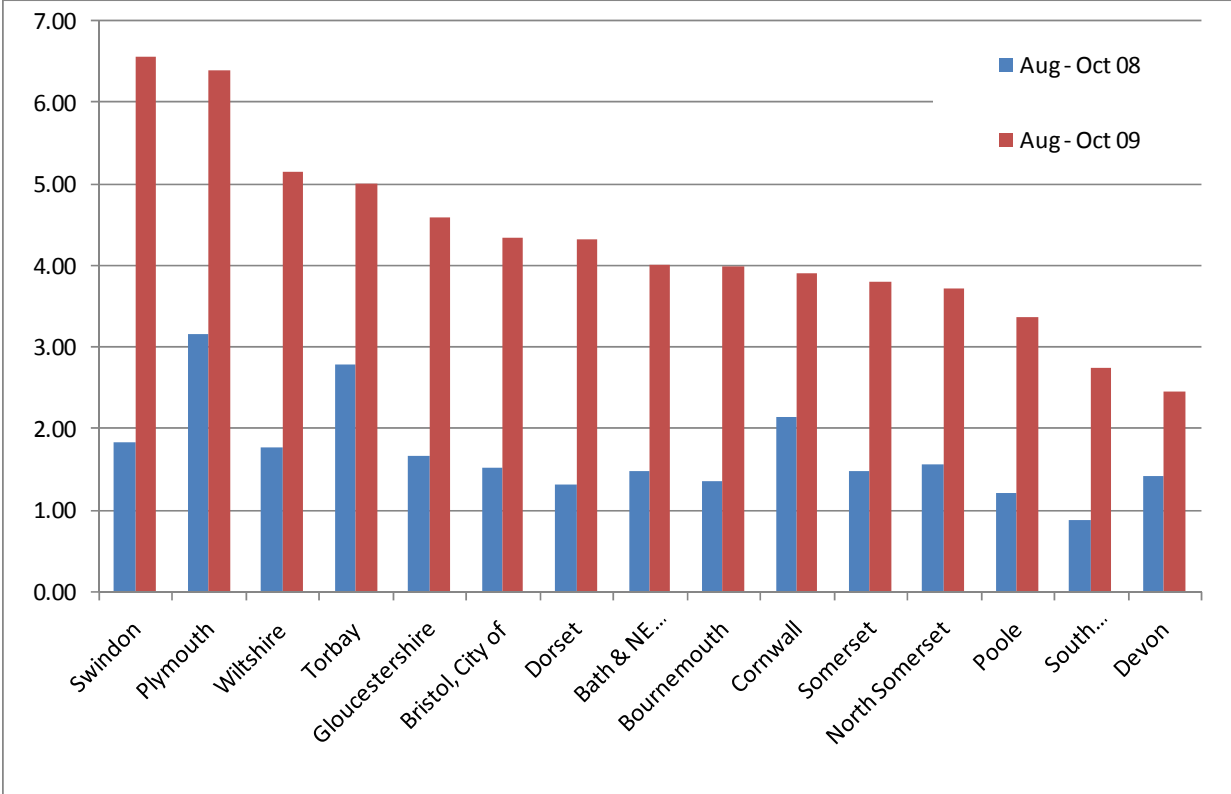


Source: JC+ / NOMIS

As stated, the number of claimants per vacancy provides a better measure of relative competition for, or difficulty experienced in, finding jobs in different Local Authority areas.

Using this measure Swindon appears hardest hit by the recession, having both the largest number of claimants per vacancy and seeing the greatest growth in over the year. Plymouth has a large number of claimants per vacancy, although this was also the case prior to the recession. Swindon, Gloucestershire and Bristol have also seen significant levels of growth (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Claimants per Vacancy, South West Local Authorities, April 2008 & October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

4. REDUNDANCIES

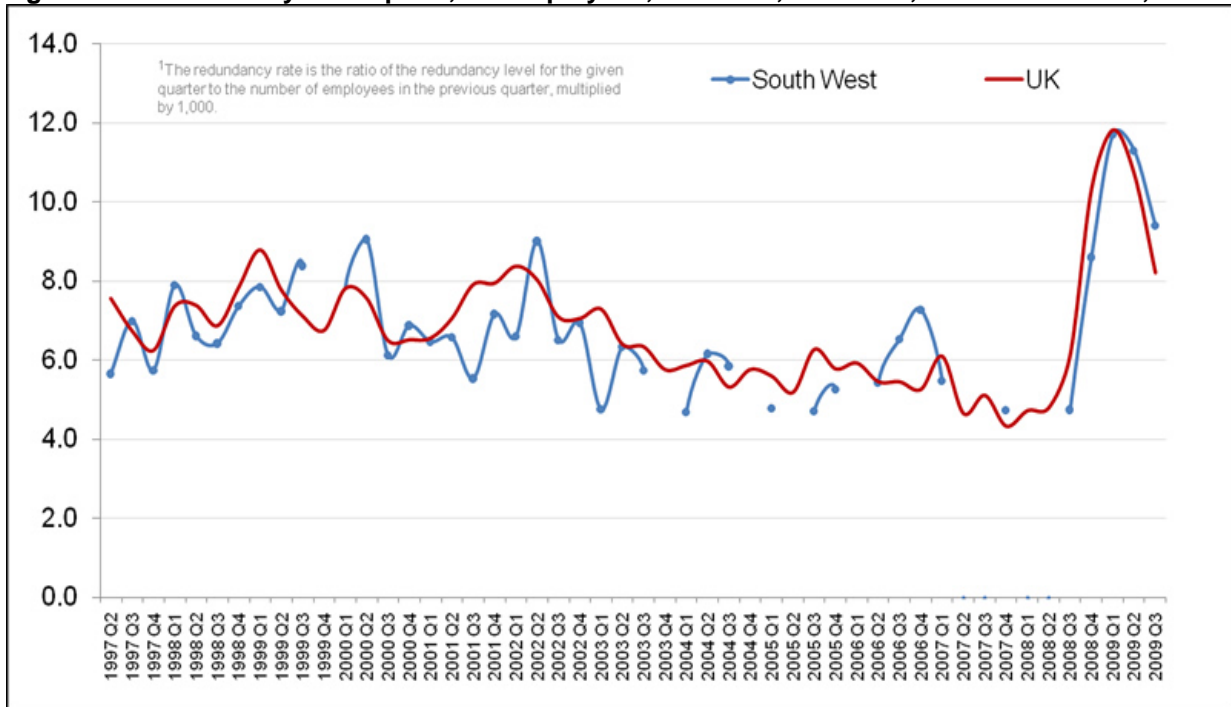
As with unemployment, redundancy data is available from two sources - the Labour Force Survey and Jobcentre Plus².

The LFS shows that over the last decade the rate of redundancies, both within the region and nationally, tended to be fairly constant, at around 5% to 8% per 1,000 employees each quarter.

The redundancy rate accelerated rapidly at the onset of the recession, rising from 4.7 per 1,000 employees in Quarter 3 2008, to 8.6 in Quarter 4 and 11.7 in Quarter 1 2009. In the most recent period, Quarter 3 2009, the South West redundancy rate has dropped back, reaching 9.4 per 1,000 employees.

The regional pattern is very similar to that shown nationally.

Figure 19: Redundancy Rates per 1,000 employees, SW & UK, Quarter 1, 1997 to Quarter 3, 2009

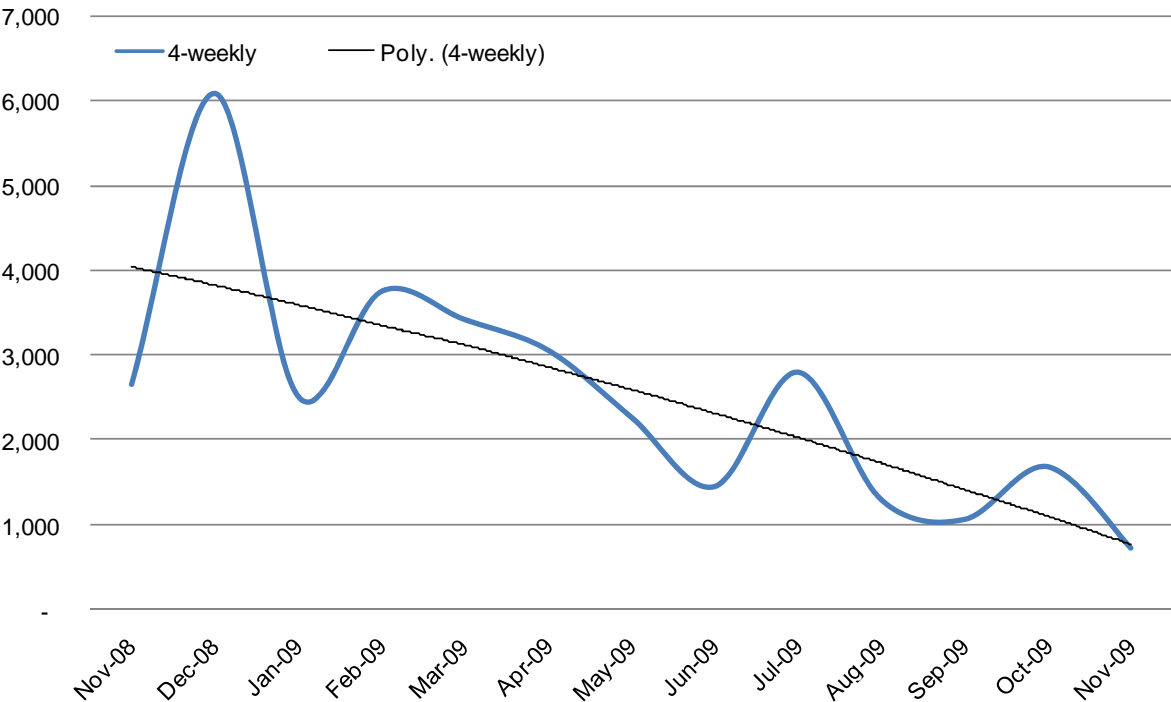


Source: LFS, ONS

The contention that redundancy levels have been falling since reaching a high in the early months of the recession is supported by data on Notified Redundancies from Jobcentre Plus, shown in Figure 20 below.

² The two measures are very different. Jobcentre Plus data is a count of all notified redundancies, i.e. instances where employers inform Jobcentre Plus of their intention to make redundancies (a legal requirement where more than 20 people are losing their jobs). The LFS captures instances where people taking part in the survey identify that they have been made redundant in the last three months. Both have pros and cons. The LFS suffers from confidence intervals so large that data at the regional level is sometimes suppressed as unreliable, leading to breaks in the line. Notified redundancy data fails to capture many instances where fewer than 20 people lose their jobs, or instances where redundancy notifications fail to result in actual job losses.

Figure 20: Notified redundancies per 4 week period, South West, November 2008 to Oct 2009



Source: Jobcentre Plus Administrative Data

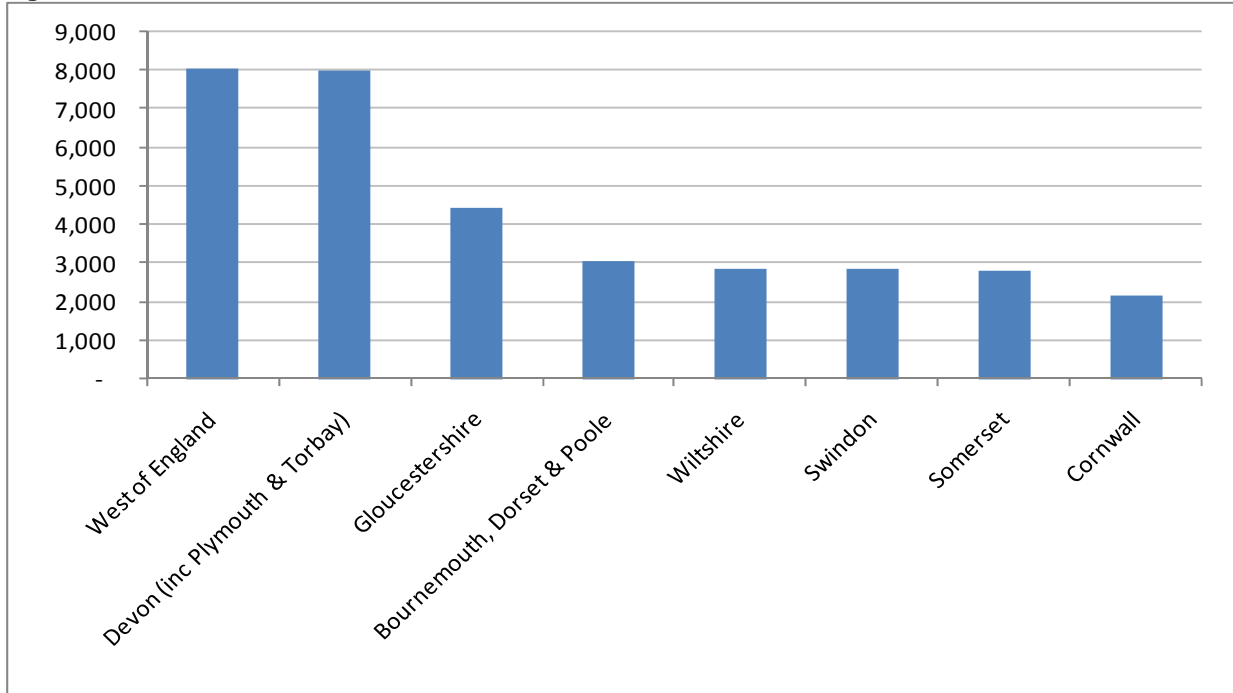
That said, Jobcentre Plus data is generally more positive, showing a much greater decline in redundancy rates, from around 4,000 per 4-week period at the turn of the year, to between 1,000 and 2,000 every four weeks more recently. Caution is however needed, as redundancy figures are extremely volatile and the announcement of a few large redundancies could easily reverse what does appear to be the longer-term downward trend.

Looking sub-regionally, the greatest number of redundancies have been made in the West of England³ and the county of Devon⁴.

³ West of England includes the City of Bristol, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and Bath & North East Somerset.

⁴ Local / Unitary Authority data is not available.

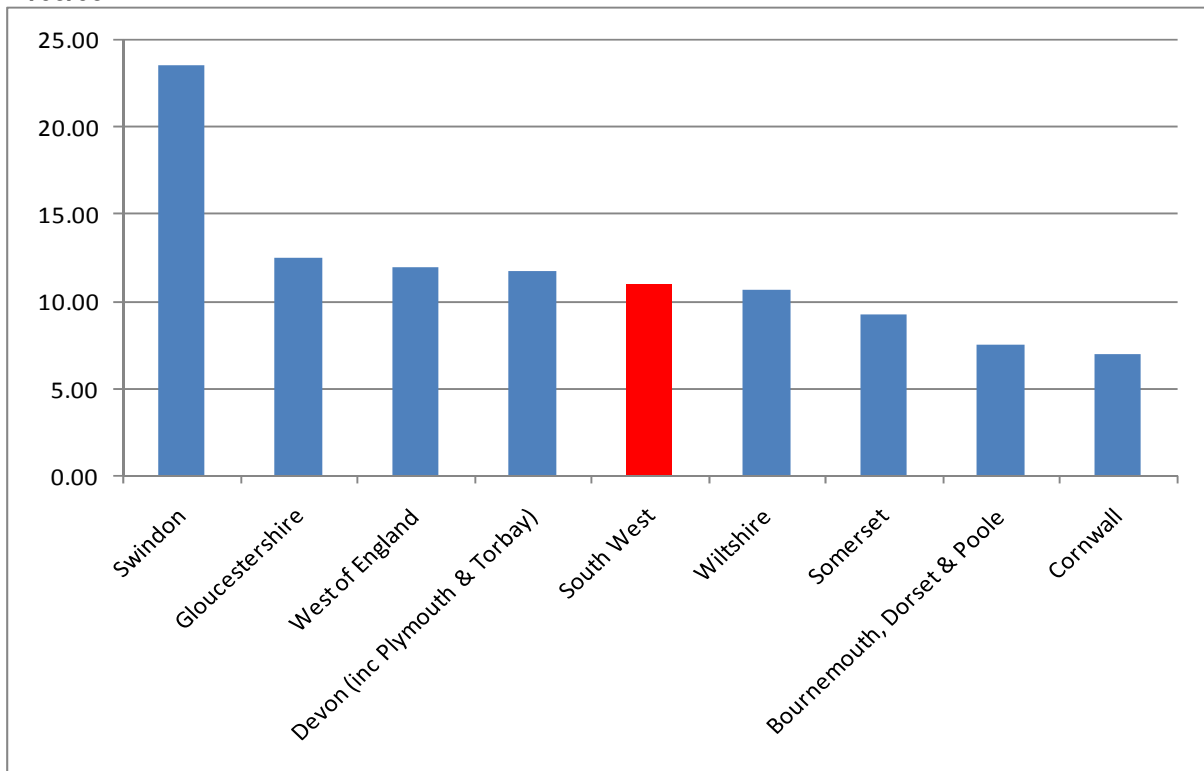
Figure 21: Total Notified redundancies, SW Counties, 8/11/08 to 20/11/09



Source: Jobcentre Plus Administrative Data

A more useful measure is however the number of redundancies per capita. Under this measure Swindon emerges clearly as worst hit, with more than twice the number of redundancies per 1,000 members of the working age population⁵ than the regional average.

Figure 22: Notified redundancies per 1,000 working age population, SW Counties, 8/11/08 to 11/09/09



Source: Jobcentre Plus Administrative Data

⁵ These have been calculated using mid-year population estimates for 2007.

5. IMPACT ON DIFFERENT GROUPS

5.1 Gender

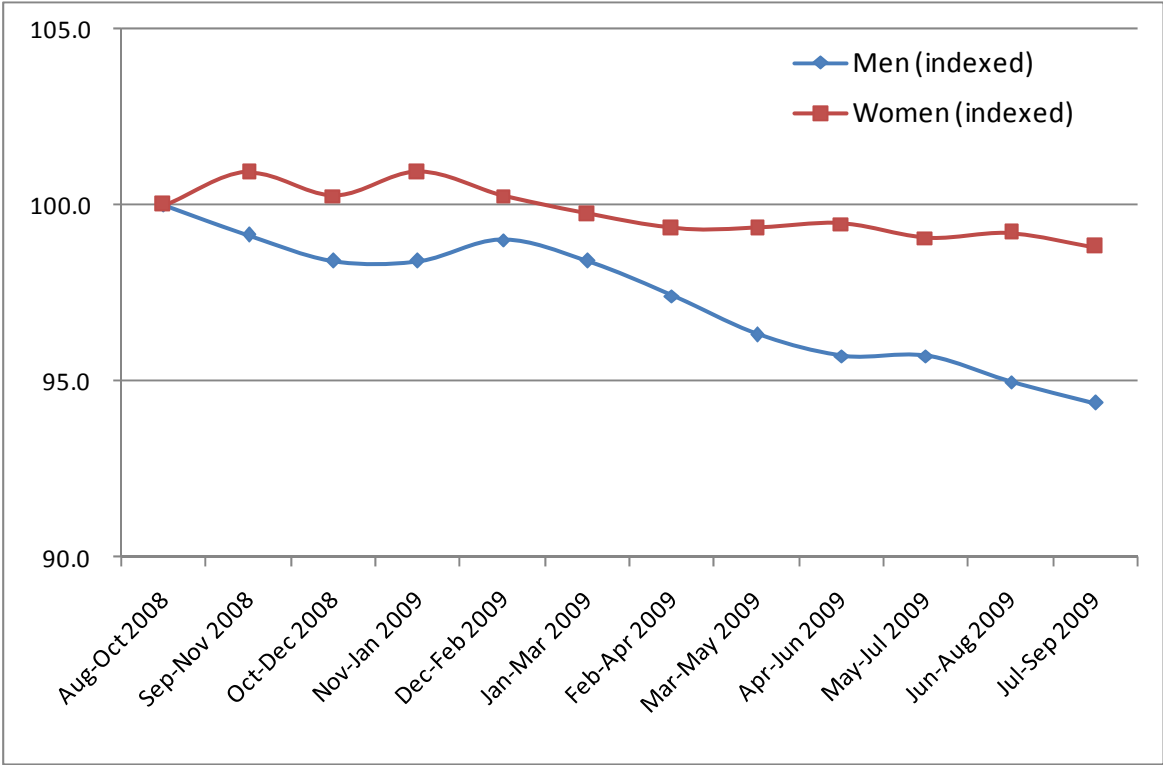
So far the recession has produced a greater decline in male than female employment.

LFS data suggests that in the three months from July to September 2009 there were 76,000 fewer South West resident males in employment compared to a year earlier. There was a decline of 6,000 in the number of South West resident females in employment in the same period.

This is likely to be due to: the fact that more men work in the private sector than women; differences in the industries that men and women tend to work in, and differences in the jobs they tend to hold within those industries. It may also be because of other factors, such as women entering employment to replace the incomes of partners who have lost work.

LFS suggests that the employment rate for men has fallen by 4.6% since the quarter ending October 2008, around the time when the recession began. The employment rate for women declined by 0.9% over the same period.

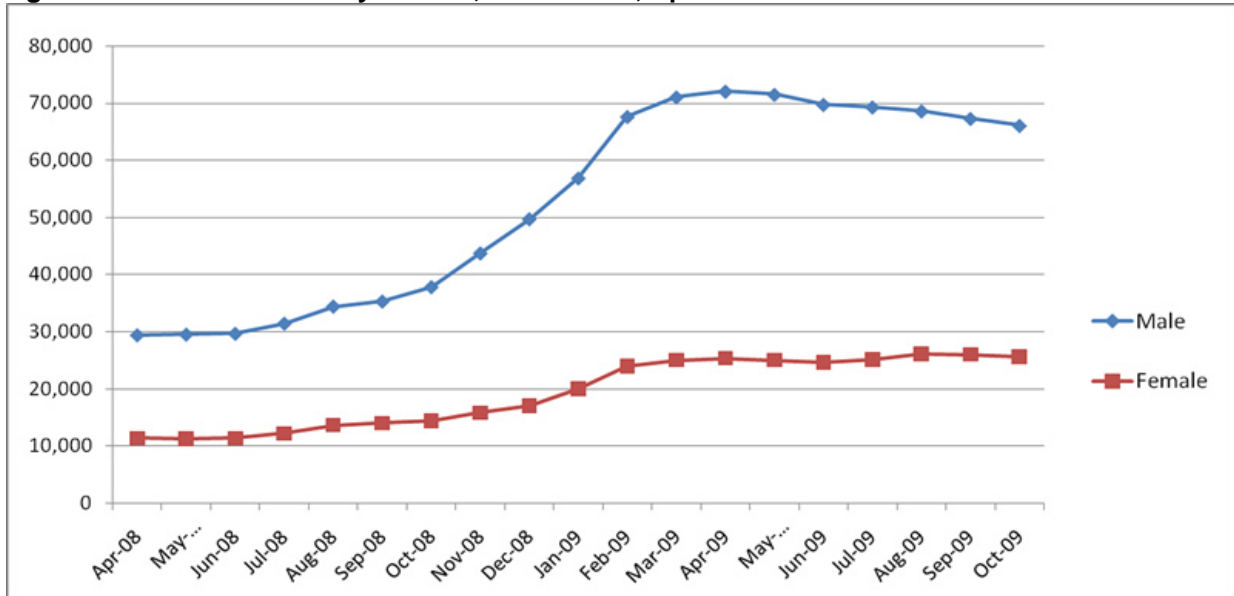
Figure 23: Employment Rates by Gender, South West, (indexed, Aug-Oct 08 = 100)



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

Figure 24 shows that between April 2008 to October 2009 the number of male JSA Claimants in the South West region rose by 36,492, compared to a rise of just under 14,248 among females. Interestingly however, during recent months, from April 2009 to October 2009, the number of male claimants has fallen by 5,986, while the number of female claimants has risen by around 223.

Figure 24: Claimant Count by Gender, South West, April 2008 to October 2009

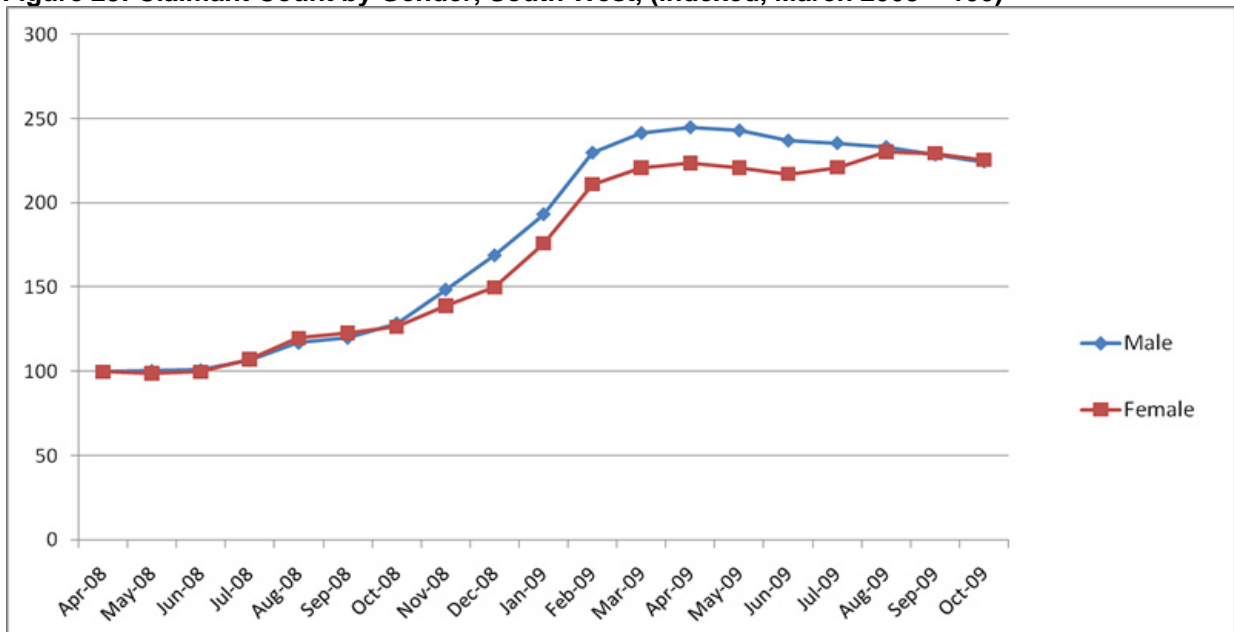


Source: JC+ / NOMIS

Some care is required in the interpretation of these figures, in that where joint claims are made on behalf of jobless couples these are commonly made by the male claimant.

Also, Figure 25 (below) shows that when the figures are indexed to show comparative growth, the rate of rise in the male and female Claimant Count is very similar.

Figure 25: Claimant Count by Gender, South West, (indexed, March 2008 = 100)



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

5.2 Youth Unemployment

At the time of writing, regional LFS data on economic activity by age is only available to March 2009. This shows that in the six months between the quarters ending September 2008 and March 2009 there was a decline in the employment rate for all ages of 0.3%, but that this was particularly concentrated among young people aged 18-24 (see Table 1).

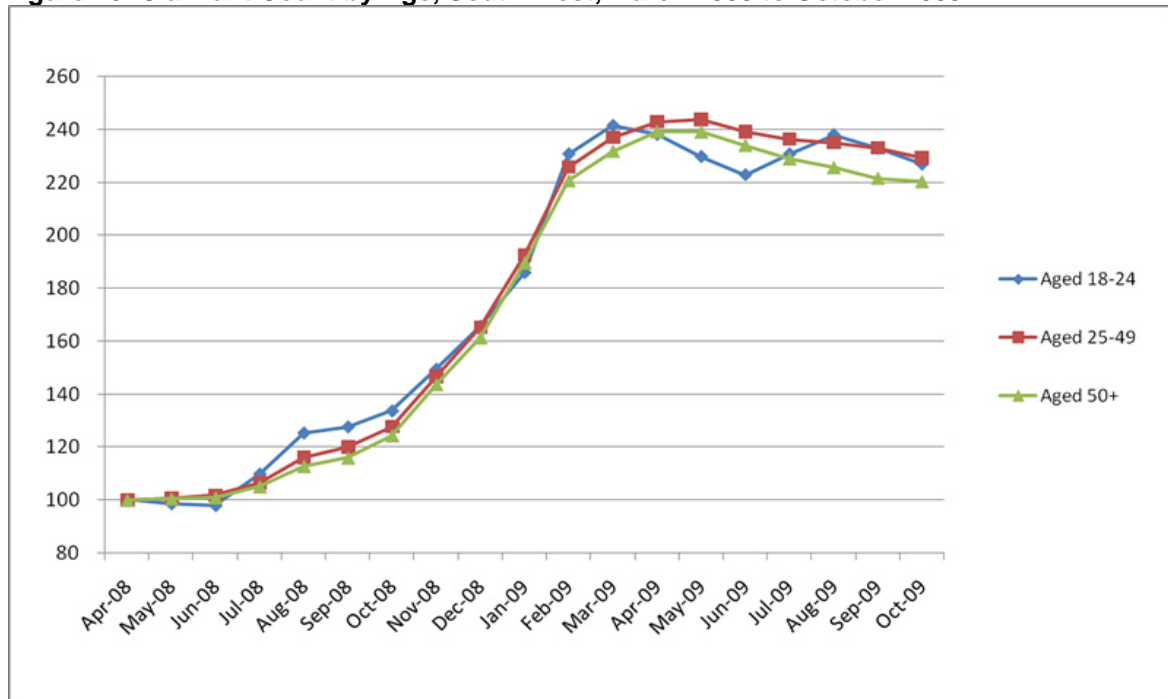
Table 1: Change in % Employment Rates by Age Group, South West, Oct 2007–Sept 2008 to Apr 2008-Mar 2009

Age Group:	16-17	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64 (m) 50-59 (w)
Change in Employment Rates (%)	-0.7	-1.3	-0.7	-0.7	0.4

Source: LFS/ONS

Looking at the Claimant Count, we see that growth-rates during the recession have been fairly similar for all age groups. It is interesting to note that Claimant Count rate for 18 to 24 year olds declined briefly between April and June 2009, before rising fairly rapidly during July and August. Looking back at 2008, this can be seen to be a seasonal pattern, related to young people failing to find work after leaving school, college and university.

Figure 26: Claimant Count by Age, South West, March 2008 to October 2009

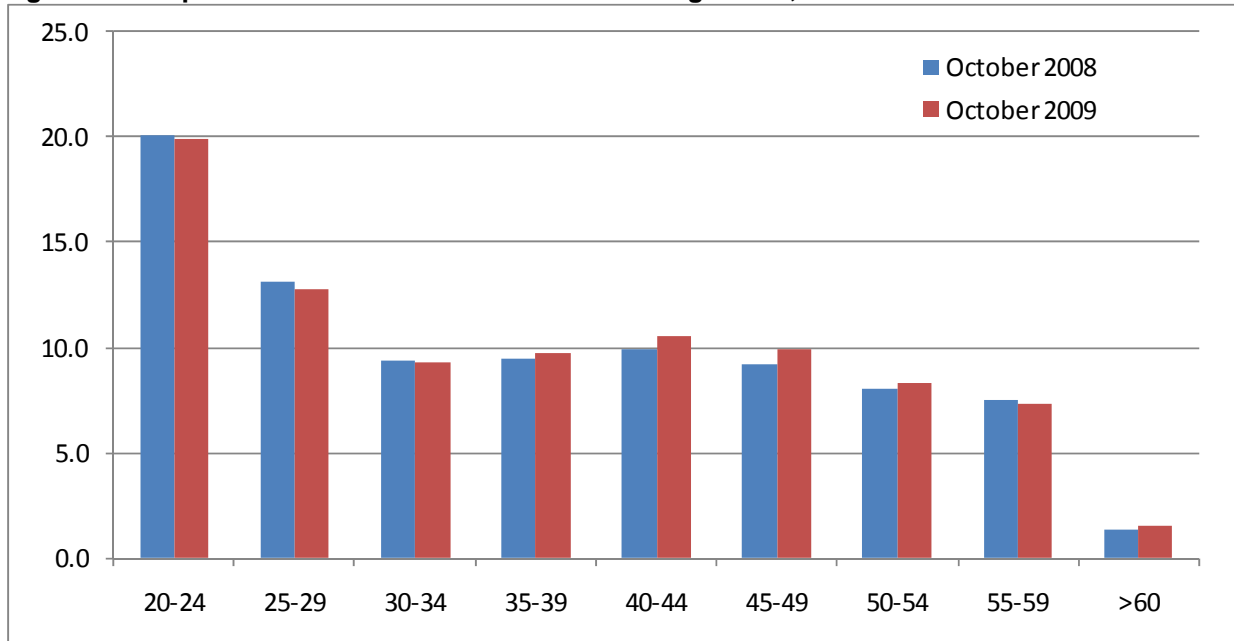


Source: JC+ / NOMIS

Over the last two months to October (during which the overall Claimant Count has declined by 0.1%, see figure 6), claimant levels fell for all ages, with the level of 25 to 49 year old claimants seeing the largest fall, dropping by 785, followed closely by 18 to 24 year olds, with 725 fewer claimants.

The breakdown of claimants by age band shown in Figure 27 tells a similar story, showing that the distribution of claimants across the age bands has not changed dramatically during the recession. People aged 20 to 24 made up around 20% of all claimants during both October 2008 and October 2009.

Figure 27: Proportion of total claimant count in each age band, October 2008 & October 2009

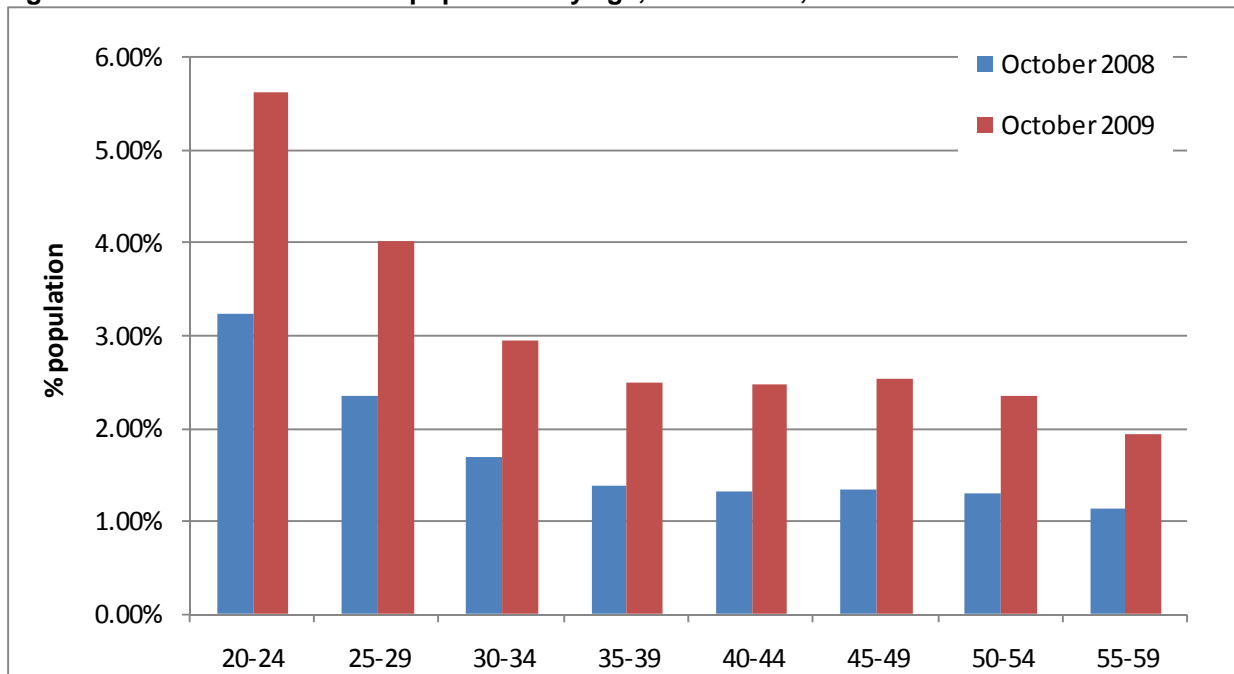


Source: JC+ / NOMIS

However, while there may have been very little change in age distribution of claimants, the feature that stands out from Figure 27 (above) is the very large proportion of the total number of claimants who were under 30 years old, particularly 20 to 24, during both 2008 and 2009.

Thus, while the rates of growth (seen in Figure 27) may have been similar for all age groups, the overall impact on young people has been much greater, as shown in figure 28

Figure 28: Claimant Count as % population by age, South West, Oct '08 vs. Oct '09

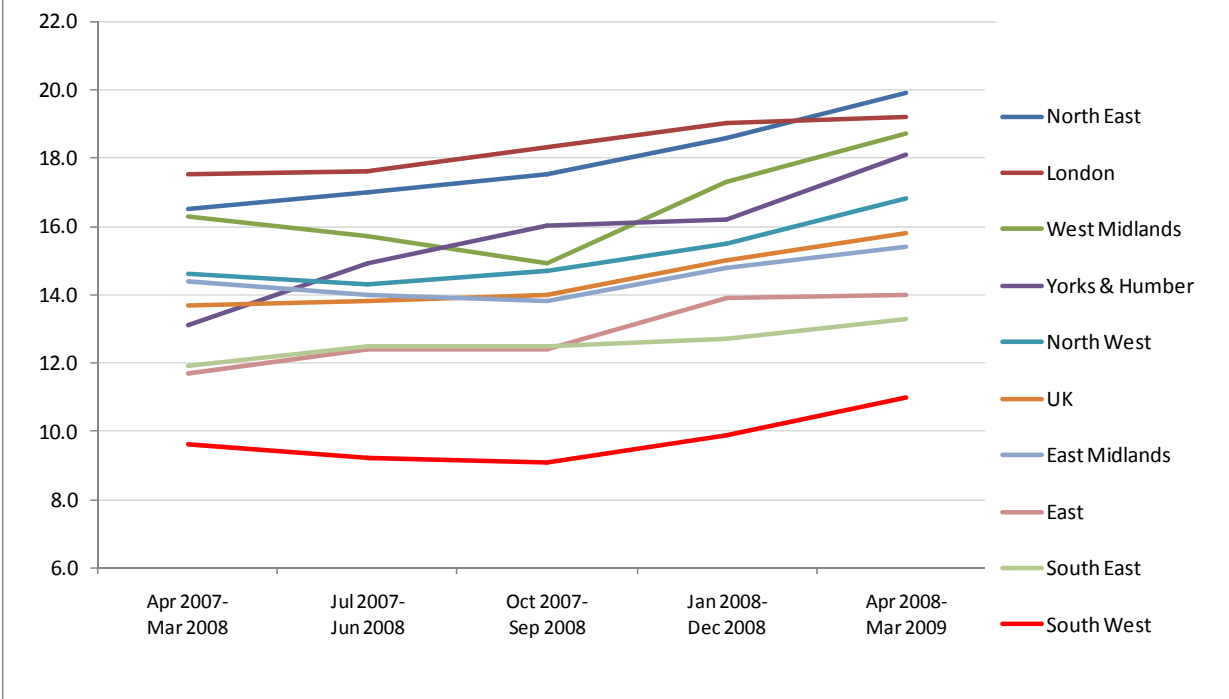


Source: NOMIS / JC+

The LFS data showing the national youth unemployment for 18 to 24 year olds rising to 18.0% during the quarter July to September 2009 attracted much media and political comment⁶. Unfortunately LFS data for youth unemployment is not available at the regional level, so we are unable to benchmark the South West against this national figure.

However, we do know that over the whole year April 2008 to April 2009 the LFS/APS unemployment rate for 18 to 24 year olds in the South West averaged 11%, up from 9.6% a year earlier. As Figure 29 shows, over this period the South West had a lower regional LFS/APS unemployment rate than any other English region.

Figure 29: Unemployment rate, 16 to 24 year olds, UK & English Regions

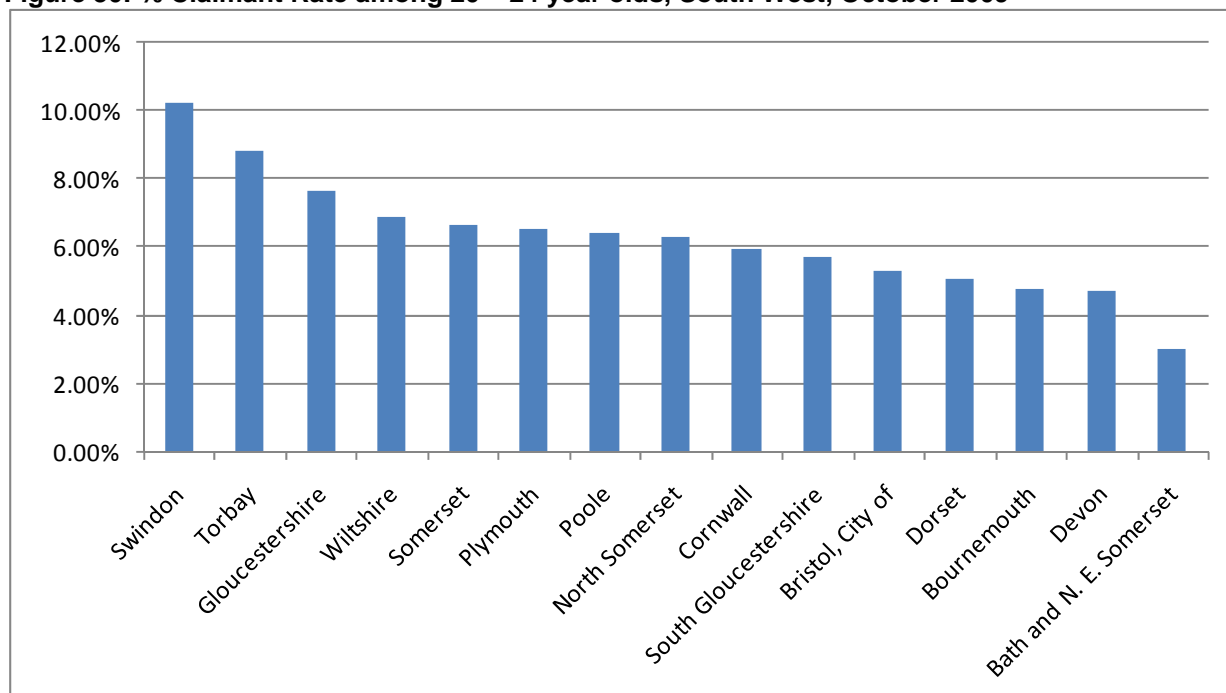


Source: LFS / Annual Population Survey.

Rates of youth claimant-based unemployment in different Local / Unitary Authority areas ranges considerably.

⁶ See, for example, Shadow work and pensions secretary Theresa May's statement that the latest unemployment statistics were "yet more grim figures for Britain"... "Labour has written off a generation of young people with one in five now unable to find a job". BBC Article 'Rise in UK Unemployment slowing', 11th November 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/8353933.stm>

Figure 30: % Claimant Rate among 20 – 24 year olds, South West, October 2009



Source: JC+ / NOMIS

In Swindon, in October 2009, 10.3% of all people aged 20 to 24⁷ were claiming JSA, a figure 7.2% above that for the lowest rate of 3.1% seen in Bath and North East Somerset. This range (7.2%) in Claimant Count rates for young people across the region is much greater than the range in rates for older age groups. Claimant count rates in the 30 to 59 year old age group, for example, range by 2.3%, from 4.3% in Swindon to 1.7% in Dorset.

5.3 Ethnicity

Across England, the Claimant Count for people who identified themselves as 'White' rose 103%, from 502,000 in March 2008 to 1,018,520 in October 2009. During the same period the rise among those who identified themselves as being from an 'Ethnic minority' rose 70% from 125,000 to 212,115 in October 2009. The rise among white people exceeded the rise among any single ethnic minority sub-group.

This trend is also seen in the South West, where the rise among the 'White' population was 134%, to October, compared to a rise of 100% among the region's ethnic minority populations.

This is likely to be the result of differences in sector, occupation and type of employment (e.g. self employment), though other factors, such as family support arrangements or attitudes towards benefit dependency, cannot be discounted.

⁷ Based on August 2009 Claimant Count and 2007 Mid-year Population estimates, by quinary age band.

6. OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS

The occupational composition of unemployment in the South West is very similar to that for England as a whole.

Table 2: Composition of Claimant Count by Occupation, SW & England, October 2009

Occupation	South West	England
Managers and Senior Officials	6%	5%
Professional Occupations	5%	4%
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	7%	7%
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	10%	11%
Skilled Trades Occupations	13%	12%
Personal Service Occupations	5%	5%
Sales and Customer Service occupations	15%	16%
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	10%	10%
Elementary Occupations	27%	29%
	100%	100%

Source: JC+ Administrative Data / NOMIS

However, as Table 3 below shows, unemployment rates for people in lower skilled occupations are significantly higher those found for people in more skilled occupations. For example, while 11% of all regional employment is in Elementary Occupations, people whose usual job was in an Elementary Occupation made up 27% of claimants in the South West in August 2009.

Table 3: Composition of Employment & Claimant Count, South West, October 2009

Occupation - South West	% Claimants	% Employment
Managers and Senior Officials	6%	16%
Professional Occupations	5%	12%
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	7%	15%
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	10%	11%
Skilled Trades Occupations	13%	12%
Personal Service Occupations	5%	9%
Sales and Customer Service occupations	15%	8%
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	10%	6%
Elementary Occupations	27%	11%

Source: JC+ Administrative Data & LFS / NOMIS

Table 4 (below) shows that the recession has had some 'levelling effect', with Managers, Senior Officials, Professionals and Associate Professionals making up a growing proportion of the Claimant Count over the last year. However, the dominant pattern, of unemployment being concentrated among lower skilled occupations, has not changed.

Table 4: Composition of Claimant Count, South West, October 2008 & October 2009

Occupation	Oct-08	Oct-09
Managers and Senior Officials	5.5%	6.1%
Professional Occupations	4.0%	4.6%
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	6.4%	7.1%
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	10.9%	10.3%
Skilled Trades Occupations	12.7%	13.3%
Personal Service Occupations	5.0%	5.5%
Sales and Customer Service occupations	14.5%	15.1%
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	10.4%	10.4%
Elementary Occupations	30.4%	27.5%

Source: JC+ / NOMIS