

South East Labour Market Update Headlines – March 2011

The **claimant count unemployment¹ in February 2011 was 129,600**. The claimant count was **600 lower than in January 2011** and 22,400 lower than a year ago. The claimant count in the United Kingdom decreased by 10,200 between January 2011 and February 2011 to 1.45 million.

Using the broader measure of unemployment (the Labour Force Survey measure), in the three months to January 2011 there were **282,000 unemployed people in the region – about 6,000 more than in the previous three months**. The North West (down 16,000), East of England (down 16,000) and Scotland (down 16,000) saw the largest fall in unemployment. London (up 16,000) and the South West (up 16,000) saw the greatest increase in unemployment. **In the UK the total number of people out of work increased by 27,000 to 2.53 million**.

- There were **157,000 men out of work in the region – down 1,000 on the previous three months. Female unemployment increased by 7,000** in the three months to January 2011, to 125,000.

In the three months to January the average **unemployment rate was 6.3%, which alongside the South West (6.3%) and East of England (6.2%) was the lowest of any region**. The unemployment rate increased by 0.1 percentage points over the previous three months.

The **number of people in employment in the region increased by 21,000 to 4.195 million over the previous three months**. Two regions saw larger rises in employment over the previous three months than the South East; East of England up 27,000 and East Midlands up 22,000. Other regions to report a rise in employment were North West (up 15,000), Yorkshire and Humber (up 8,000), London (up 9,000), Scotland (up 8,000) and Wales (up 2,000). Several regions saw a fall in employment over the previous three months; West Midlands down 38,000, South West down 27,000 and North East down 15,000. In the UK as a whole, employment increased by 32,000.

- **Women's employment increased by 14,000 and men's increases by 8,000 during the three months to January 2011.**

The **employment rate was 75%** in the three months to January – no change on the previous quarter, remaining the highest of any region.

The **number of economically active people increased by 27,000 in the three months to January**.

- **Men's economic activity increased by 7,000 and women's increased by 21,000** in the three months to January 2011.

In the three months to December, the **economic activity rate increased by 0.1 percentage points, to 80.2 per cent**, remaining the highest in the country.

The number of **economically inactive people decreased by 4,000** during the three months to January. The rate of economic inactivity was 19.8% (down by 0.1 percentage points), the lowest in the country.

¹ The non seasonally adjusted claimant count in the South East was 139,851 in February, an increase of 4,592 compared to January 2011. In the UK, the non seasonally adjusted claimant count increased by 33,119 to 1.538 million.