Economy Module

JSA Claimant Count – April 2012 data (released 16/5/12)

SOUTH WEST **OBSERVATORY**

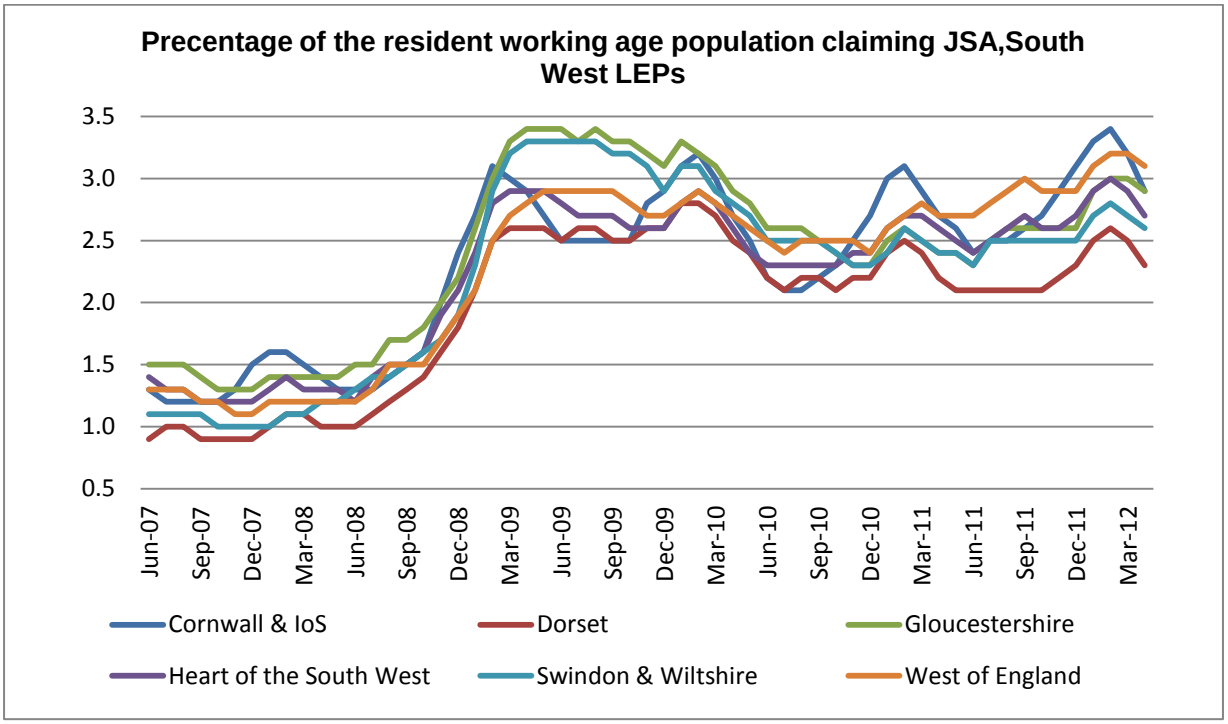
Claimant Count Data Alert – April 2012

Headlines:

- Total rate of claimants reduces for second month running, for all LEP areas in the South West;
- Rates of young people (16 – 24) unemployed also reduce;
- Numbers of long term unemployed still rising.

Total Claimants

Figure 1: LEP Claimant Count: Jun 07 – Apr 12



Rates of the working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) appeared relatively stable between May and December 2011, before rising again between December 2011 and February 2012. The past two months have seen a reduction in rates of JSA claimants across all LEP areas and collectively the LEPs continue to follow a similar 'shape' in terms of their claimant count rate – albeit at different levels.

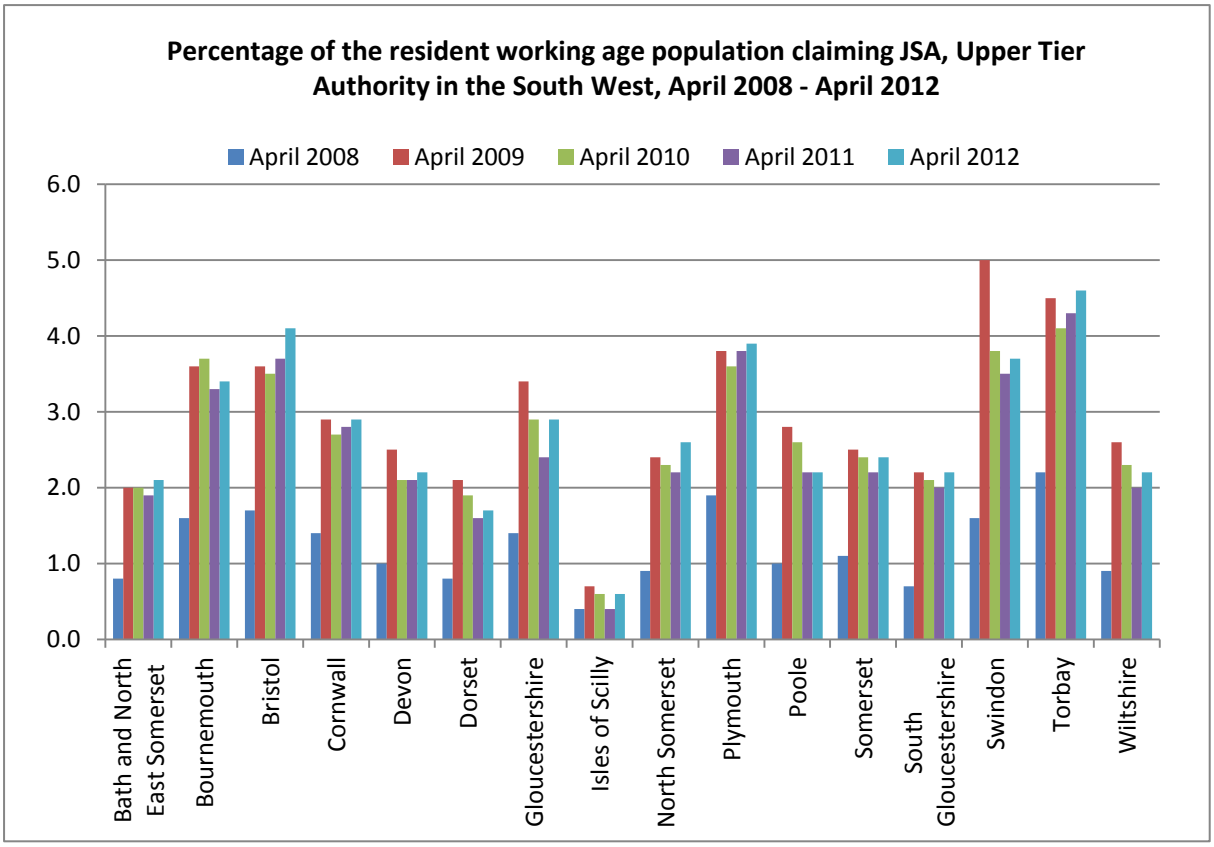
Nationally this figure has also decreased – the average proportion of claimants in England in April 2012 is 3.9%.

Rates still remain slightly higher than they were one year ago (April 2011; see Figure 2), for all areas. This largely reflects the weakness in the economy, particularly around the Christmas trading period.

Figure 2: LEP Claimant count: Summary

Geography	April 2011		March 2012		April 2012	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	9,058	2.7	10,705	3.2	9,631	2.9
Dorset	9,361	2.2	10,641	2.5	9,689	2.3
Gloucestershire	9,044	2.4	11,020	3.0	10,680	2.9
Heart of SW	26,545	2.6	29,957	2.9	28,221	2.7
Swindon and Wiltshire	10,234	2.4	11,420	2.7	11,018	2.6
West of England	20,105	2.7	23,235	3.2	22,551	3.1
SOUTH WEST	84,347	2.5	96,978	2.9	91,790	2.8
ENGLAND	1,246,163	3.7	1,370,504	4.0	1,329,765	3.9

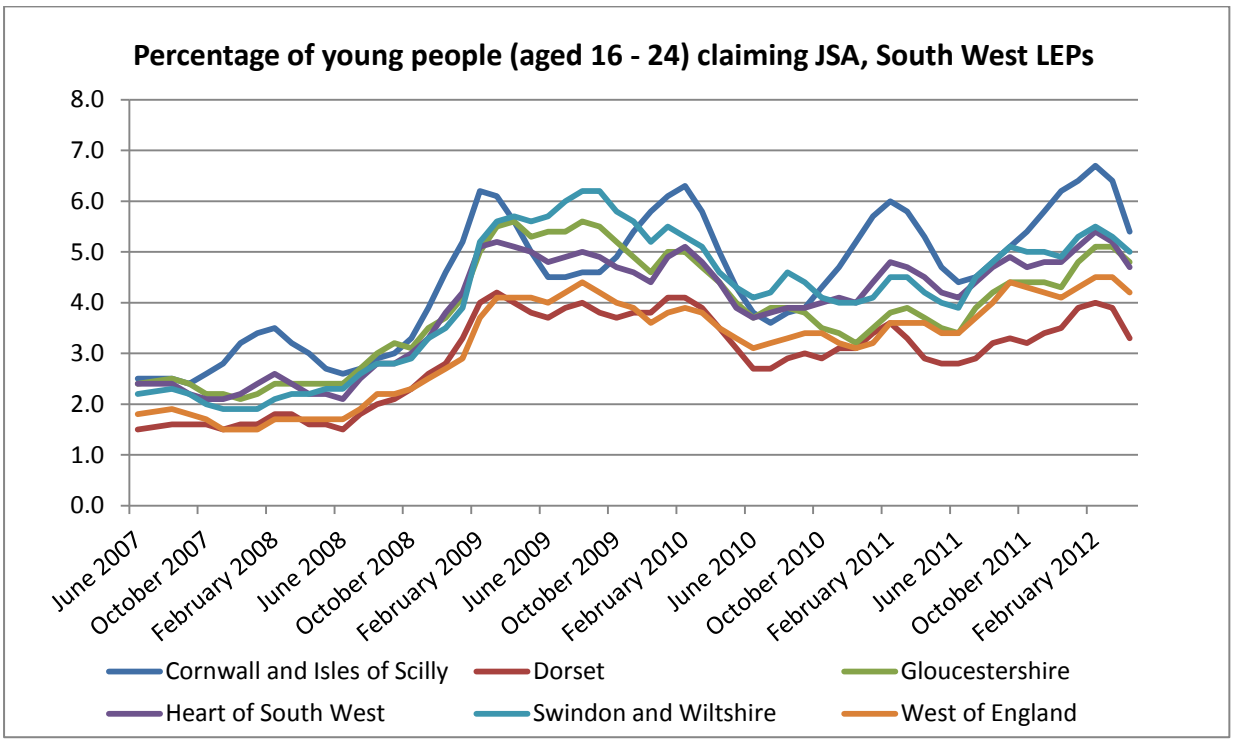
Figure 3: Upper Tier Authority Claimant Count – April 2008 – April 2012



Overall, claimant count rates have increased over the past year in all upper tier authority areas in the South West, with the exception of Poole, where 2.2% of the working age population were claiming JSA in both April 2012 and April 2011, having dropped from 2.6% in 2010.

Young Claimants

Figure 4: Youth unemployment: Jun 07 – April 12



Rates of young people (aged 16 – 24) claiming JSA show a similar pattern to that for overall claimants, with rates dropping in the most recent two months, but remaining slightly above those recorded in April 2011. Whilst the recent fall has been relatively small, the reversal of the increase that had been sustained throughout the previous 9 months is to be welcomed. The fall of the past two months has also helped the rates between the LEPs converge somewhat – again, reversing the divergence between rates that had occurred since the middle of 2011.

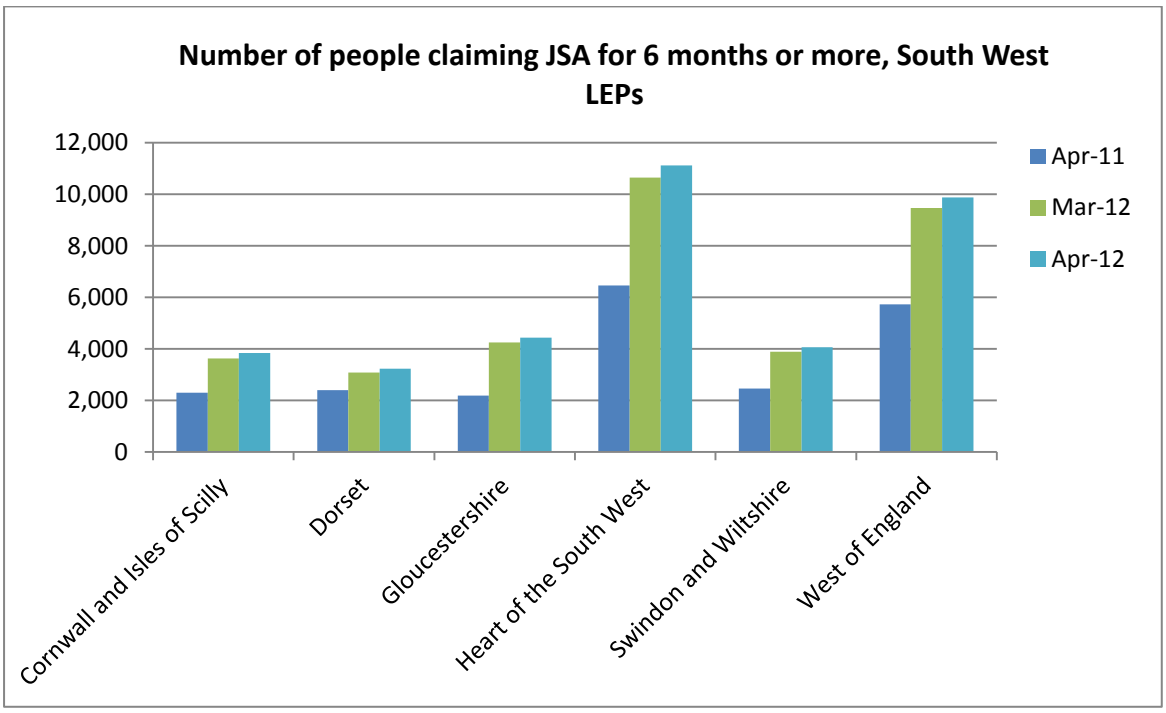
The highest rate in April 2012 is in Cornwall, at 5.4%. Swindon and Wiltshire and Gloucestershire have the second and third highest proportions of young claimants respectively, when compared with all LEPs in the region

Figure 5: Youth unemployment (aged 16 – 24): Summary

Geography	April 2011		March 2012		April 2012	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	2,960	5.3	3,610	6.4	3,025	5.4
Dorset	2,370	2.9	3,115	3.9	2,670	3.3
Gloucestershire	2,395	3.7	3,335	5.1	3,155	4.8
Heart of SW	8,530	4.5	9,945	5.2	9,010	4.7
Swindon and Wiltshire	2,850	4.2	3,595	5.3	3,385	5.0
West of England	5,560	3.6	6,980	4.5	6,510	4.2
SOUTH WEST	24,660	4.0	30,575	5.0	27,750	4.5
ENGLAND	350,980	5.6	408,580	6.5	384,980	6.2

Long term unemployed

Figure 6: Long term unemployment over past month and year



Whilst we have shown the recent reduction in the total number of claimants, as well as young claimants, the number claiming for 6 months or more has increased.

In Gloucestershire LEP, the number of working age population claiming for 6 months or more has doubled since April 2011. This is the largest proportional increase when compared with all LEPs in the South West. Cornwall and Isles of Scilly have seen the greatest proportional rise over the past month, of 6% - although the numbers do tend to fluctuate on a monthly basis.

Figure 7: Long term unemployment: Summary (Claiming for 6 months or more)

Geography	April 2011		March 2012		April 2012	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	2,295	0.7	3,625	1.1	3,840	1.2
Dorset	2,400	0.6	3,085	0.7	3,225	0.8
Gloucestershire	2,190	0.6	4,245	1.1	4,440	1.2
Heart of SW	6,460	0.6	10,655	1.0	11,120	1.1
Swindon and Wiltshire	2,460	0.6	3,885	0.9	4,060	1.0
West of England	5,730	0.8	9,465	1.3	9,875	1.3
SOUTH WEST	21,535	0.7	34,955	1.1	36,555	1.1
ENGLAND	403,025	1.2	591,485	1.7	609,030	1.8

In terms of longer-term unemployed, the number claiming for 2 years or more shows similar increases when compared to the previous month and year. The highest *proportional* increase has

occurred in Wiltshire and Swindon, which has seen an increase from 55 residents claiming for more than 2 years in April 2011, to 225 in April 2012.

Notes: *Working age population is defined here as aged 16 – 64.*

All data sourced from NOMISweb: http://www.nomisweb.co.uk.

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Contacts

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