



# **Briefing on the latest HMRC Official Statistics on the furlough support scheme**

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April 2021



# Background

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the government introduced two significant employment support schemes aimed at preventing large rises in unemployment and longer-term labour market scarring:

- [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) – for employees (PAYE)
- [Self-Employment Income Support Scheme](#) – for the self-employed

This briefing provides statistics and analysis of the latest Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) data for London.

Previous briefings and other labour market analysis can be found on our [COVID-19 labour market analysis page](#).



# Overview of the CJRS

## Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The CRJS provides grants to employers to 'furlough' eligible employees. This is to ensure that employers can retain and continue to pay staff, despite the effects of the pandemic.

Furlough levels largely rise and fall with changes in lockdown restrictions and changes to the scheme.

Since it was first introduced, in March 2020, there have been a number of extensions and adjustments to the CRJS. From 1 July 2020, for example, the furlough scheme was made more flexible so that furloughed employees could be brought back part-time. A full summary of previous announcements can be found [here](#).

## Budget 2021

On 3 March the government announced that the CJRS would be extended from 1 May to 30 September 2021:

- The CJRS will continue to cover 80% of an employee's wages until 30 June 2021.
- From 1 July the grant will cover 70% of wages and employers will be required to top up an additional 10%.
- From 1 August the grant will cover 60% of wages and employers will be required to top up 20%.



# Notes on the data

This briefing provides analysis of official statistics published by HMRC based on administrative data from CRJS claims. The latest data refers to **claims made up to 28<sup>th</sup> February**. The data used includes claims submitted to HMRC by 15 March 2021.

The data for February is not yet fully complete as while claims relating to February should have been filed by 15 March 2021, employers could file claims later with the agreement of HMRC if they had a reasonable excuse. Claims for February can also be amended until 29 March 2021.

Together these factors are likely to have a small effect on the statistics. HMRC provide a geographical breakdown of CJRS claims based on the residential address information that HMRC holds for employees. This does not directly translate to the employee's usual place of work or their employer's centre of operations, which may be in a different region.

- There are small, but not insignificant, proportions of 'unknowns' within the breakdowns. Differences in the proportion of unknown observations are due to the matching of CJRS claims to other HMRC data sources.
- Industrial breakdowns may not reflect the true operational activities of the individuals on furlough. It reflects the main operation of the employers' rather than the workers' activities.
- Earlier releases had provided cumulative totals for regions. All data reported here is of a snapshot at a given point in time.

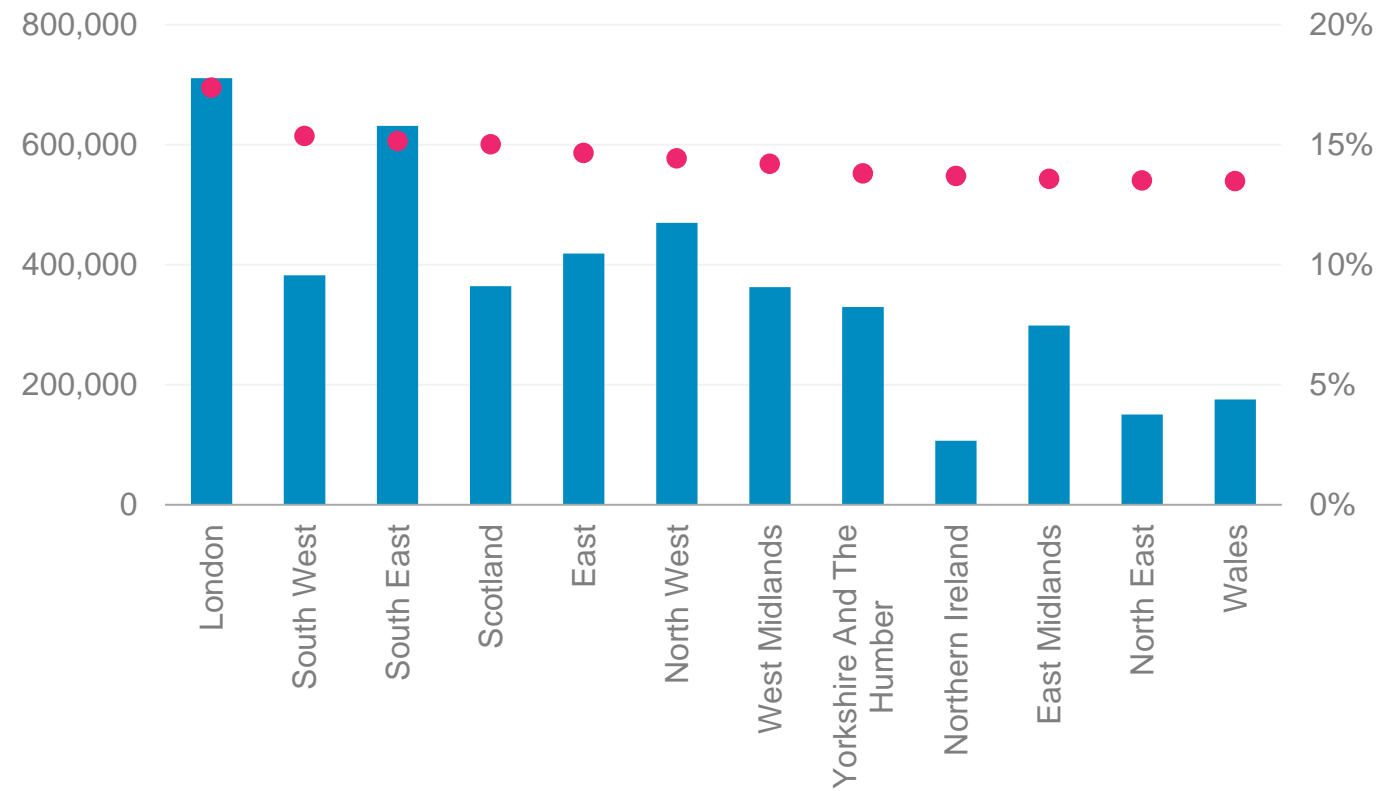
# There were rough 710,000 furloughed jobs in London by the end of February 2021, the highest in the country

As at 28 February 2021:

- Provisional data indicates there were at least 710,800 furloughed employments in London and 4.7 million across the UK as a whole.
- London had a total of roughly 4.1 million employments potentially eligible for furlough. With a take up rate of 17%, London remains the region/country with highest take up rate (15% across the UK).
- London had 349,900 females (17% take up) and 360,900 males (18% take up) on furlough.
- The male take up rate in London remains notably higher than in other regions/countries (all male take up rates between 13-15%).

On a cumulative basis, the total number of furlough claims submitted for London up to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 was 1.6 million.

**Furloughed employments (LHS) and take up rates (% , RHS)**  
by UK region/nation, as at 28 February 2021 (provisional)

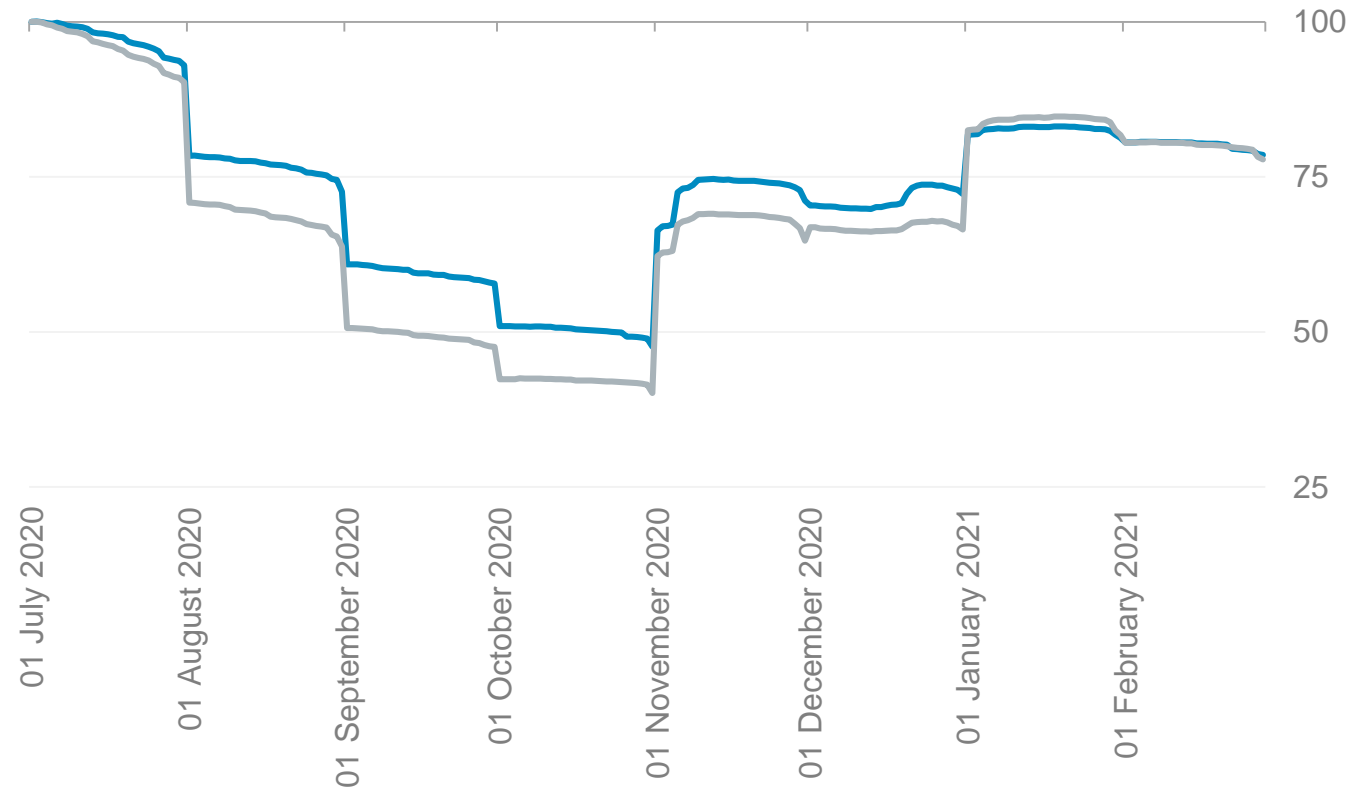


# The number of furloughed employments in London fell slightly over the course of February.

Across all UK regions and countries, the number of employments furloughed declined slightly between 31 January and 28 February 2021.

- Provisional data shows that London saw a decline in the number of furloughed employments of 29,400 or 4%.
- Furlough levels in London continue to follow national trends. The latest furlough levels in London were 21.5% below that seen at the start of July 2020, roughly in line with the UK which is 22.2% below levels at the start of July.
- Northern Ireland and Wales were regions/countries with the largest declines, at 9.2% and 6.9% respectively.

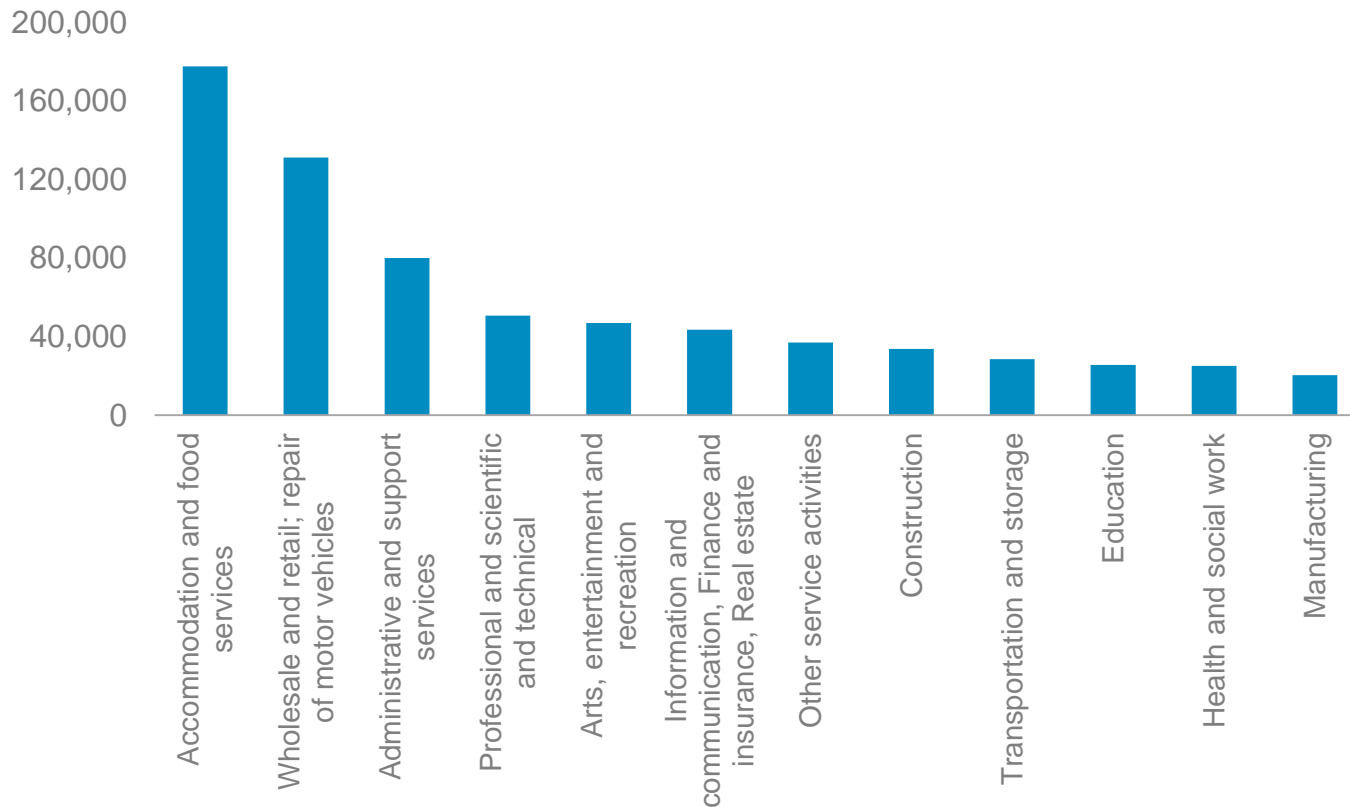
**Trend in furloughed employments for London and UK**  
Index, 100 = 1 July 2020, latest provisional data for 28 January 2021



*Note: data for February 2021 is provisional*

# Accommodation & food and Wholesale & retail remain the sectors with the highest number of furloughed jobs in London

**Furloughed employments in London by sector**  
as at 28 February 2021 (provisional)



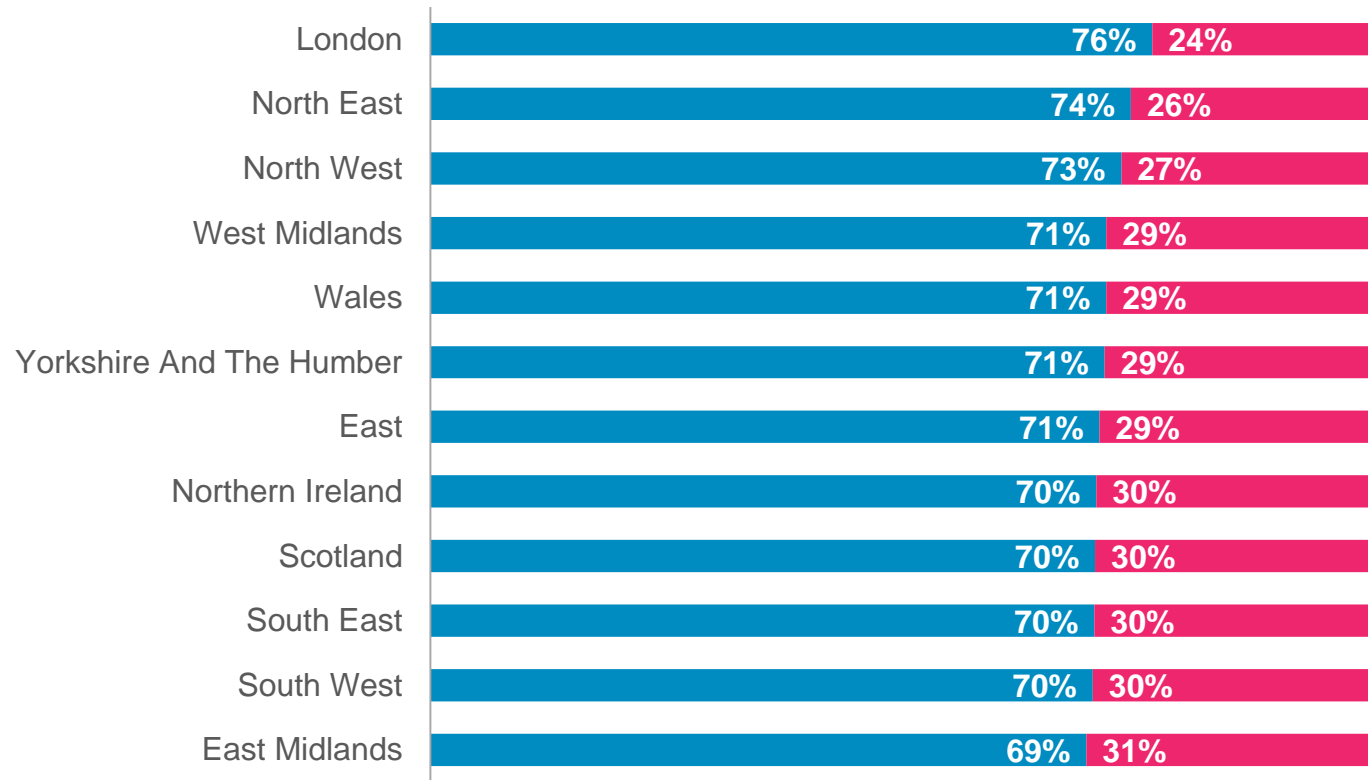
Only four sectors across London, had more than 50,000 furloughed employments:

- Accommodation and food services had the highest number of furloughed employments at the end of February 2021 (177,560).
- This was followed by Wholesale & retail (131,140) and Administrative & support services (80,010).
- Professional, scientific and technical activities had approximately 50,630 furloughed employments.

# 1 in 4 in the capital are on partially furloughed, with the partial furlough share virtually unchanged when compared with January.

## Full and partial furlough share by UK region/country

% of total furloughed employments, as at 28 February 2021 (provisional)



As at 28 February 2021 the full and partial furlough shares were virtually unchanged when compared with 31 January 2021.

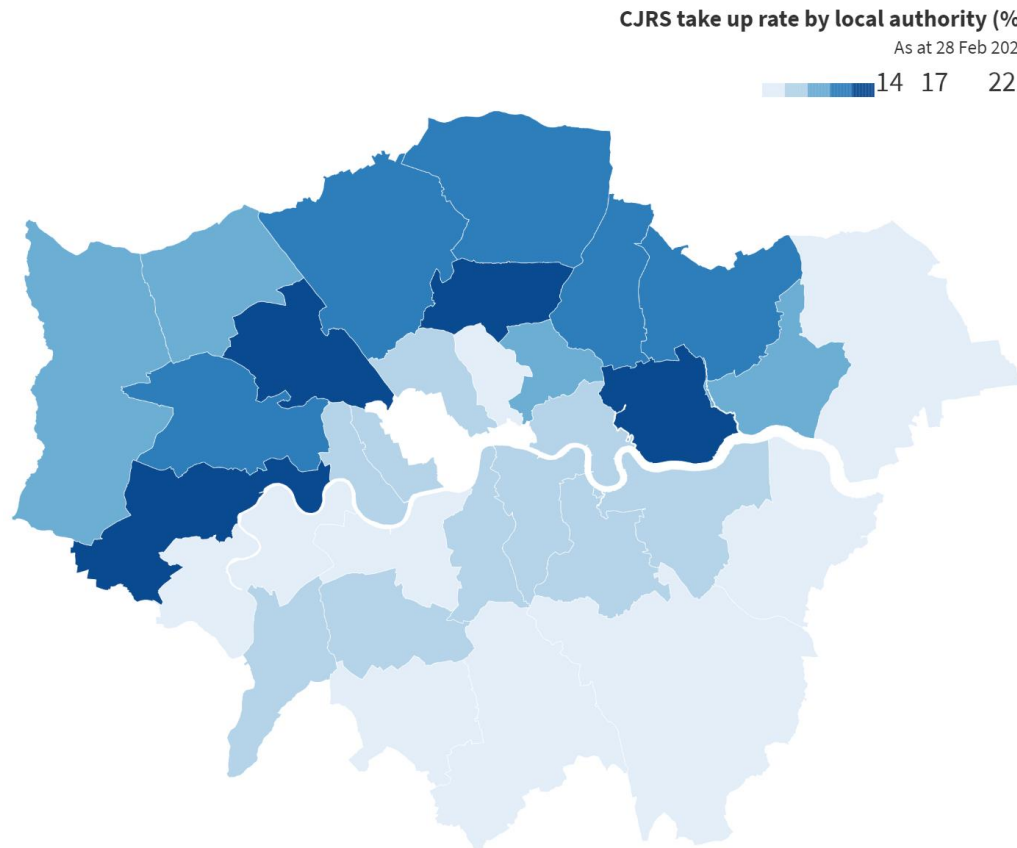
- Only 24% (169,600) furloughed jobs in London were on partial furlough – similar to 25% seen at the end of January.
- The capital continue to record the highest proportion on full furlough of any UK region/country, at 76% (541,200).
- Most regions/countries saw no or little change in their full furlough share with South West and Yorkshire and the Humber being the exceptions (3 and 4 percentage point increases respectively).
- All other regions/countries either saw no change or a change between 1-2 percentage points.



# According to the latest data Newham, Haringey and Brent have the highest furlough take up rates across London

## CJRS take up rates by local authority

As at 28 February 2021 (provisional)



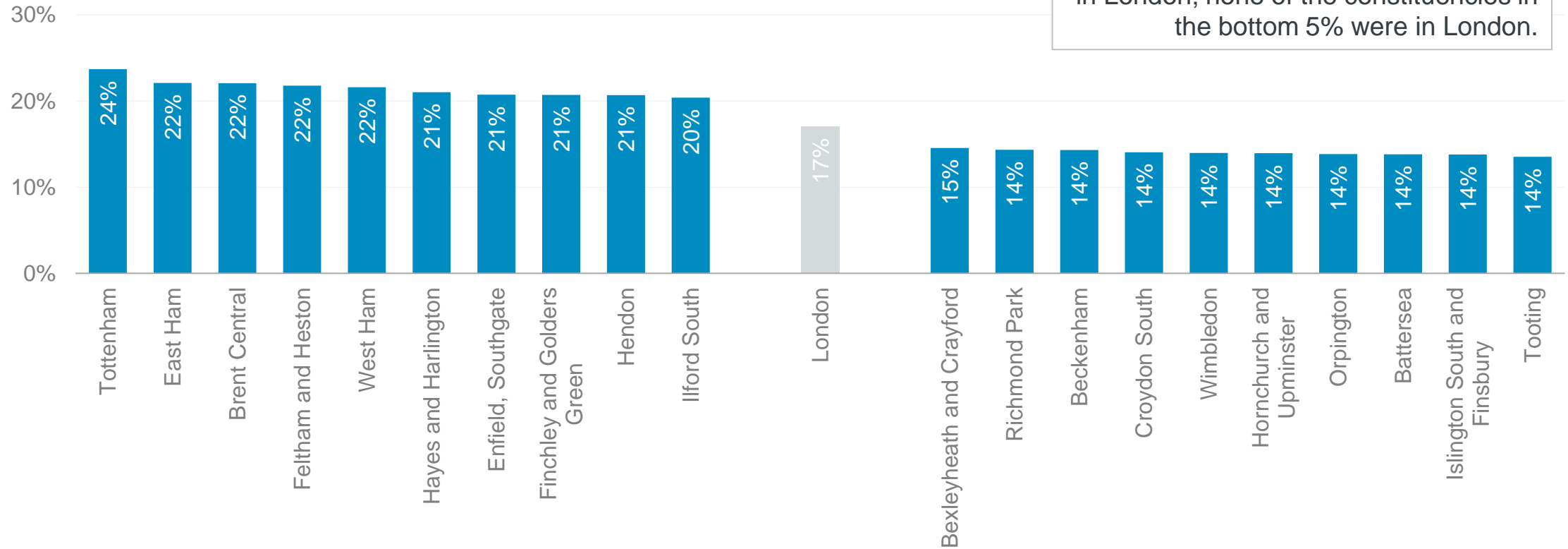
As at 28 February 2021:

- Newham had the highest take up rate (as a share of those eligible) across the capital of 22% (35,600 furloughed employments).
- This was followed by Brent and Haringey with 21% take up rates (23,500 and 27,900 furloughed employments).
- Richmond upon Thames had the lowest take up rate of 14% (12,300 furloughed employments), along with Wandsworth and Bromley which also have a take up rate of 14% (21,700 and 24,000 furloughed employments respectively).

# By parliamentary constituency, Tottenham had the highest take up rate in London, followed by East Ham and Brent Central

**Top and bottom 10 London furlough take up rates by parliamentary constituency**  
as at 28 February 2021 (provisional)

17 of the 33 UK constituency areas (top 5%) with the highest take up rates were in London; none of the constituencies in the bottom 5% were in London.



Note: seven other parliamentary constituencies in London had take up rates of 18% and 15 other areas had take up rates of 15%.



# Definitions

1. **Employer** is statistically defined as those on a Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Scheme. In some circumstances this does not map directly to what is commonly understood to be an employer. For example, some organisations operate multiple payrolls and in other situations, a group of companies may pool their payrolls together under one PAYE scheme. However, HMRC take the view that PAYE schemes provides a reasonable proxy for employers for the purposes of this release.
2. **Employment** is defined as a count of anyone who meets the scheme criteria set out within the published guidance and has claimed for CRJS. HMRC have applied this definition in order to simplify the complexities in separating out Office Holders (such as directors) from what are generally considered employees. However, these findings solely report on employees and the CJRS is to be considered separate from the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).
3. **Take up rates** are calculated as a proportion of all those who are eligible based on their PAYE tax returns information.

Note – if an employee has a job with more than one employer and has also been furloughed by more than one employer, they will be counted in these statistics once for each employment that has been furloughed.