

National

Six Weekly Business Dashboard

Theme	Indicator	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	Trend	Relative to Peer Group ¹	Commentary																														
Business	National Business Investment ² (update due Jun 2026)	£78.3bn (Q1)			£77.7bn (Q2)			£78.7bn (Q3)			£76.4bn (Q4)			£76.9bn (Q1)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>2022</th> <th>2023</th> <th>2024</th> <th>2025</th> <th>2026</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1</td> <td>£71.2bn</td> <td>£73.0bn</td> <td>£73.0bn</td> <td>£78.3bn</td> <td>£76.9bn</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2</td> <td>£72.1bn</td> <td>£73.2bn</td> <td>£74.3bn</td> <td>£77.7bn</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3</td> <td>£70.9bn</td> <td>£71.4bn</td> <td>£76.0bn</td> <td>£78.7bn</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4</td> <td>£70.1bn</td> <td>£73.0bn</td> <td>£75.1bn</td> <td>£76.4bn</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Q1	£71.2bn	£73.0bn	£73.0bn	£78.3bn	£76.9bn	Q2	£72.1bn	£73.2bn	£74.3bn	£77.7bn		Q3	£70.9bn	£71.4bn	£76.0bn	£78.7bn		Q4	£70.1bn	£73.0bn	£75.1bn	£76.4bn		-	<p>provisional estimates show that UK business investment was at £76.9bn in Q1 2026. It has increased by 0.7% since Q4 2025.</p> <p>UK business investment is 1.8% below the level seen in Q1 2025.</p>
Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026																																										
Q1	£71.2bn	£73.0bn	£73.0bn	£78.3bn	£76.9bn																																										
Q2	£72.1bn	£73.2bn	£74.3bn	£77.7bn																																											
Q3	£70.9bn	£71.4bn	£76.0bn	£78.7bn																																											
Q4	£70.1bn	£73.0bn	£75.1bn	£76.4bn																																											

Regional

Monthly / Quarterly Business Dashboard

Theme	Indicator	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary												
Business	Regional Business Activity Index ³ (monthly update)	47.5	50.4	50.9	50.6	51.1	48.1	50.5	51.4	52.9	54.4	53.5	50.2	49.5	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Apr 2022</th> <th>Apr 2023</th> <th>Apr 2024</th> <th>Apr 2025</th> <th>Apr 2026</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Value</td> <td>54.5</td> <td>52.8</td> <td>55.5</td> <td>47.5</td> <td>49.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	Value	54.5	52.8	55.5	47.5	49.5	<p>WM: 10th Highest Region UK: 52.6 London: 57.4 (1st) Wales: 47.9 (12th)</p>	<p>The West Midlands Business Activity Index decreased from 50.2 in March 2026 to 49.5, marking the first month of contraction for seven months.</p> <p>The UK Business Activity Index increased from 50.3 in March 2026 to 52.6 in April 2026.</p>
Month	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026																								
Value	54.5	52.8	55.5	47.5	49.5																								

The Dashboard has been updated to reflect the WMCA 7 Met. geography where available.

¹ Comparisons vary depending on geography; Birmingham has been compared to Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle. Due to data availability, the WM 7 Met. has been either compared to other combined authorities (following what is available Greater London Authority is not always included), (traditional combined authorities are Greater Manchester CA (GMCA), Sheffield City Region, West Yorkshire CA, Liverpool City Region CA, Tees Valley CA, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CA, West of England CA, North East CA and North of Tyne CA, however for claimants/ ONS labour market activity new CAs are now available meaning the 15 will be - GMCA, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Devon & Torbay, Lancaster, Greater Lincolnshire, Hull & East Yorkshire, Liverpool City Region, Tees Valley, WMCA, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, West of England, York & North Yorkshire, East Midlands and the North East or NUTS 2 / ITL 2 geography. The West Midlands region has been compared to other regions in the UK. No comparators have been included for UK-wide. The GVA indicator now includes 15 agreed Combined Authorities.

² Office for National Statistics (ONS), Business investment in the UK: January to March 2026 provisional results – released May 2026.

³ NatWest, UK regional growth tracker report– released May 2026

WMCA ECONOMIC DASHBOARD – MAY 2026

Theme	Indicator	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary										
Business	Regional Future Business Activity Index ⁴ (monthly update)	67.3	75.2	70.7	69.6	74.2	71.4	72.1	69.5	74.9	72.2	73.3	68.0	Not Currently Available	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>Mar 2022</th> <th>Mar 2023</th> <th>Mar 2024</th> <th>Mar 2025</th> <th>Mar 2026</th> </tr> <tr> <td>75.2</td> <td>78.0</td> <td>79.7</td> <td>68.5</td> <td>68.0</td> </tr> </table>	Mar 2022	Mar 2023	Mar 2024	Mar 2025	Mar 2026	75.2	78.0	79.7	68.5	68.0	WM: 2 nd Highest Region London: 68.5 (1 st) Northern Ireland: 55.7 (12 th)	The West Midlands Future Business Activity Index decreased from 73.3 in February 2026 to 68.0 in March 2026. Expectations to launch new products and explore new markets, as well investment in operations and increasing marketing budgets supported business confidence in the region.
	Mar 2022	Mar 2023	Mar 2024	Mar 2025	Mar 2026																						
	75.2	78.0	79.7	68.5	68.0																						
WMCA (7 Met.) Enterprise Deaths ⁵ (quarterly – update due Jul 2026)			2,880 (Q2)			2,800 (Q3)				2,875 (Q4)			3,720 (Q1)	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>Q1 2022</th> <th>Q1 2023</th> <th>Q1 2024</th> <th>Q1 2025</th> <th>Q1 2026</th> </tr> <tr> <td>4,730</td> <td>5,775</td> <td>4,095</td> <td>3,955</td> <td>3,720</td> </tr> </table>	Q1 2022	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2026	4,730	5,775	4,095	3,955	3,720	WMCA: 2 nd Highest CA GMCA: 3,725 (1 st) Hull & East Yorkshire: 565 (15 th)	The number of business deaths in the WMCA area in Q1 2026 was 3,720. This figure was 5.9% (-235) lower than the number of business deaths in Q1 2025, while the UK fell by 1.1%. Quarter on quarter analysis (between Q4 2025 and Q1 2026) shows an increase in business deaths of 29.4% (+845) for the WMCA area, the UK increased by 27.0%.	
Q1 2022	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2026																							
4,730	5,775	4,095	3,955	3,720																							
WMCA (7 Met.) Enterprise Births ⁶ (quarterly – update due Jul 2026)			3,160 (Q2)			3,235 (Q3)				2,975 (Q4)			3,385 (Q1)	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>Q1 2022</th> <th>Q1 2023</th> <th>Q1 2024</th> <th>Q1 2025</th> <th>Q1 2026</th> </tr> <tr> <td>4,850</td> <td>3,495</td> <td>3,975</td> <td>3,680</td> <td>3,385</td> </tr> </table>	Q1 2022	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2026	4,850	3,495	3,975	3,680	3,385	WMCA: 2 nd Highest CA GMCA: 3,660 (1 st) Hull & East Yorkshire: 600 (15 th)	The number of business births in the WMCA area in Q1 2026 was 3,385. This figure was 8.0% (-295) lower than the number of business births in Q1 2025. The UK also decreased by 8.0% over this period. Quarter on quarter analysis (between Q4 2025 and Q1 2026) shows an increase of 13.8% (+410) for the WMCA area, while the UK increased by 11.1%.	
Q1 2022	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2026																							
4,850	3,495	3,975	3,680	3,385																							

⁴ NatWest, UK regional growth tracker report – released April 2026

⁵ ONS, Business demography, quarterly experimental statistics, low-level geographic breakdown, UK – released April 2026.

⁶ ONS, Business demography, quarterly experimental statistics, low-level geographic breakdown, UK – released April 2026.

Annual Business Dashboard

Theme	Indicator	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary
Business	WMCA (7 Met.) High Growth Enterprises ⁷ (annual – update due Nov 2026)	415	380	340	345	385	430		WMCA: 3 rd Highest CA GMCA: 580 (1 st) Tees Valley: 90 (15 th)	The latest available data for the WMCA area shows that the number of high growth enterprises has increased for the third consecutive year. There was a total of 430 high growth enterprises in the WMCA area in 2024, an increase of 11.7% (+45) since 2023, the UK increased by 4.2%.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Enterprise Births ⁸ (annual – update due Nov 2026)	15,310	14,125	16,550	15,435	14,080	14,395		WMCA: 2 nd Highest CA GMCA: 15,150 (1 st) Hull & East Yorkshire: 2,475 (15 th)	Enterprise births in the WMCA area increased by 2.2% (+315) since 2023 to 14,395 in 2024. Over this period, the UK increased by 0.4%. In 2024, there were 2,255 more enterprise births than deaths.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Enterprise Deaths ⁹ (annual – update due Nov 2026)	12,080	13,830	13,375	14,865	14,760	12,140		WMCA: 2 nd Highest CA GMCA: 12,735 (1 st) Hull & East Yorkshire: 2,035 (15 th)	Enterprise deaths in the WMCA area decreased by 17.8% (-2,620) since 2023 to 12,140 in 2024. Over this period, the UK decreased by 9.5%. In 2024, there were 2,255 more enterprise births than deaths.
	WMCA (7 Met.) 3 Year Enterprise Survival Rates ¹⁰ (annual – update due Nov 2026)	43.4% (2016 birth)	47.7% (2017 birth)	46.9% (2018 birth)	50.4% (2019 birth)	48.0% (2020 birth)	46.3% (2021 birth)		WMCA: Lowest CA UK: 53.5% York and North Yorkshire: 60.3% (1 st) Liverpool City Region: 47.6% (14 th)	Across 1-to-5-year enterprise survival rates, the WMCA performs worse than nationally. Of the 16,550 enterprise births in 2021 in the WMCA area, 46.3% (7,665) were still active after 3 years compared to 53.5% for the UK.
	WM 7 Met. Innovation Active Businesses ¹¹ (Biennial – update due Jun 2026)		45.0% (2018-20)		31.7% (2020-22)				WM 7 Met.: 8 th Lowest/ 40 UK: 36.3% Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire, Wiltshire & Bath/Bristol area: 45.0% (Joint 1 st) Outer London – East & North East: 27.0% (40 th)	Trends in the proportion of businesses that are innovation active continues to fluctuate. Following the national trend (decreasing from 44.9% in 2018-2020 to 36.3% in 2020-22), the WM 7 Met. Area decreased from 45.0% in 2018-20 to 31.7% in 2020-22.

⁷ ONS, Business Demography (provisional for 2022), UK 2024 – released November 2025
⁸ ONS, Business Demography (provisional for 2022), UK 2024 – released November 2025
⁹ ONS, Business Demography (provisional for 2022), UK 2024 – released November 2025
¹⁰ ONS, Business Demography (provisional for 2022), UK 2024 – released November 2025
¹¹ Department for Business and Trade, UK Innovation Survey 2023 – released May 2024

Quarterly Place Dashboard

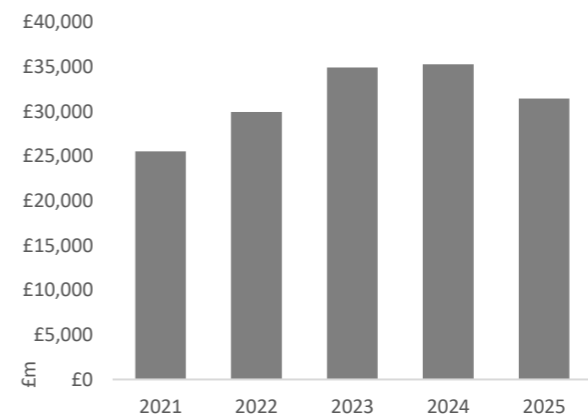
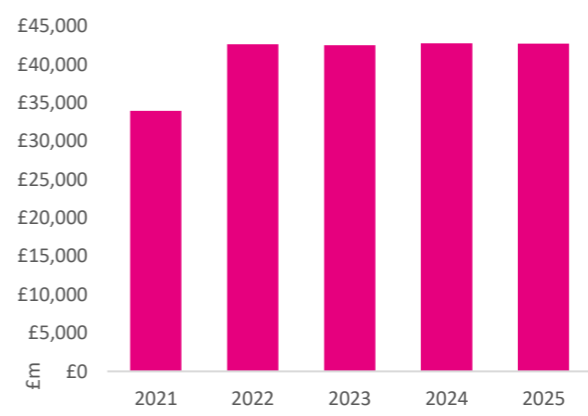
Theme	Indicator	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary																														
Place	Birmingham City Centre Rent ¹² (Quarterly – update due Aug 2026)	£43.25 Per Sq ft (Q1)			£45.50 Per Sq ft (Q2)			£46.50 Per Sq ft (Q3)			£46.00 Per Sq ft (Q4)			£52.00 Per Sq ft (Q1)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>2022</th> <th>2023</th> <th>2024</th> <th>2025</th> <th>2026</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1</td> <td>£39.00</td> <td>£40.00</td> <td>£42.50</td> <td>£43.25</td> <td>£52.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2</td> <td>£39.00</td> <td>£41.00</td> <td>£43.25</td> <td>£45.50</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3</td> <td>£40.00</td> <td>£41.00</td> <td>£43.25</td> <td>£46.50</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4</td> <td>£40.00</td> <td>£41.00</td> <td>£43.25</td> <td>£46.00</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Q1	£39.00	£40.00	£42.50	£43.25	£52.00	Q2	£39.00	£41.00	£43.25	£45.50		Q3	£40.00	£41.00	£43.25	£46.50		Q4	£40.00	£41.00	£43.25	£46.00		Birmingham: Joint Highest (with Bristol) / 9 Edinburgh and Leeds: £46.00 (Joint 3 rd) Liverpool: £29.50 (9 th)	The largest deal of the quarter was to Eversheds Sutherland LLP acquiring 45,690 sq. ft on the 3rd and 4th floors at Three Chamberlain Square. The Federated Hermes scheme has achieved the highest sustainability accreditations contributing in Eversheds setting a new headline rent in the city of £52 per sq. ft marking quarterly rental growth of 13.0% and annual growth of 20.2%.
	Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026																																									
Q1	£39.00	£40.00	£42.50	£43.25	£52.00																																										
Q2	£39.00	£41.00	£43.25	£45.50																																											
Q3	£40.00	£41.00	£43.25	£46.50																																											
Q4	£40.00	£41.00	£43.25	£46.00																																											
	WMCA (7 Met.) Gigabit broadband Connectivity ¹³ (bi-annual – update due autumn 2026)						96.2% premises (As of Jul 2025)					96.5% premises (As of Jan 2026)			WMCA: Highest 2 nd CA UK: 88.9% Hull & East Yorkshire: 97.0% (1 st) Devon & Torbay: 72.5% (15 th)	As of January 2026, 96.5% of premises in the WMCA area had gigabit broadband availability – remained significantly above the UK-wide figure of 88.9%.																															

¹² Avison Young, The Big Nine – created May 2026.

¹³ Ofcom, connected nations – released May 2026.

Quarterly Economy Dashboard

Regional

Theme	Indicator	December 2024	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary
Economy	Regional Exports in Goods ¹⁴ (quarterly – update due Jun 2026)	£35.3bn (Full Year 2024)			£34.9bn (Year to Q1 2025)			£34.2bn (Year to Q2 2025)			£33.2bn (Year to Q3 2025)			£31.5bn (Full Year 2025)		WM – Joint 3 rd Highest Region (with Scotland) South East: 11.2% (1 st) Northern Ireland: 3.1% (12 th)	In 2025, the West Midlands region exported £31.5bn worth of goods, a decrease of £3.8bn (-10.9%, UK: +0.3%) compared to the previous annual period. The West Midlands accounted for 8.8% of UK exports. The West Midlands had a trade deficit of £11.3bn.
	Regional Imports in Goods ¹⁵ (quarterly – update due Jun 2026)	£42.8bn (Full Year 2024)			£42.8bn (Year to Q1 2025)			£42.4bn (Year to Q2 2025)			£42.6bn (Year to Q3 2025)			£42.7bn (Full Year 2025)		WM – 5 th Highest Region South East: 18.3% (1 st) Northern Ireland: 1.7% (12 th)	Goods imports to the West Midlands region were worth £42.7bn in 2025, an annual decrease of £36m (-0.1%, UK: +3.7%). The West Midlands accounted for 7.1% of UK's goods imports.

¹⁴ HMRC, UK regional trade in goods statistics – released March 2026. Data is not comparable across the dashboard. Please note, annual change figures in the commentary section may not sum due to rounding.

¹⁵ HMRC, UK regional trade in goods statistics – released March 2026. Data is not comparable across the dashboard. Please note, annual change figures in the commentary section may not sum due to rounding.

Annual Economy Dashboard

Theme	Indicator	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary
Economy	WMCA FDI Projects ¹⁶ (annual – update due Jun / Jul 2026)							70	58		WM 7 Met.: 4 th Highest ITL 2 / 31 Inner London - West: 264 (1 st) Lincolnshire and Outer London – South: 13 (Joint 31 st)	For the West Midlands 7 Met. Area, the number of single site FDI projects decreased from 70 in 2023/24 to 58 in 2024/25 (-17.1%). The UK had an overall decrease of 11.6% to 1,375.
	WMCA FDI New Jobs ¹⁷ (annual – update due Jun / Jul 2026)							6,082	2,758		WM 7 Met.: 5 th Highest ITL 2 / 31 Inner London - West: 15,526 (1 st) North Yorkshire: 249 (31 st)	The number of new jobs created decreased from 6,082 in 2023/24 to 2,758 in 2024/25 (-54.7%) in the West Midlands 7 Met. Area. The UK experienced an annual decrease of 3.0% (from 71,478 in 2023/24 to 69,355 in 2024/25).
	WMCA (7 Met.) Smoothed GVA per Hour ¹⁸ (Annual – update due Aug 2026)	£31.66	£32.36	£33.25	£34.27	£35.18	£35.72					WMCA: 4 th Lowest CA / 10 UK: £41.87 West of England: £42.01 (1 st) South Yorkshire: £33.77 (14 th)

¹⁶ Department for Business and Trade (DBT), inward investment results – released June 2025.

¹⁷ DBT, inward investment results – released June 2025.

¹⁸ ONS, regional and subregional labour productivity – released June 2025. In this publication ONS covered fourteen Combined Authorities: Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Liverpool City Region, Tees Valley, West Midlands, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, West of England, York & North Yorkshire, East Midlands, North East, Hull & East Yorkshire, Greater Lincolnshire and Lancashire.

WMCA ECONOMIC DASHBOARD – MAY 2026

Theme	Indicator	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary
	WMCA (7 Met.) Total GVA – Chained Volume Measures in 2022 Money Value ¹⁹ (Annual – update due Jul 2026)	£77.9bn	£77.0bn	£67.2bn	£73.6bn	£76.1bn	£76.9bn				WMCA: 2 nd Highest CA / 15 GMCA: £92.2bn (1 st) Hull & East Yorkshire (CER): £15.5bn (15 th)	The WMCA area total GVA increased from £76.1bn in 2022 to £76.9bn in 2023. This equated to a 1.0% (+£774m) annual increase which was above the UK growth rate of 0.3%.
Economy	WMCA (7 Met.) Exports in Services ²⁰ (Annual – update TBC 2026)	£8.3bn	£8.7bn	£7.8bn	£8.0bn	£9.2bn	£11.0bn				WMCA.: 4 ^h Highest / 8 Greater London Authority - Inner London: £184.8bn (1 st) North of Tyne: £3.8bn (8 th)	Since the year ending 2022, the WMCA's total value in service exports increased by £1.8bn (+19.3%) to £11.0bn in 2023. The overall value of UK trade in service exports increased, by 13.9% (to £417.6bn) in 2023. The WMCA had a trade surplus of £7.0bn in 2023.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Imports in Services ²¹ (Annual – update TBC 2026)	£3.6bn	£3.7bn	£3.9bn	£3.4bn	£3.6bn	£4.1bn				WMCA: 5 th Lowest / 10 Greater London Authority - Inner London: £71.2bn (1 st) Tees Valley: £570m (10 th)	Since 2022, the value of WMCA imports increased by £494m (+13.6%) to £4.1bn in 2023. UK-wide total imports increased by 16.2% to £292.1bn.

¹⁹ ONS, Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, UK: 1998 to 2023 – released April 2025. This recently updated indicator now has a peer group which covers fifteen currently agreed combined authorities, twelve of which match ITL2 subregions, and the other three are included as city and enterprise regions (CER). The peer group includes Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, Devon & Torbay (CER), East Midlands, Greater Lincolnshire (CER), Greater Manchester, Hull & East Yorkshire (CER), Lancashire, Liverpool City Region, North East, South Yorkshire, Tees Valley, West Midlands, West of England, West Yorkshire and York & North Yorkshire.

²⁰ ONS, International trade in UK nations, regions and cities: 2023 – released August 2025. Peer Group Combined Authorities are – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Greater Manchester, Greater London Authority – Inner and Outer, Liverpool City Region, North of Tyne, South Yorkshire, Tees Valley, West Midlands, West Yorkshire and West of England. However, no data is available for Tees Valley, South Yorkshire and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough CA

²¹ ONS, International trade in UK nations, regions and cities: 2023 – released August 2025. Combined Authorities are – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Greater Manchester, Greater London Authority – Inner and Outer, Liverpool City Region, North of Tyne, South Yorkshire, Tees Valley, West Midlands, West Yorkshire and West of England. However, no data is available for Liverpool City Region.

WMCA ECONOMIC DASHBOARD – MAY 2026

Monthly People Dashboard

Theme	Indicator	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary										
People	WMCA (7 Met.) Claimants (16+) ²² (monthly update)	146,120 (7.6% of Pop. aged 16-64)	144,750 (7.5% of Pop. aged 16-64)	145,170 (7.5% of Pop. aged 16-64)	142,280 (7.4% of Pop. aged 16-64)	141,890 (7.4% of Pop. aged 16-64)	141,350 (7.3% of Pop. aged 16-64)	140,760 (7.3% of Pop. aged 16-64)	139,605 (7.2% of Pop. aged 16-64)	138,270 (7.2% of Pop. aged 16-64)	137,525 (7.1% of Pop. aged 16-64)	140,975 (7.3% of Pop. aged 16-64)	141,845 (7.4% of Pop. aged 16-64) Revised	143,080 (7.4% of Pop. aged 16-64) Provisional	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Apr 2022</th><th>Apr 2023</th><th>Apr 2024</th><th>Apr 2025</th><th>Apr 2026</th></tr> <tr><td>127,785</td><td>127,325</td><td>125,435</td><td>146,120</td><td>143,080 p</td></tr> </table>	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	127,785	127,325	125,435	146,120	143,080 p	Provisional WMCA: Highest CA Eng.: 4.1% West Yorkshire: 5.0% (2 nd) York & North Yorkshire: 2.0% (15 th)	Provisional estimates show there were 143,080 claimants in the WMCA area in April 2026. Since March 2026, there has been an increase of 0.9% (+1,235) claimants in the WMCA area, England also increased by 0.9%. When compared to April 2025 claimants have decreased by 2.1% (-3,040) in the WMCA area, with England decreasing by 0.1%.
	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026																						
	127,785	127,325	125,435	146,120	143,080 p																						
	WMCA (7 Met.) Youth Claimants (18-24) ²³ (monthly update)	27,340 (8.9% of Pop. aged 18-24)	27,045 (8.8% of Pop. aged 18-24)	27,265 (8.9% of Pop. aged 18-24)	27,540 (8.9% of Pop. aged 18-24)	28,425 (9.2% of Pop. aged 18-24)	28,425 (9.2% of Pop. aged 18-24)	28,835 (9.4% of Pop. aged 18-24)	29,245 (9.5% of Pop. aged 18-24)	29,080 (9.4% of Pop. aged 18-24)	28,665 (9.3% of Pop. aged 18-24)	29,205 (9.5% of Pop. aged 18-24)	29,480 (9.6% of Pop. aged 18-24) Revised	29,730 (9.7% of Pop. aged 18-24) Provisional	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Apr 2022</th><th>Apr 2023</th><th>Apr 2024</th><th>Apr 2025</th><th>Apr 2026</th></tr> <tr><td>21,530</td><td>22,945</td><td>24,745</td><td>27,340</td><td>29,730 p</td></tr> </table>	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	21,530	22,945	24,745	27,340	29,730 p	Provisional WMCA: Highest CA Eng: 5.9% Tees Valley: 7.9% (2 nd) York & North Yorkshire: 2.8% (15 th)	Provisional estimates show there were 29,730 youth claimants in the WMCA area in April 2026. Since March 2026, there has been an increase of 0.8% (+250) youth claimants in the WMCA area, England-wide youth claimants increased by 0.7%. When compared to April 2025, youth claimants have increased by 8.7% (+2,390) in the WMCA area, with England also increasing by 9.3%.
Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026																							
21,530	22,945	24,745	27,340	29,730 p																							
WM 7 Met. Seasonally Adjusted Payrolled Employees ²⁴ (monthly update)	1,258,453	1,257,428	1,256,775	1,257,114	1,258,451	1,257,643	1,257,055	1,257,094	1,255,526	1,254,479	1,253,486	1,251,753	1,244,737	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Apr 2022</th><th>Apr 2023</th><th>Apr 2024</th><th>Apr 2025</th><th>Apr 2026</th></tr> <tr><td>1,200,391</td><td>1,229,949</td><td>1,257,827</td><td>1,258,453</td><td>1,244,737</td></tr> </table>	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	1,200,391	1,229,949	1,257,827	1,258,453	1,244,737	WM 7 Met.: 3 rd Highest NUTS 2 / 41 Surrey, East & West Sussex: 1,305,239 (1 st) Highlands & Islands: 207,383 (41 st)	The latest (provisional) figures show for the WM 7 Met. Area, there was a monthly decrease of 0.6%, while the UK decreased by 0.3%. There were over 1.24m payrolled employees in the WM 7 Met. area in April 2026. When compared to April 2025 there were 13,716 fewer payrolled employees (-1.1%) for the WM 7 Met. Area while the UK decreased by 0.7%.	
Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026																							
1,200,391	1,229,949	1,257,827	1,258,453	1,244,737																							
WMCA (7 Met.) Employment Rate ²⁵ (quarterly – update due Jul 2026)			70.1% (Year Ending Jun 2025)			70.6% (Year Ending Sep 2025)				69.2% (Full Year 2025)					WMCA: Lowest CA / 15 UK: 75.5% Devon & Torbay: 79.7% (1 st) Tees Valley: 69.9% (14 th)	The WMCA area employment rate was 69.2% in 2025, this was a decrease of 0.3pp since 2024. While the UK employment rate increased by 0.2pp.											

²² ONS/DWP, claimant count – released May 2026.
²³ ONS/DWP, claimant count – released May 2026.
²⁴ ONS, Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information – released May 2026.
²⁵ ONS, Annual Population Survey – released April 2026. Please note, figures are not comparable across the dashboard.

WMCA ECONOMIC DASHBOARD – MAY 2026

Theme	Indicator	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary									
People	WMCA (7 Met.) Economic Inactivity Rate ²⁶ (quarterly – update due Jul 2026)			24.9% (Year Ending Jun 2025)			23.8% (Year Ending Sep 2025)			25.1% (Full Year 2025)						WMCA: 3 rd Highest CA UK: 20.9% Tees Valley: 25.9% (1 st) West of England: 16.8% (15 th)	The WMCA area economic inactivity rate was 25.1% in 2025, a decrease of 0.6pp since 2024. The UK economic inactivity rate decreased by 0.8pp to 20.9%.									
	WMCA (7 Met.) Unemployment Rate ²⁷ (quarterly – update due Jul 2026)			6.7% (Year Ending Jun 2025)			7.3% (Year Ending Sep 2025)			7.6% (Full Year 2025)						WMCA: Highest CA UK: 4.5% West Yorkshire: 5.7% (2 nd) York & North Yorkshire: 1.7% (15 th)	Since 2024, the WMCA area unemployment rate has increased by 1.1pp to 7.6% in 2025. The UK unemployment rate increased by 0.6pp to 4.5% in 2025.									
	WMCA (7 Met.) Economic Activity Rate ²⁸ (quarterly – update due Jul 2026)			75.1% (Year Ending Jun 2025)			76.2% (Year Ending Sep 2025)			74.9% (Full Year 2025)						WMCA: 3 rd Lowest CA UK: 79.1% West of England: 83.2% (1 st) Tees Valley: 74.1% (15 th)	Overall, for the WMCA area, the economic activity rate was 74.9% in 2025, an increase of 0.6pp since 2024. The UK economic activity rate was 79.1% and increased by 0.8pp.									
	WMCA (7 Met.) Adzuna Job Postings ²⁹ (monthly update)	47,268	45,715	48,285	55,783	44,290	44,196	58,427	45,055	37,090	39,207	45,014	42,716	46,084	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Apr 2022</th> <th>Apr 2023</th> <th>Apr 2024</th> <th>Apr 2025</th> <th>Apr 2026</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>97,665</td> <td>69,784</td> <td>53,676</td> <td>47,268</td> <td>46,084</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	97,665	69,784	53,676	47,268	46,084	-
Apr 2022	Apr 2023	Apr 2024	Apr 2025	Apr 2026																						
97,665	69,784	53,676	47,268	46,084																						

²⁶ ONS, Annual Population Survey – released April 2026. Please note, figures are not comparable across the dashboard.

²⁷ ONS, Annual Population Survey – released April 2026. Please note, figures are not comparable across the dashboard.

²⁸ ONS, Annual Population Survey – released April 2026. Please note, figures are not comparable across the dashboard.

²⁹ Adzuna Intelligence – accessed May 2026.

Annual People Dashboard

Theme	Indicator	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary
People	WMCA (7 Met.) Not In Education, Employment or Training (NEET) ³⁰ (annual – update Jul 2026)	7.1%	6.7%	5.8%	6.0%	5.2%	4.8%	5.6%	6.6%		England: 5.6%	In 2025, in the WMCA area, 6.6% of residents aged 16-17 years old were NEET (including not known). This has increased by 1.0pp in the WMCA area, while for the UK there was an increase of 0.2pp since 2024.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Working Age Population with No Qualifications ³¹ (annual – update due Apr 2027)					10.6%	9.0%	10.6%	9.5%		WMCA: 2 nd Highest CA / 15 UK: 6.4% North East: 10.2% (1 st) West of England: 3.3% (15 th)	For the WMCA area, 9.5% (172,100) of the working age population had no formal qualifications in 2025, a decrease of 10.8% (-20,900) since 2024. While for the UK, 6.4% had no qualifications, an annual decrease of 7.4%. To match the UK proportion, 56,125 residents in the WMCA area would need to gain a qualification.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Working Age Population with RQF4+ Qualifications ³² (annual – update due Apr 2027)					37.8%	41.6%	41.9%	42.8%		WMCA: 8 th (middle) CA / 15 UK: 48.4% West of England: 54.8% (1 st) Greater Lincolnshire: 34.2% (15 th)	For the WMCA area, 42.8% (778,900) of the working age population had RQF4+ qualifications in 2025, an increase of 2.5% (+18,800) since 2024. While for the UK, 48.4% were qualified to RQF4+ levels, an annual increase of 3.5%. There was a shortfall in the WMCA area (to reach the national average) of 101,469 people.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Average Life Satisfaction Score ³³ (annual – update TBC)	7.51 (Year Ending Mar 2018)	7.56 (Year Ending Mar 2019)	7.56 (Year Ending Mar 2020)	7.38 (Year Ending Mar 2021)	7.44 (Year Ending Mar 2022)	7.38 (Year Ending Mar 2023)					WMCA: Joint 4 th Highest CA (with Sheffield City Region) UK: 7.45 North of Tyne: 7.56 (1 st) Liverpool City Region: 7.30 (10 th)

³⁰ Department for Education, Participation in education, training and NEET age 16 to 17 by local authority – released July 2025. Participation estimates are based on data collected in March each year. In order to ensure the most robust estimates of NEET and not known rates an average of December/January/February data is used for an estimate around the end of the calendar year.

³¹ ONS, Annual Population Survey – released April 2026. Please note, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) estimates have been replaced with estimates on a Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) basis. RQF based estimates are available from the Jan - Dec 2022 survey period, while estimates prior to Jan - Dec 2022 remain on an NVQ basis.

³² ONS, Annual Population Survey – released April 2026. Please note, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) estimates have been replaced with estimates on a Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) basis. RQF based estimates are available from the Jan - Dec 2022 survey period, while estimates prior to Jan - Dec 2022 remain on an NVQ basis.

³³ ONS, Annual personal well-being estimates – released November 2023. Respondents were asked "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? Where 0 is 'not at all satisfied' and 10 is 'completely satisfied'"

WMCA ECONOMIC DASHBOARD – MAY 2026

Theme	Indicator	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Trend	Relative to Peer Group	Commentary
People	WMCA (7 Met.) Average Worthwhile Score ³⁴ (annual – update TBC)	7.71 (Year Ending Mar 2018)	7.71 (Year Ending Mar 2019)	7.70 (Year Ending Mar 2020)	7.70 (Year Ending Mar 2021)	7.71 (Year Ending Mar 2022)	7.73 (Year Ending Mar 2023)				WMCA: 3 rd Highest CA UK: 7.73 North of Tyne: 7.75 (1 st) West of England: 7.61 (10 th)	For the year ending March 2023, the average worthwhile score for the WMCA area was 7.73 (out of 10), now matching the UK-wide average. Since the year ending March 2022, there was an increase of 0.02 for the WMCA area compared to a decrease 0.04 UK-wide.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Average Happiness Score ³⁵ (annual – update TBC)	7.39 (Year Ending Mar 2018)	7.40 (Year Ending Mar 2019)	7.35 (Year Ending Mar 2020)	7.24 (Year Ending Mar 2021)	7.38 (Year Ending Mar 2022)	7.43 (Year Ending Mar 2023)				WMCA: 2 nd Highest CA UK: 7.39 North of Tyne: 7.44 (1 st) West Yorkshire: 7.20 (10 th)	For the year ending March 2023, the average happiness score for the WMCA area was 7.43 (out of 10), above the UK-wide average of 7.39. Since the year ending March 2022, there was an increase of 0.05 for the WMCA area compared to a decrease 0.06 UK-wide.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Average Anxiety Score ³⁶ (annual – update TBC)	2.71 (Year Ending Mar 2018)	2.74 (Year Ending Mar 2019)	2.89 (Year Ending Mar 2020)	3.30 (Year Ending Mar 2021)	3.12 (Year Ending Mar 2022)	3.15 (Year Ending Mar 2023)				WMCA: 3 rd Lowest CA UK: 3.23 Greater Manchester: 3.40 (1 st) North of Tyne: 3.03 (10 th)	For the year ending March 2023, the average anxiety score for the WMCA area was 3.15 (out of 10), below the UK average. Since the year ending March 2022, there was an increase of 0.03 for the WMCA area compared to an increase 0.11 UK-wide.
	WMCA (7 Met.) Living Wage Foundation Rates (All) ³⁷ (annual – update due TBC 2025)	23.5%	20.8%	20.1%	19.0%	13.0%	14.5%	17.6%				UK: 15.7%

³⁴ ONS, Annual personal well-being estimates – released November 2023. Respondents were asked "Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile? Where 0 is 'not at all worthwhile' and 10 is 'completely worthwhile'".

³⁵ ONS, Annual personal well-being estimates – released November 2023. Respondents were asked "Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? Where 0 is 'not at all happy' and 10 is 'completely happy'".

³⁶ ONS, Annual personal well-being estimates – released November 2023. Respondents were asked "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday? Where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious'".

³⁷ ONS, Number and proportion of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage – released November 2024