



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

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## Summary of latest furlough data

- The latest figures for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme show that there were around 263,000 London staff on furlough on 31 August 2021.
  - This marks a decrease of 36,000 jobs or 12% from 31 July – the smallest proportionate decrease of any region or country (against a UK average of 17%).
  - At 7% of eligible employments, London also continued to have the highest furlough take-up rate of any region or country (against a UK average of 5%).
- By sector, around 1 in 5 of the employments on furlough in London were in the accommodation and food services sector on 31 August 2021. UK-level data for detailed sub-sectors also suggest that Passenger air transport and Travel agencies continued to have the highest take-up rates in the UK.
- Nine of the ten local authorities with the highest take-up rates at 31 August 2021 were in London, including: Barnet, Brent, Hounslow, Newham and Redbridge (all with 9% take-up rates).



# Overview of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)

This briefing provides analysis of claims for support in paying the wages of staff on furlough for periods **up to 31 August 2021**. The data used here comes from HM Revenue and Customs' CJRS claims and includes claims submitted by 14 September 2021.

Support for paying the wages of staff on furlough was available from the CJRS for periods up to 30 September 2021 when the scheme closed. Further statistics on the Scheme, including on furlough in September 2021, will be published in November.

Since it was first introduced, in March 2020, there were a number of extensions and adjustments made to the CJRS. In March, the government announced that the CJRS would be extended to 30 September 2021 while introducing a stepped increase in employers' contributions. Specifically:

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

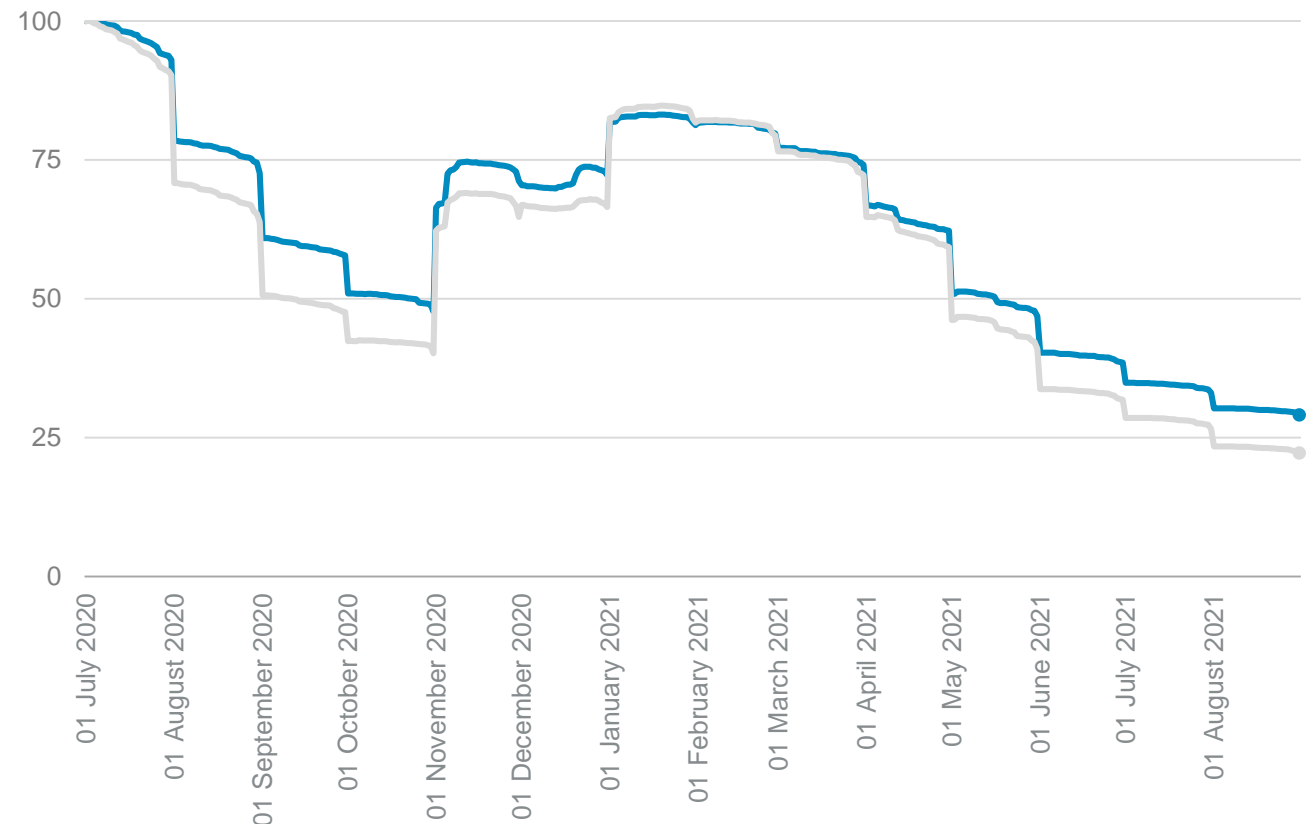
# Furlough rates in London and the UK maintained a steady decline in July and August while employer contributions increased

The furlough scheme closed on 30 September 2021 with employers contributing 10% of pay in July, rising to 20% in August and September. This is in addition to the National Insurance and auto-enrolled pension contributions they already made.

- Between 31 July and 31 August, the number of furloughed employments in London declined by 36,100, a fall of 12%.
- The decline in London was the smallest proportionate decrease of any UK region or country in August (the UK average was 17%).
- It was also a slower pace of decline than in July, when furloughed employments declined by 14% in London (against a UK average of 16%).

## Trend in furloughed employments for London and UK

Index, 100 = 1 July 2020, August 2021 data is provisional

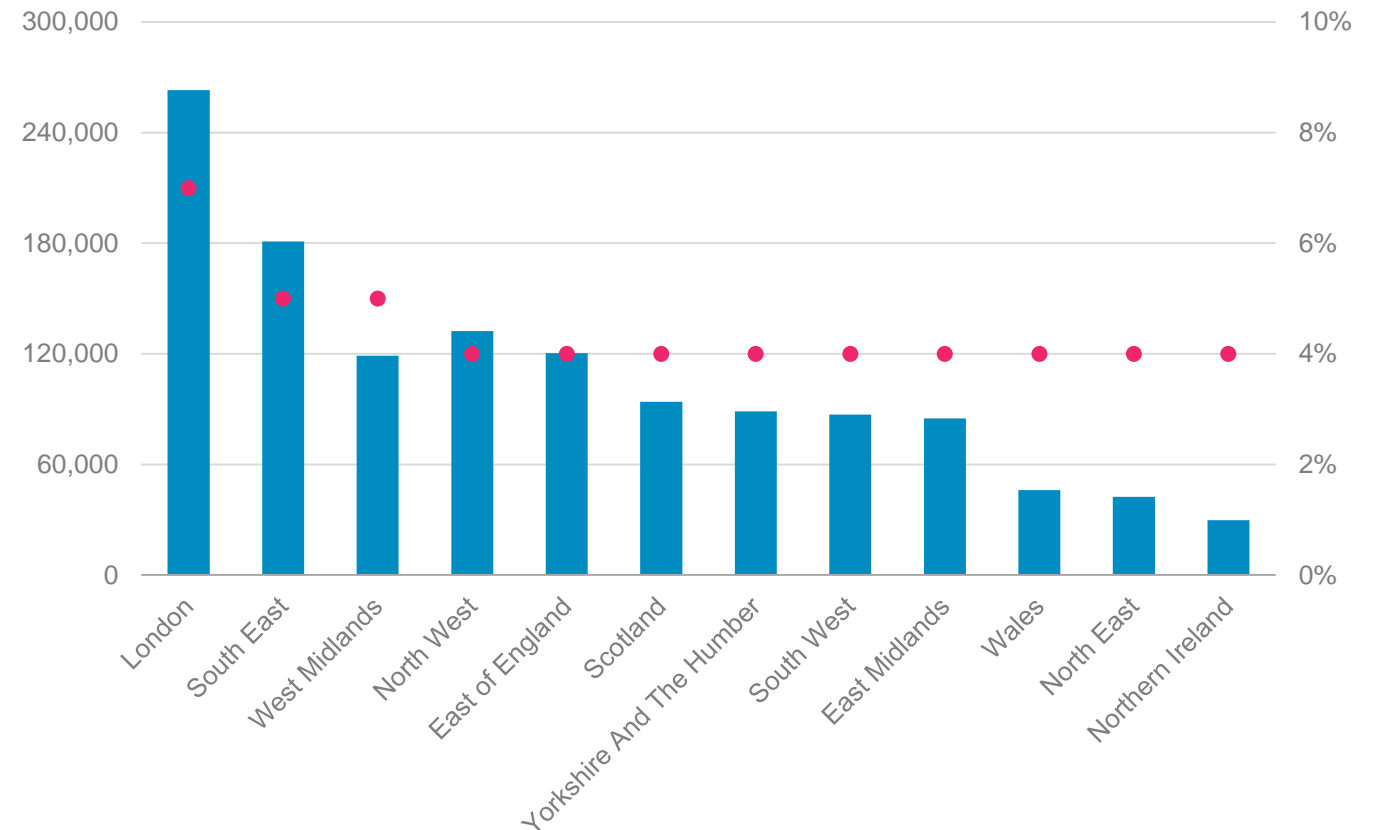


# The furlough take-up rate in London remained the highest in the UK

At 31 August 2021:

- The latest provisional data indicates there were around 263,000 employments on furlough in London, and 1.32 million across the UK as a whole.
- London continued to have a higher take-up rate (at 7%) than any other UK region or country, as rates were otherwise in the range of 4% to 5% (see chart).
- The take-up rate in the UK as a whole was 5%.

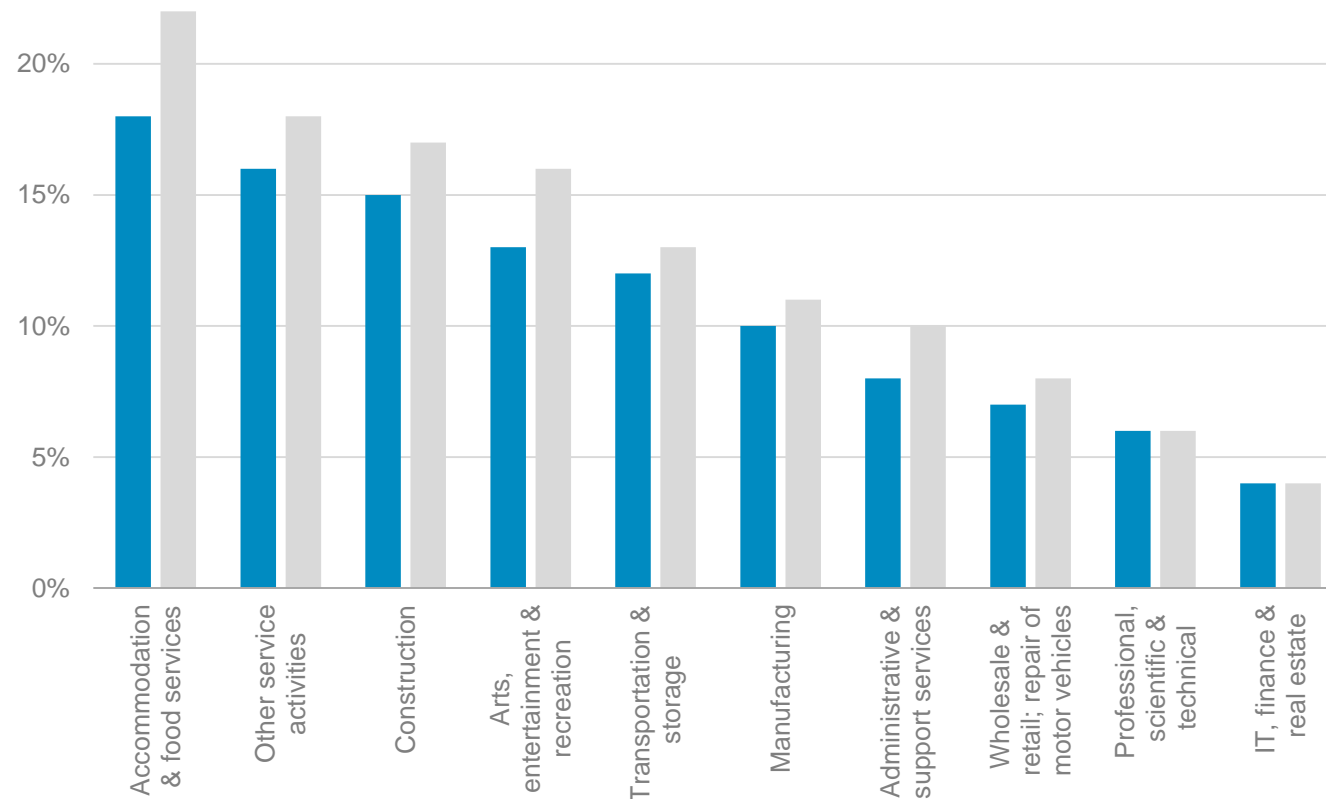
**Furloughed employments (LHS) and take-up rates (% , RHS)**  
by UK region/country, at 31 August 2021 (provisional)



# The accommodation & food sector continued to record the highest furlough take-up rate in London, though it also saw the largest decline in August

## Furlough take-up rates by selected sectors for London

July 2021 and August 2021 (August 2021 data is provisional)



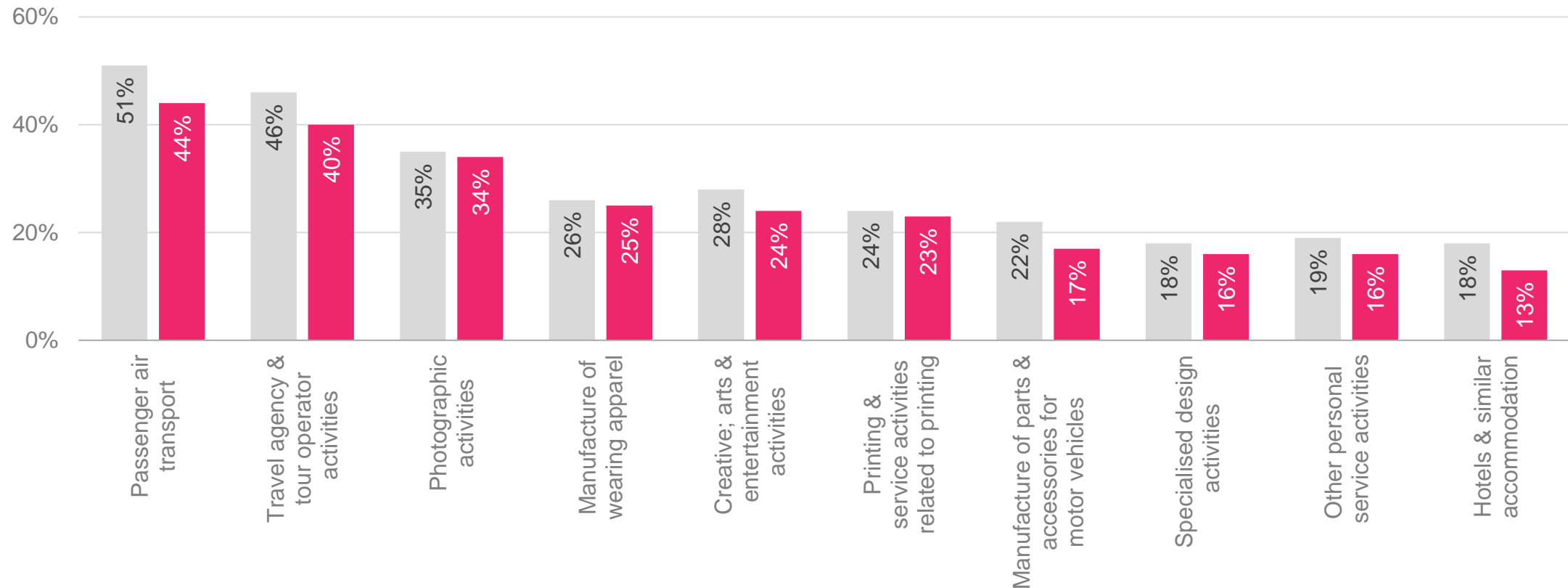
At 31 August 2021:

- Accommodation & food services continued to have the highest take-up rate by sector (18%), followed by Other service activities (16%) and Construction (15%). These three sectors also had the highest take-up rates in London in July.
- Accommodation & food services saw the largest decline in furlough take up on the previous month (down 4 percentage points (pp)), followed by Arts & entertainment (down 3pp, to 13%).
- Accommodation & food services also saw the highest number of employments on furlough at 50,300. This was followed by Wholesale & retail (35,800) and Admin & support services (33,000).

# Looking at UK-level data for detailed sub-sectors, Passenger air transport and Travel agencies continued to have the highest take-up rates in the UK

## Top 10 furlough rates by selected 3-digit sub-sectors for UK

July 2021 and August 2021 (August 2021 data is provisional), excludes sub-sectors with <4,000 furloughed employments

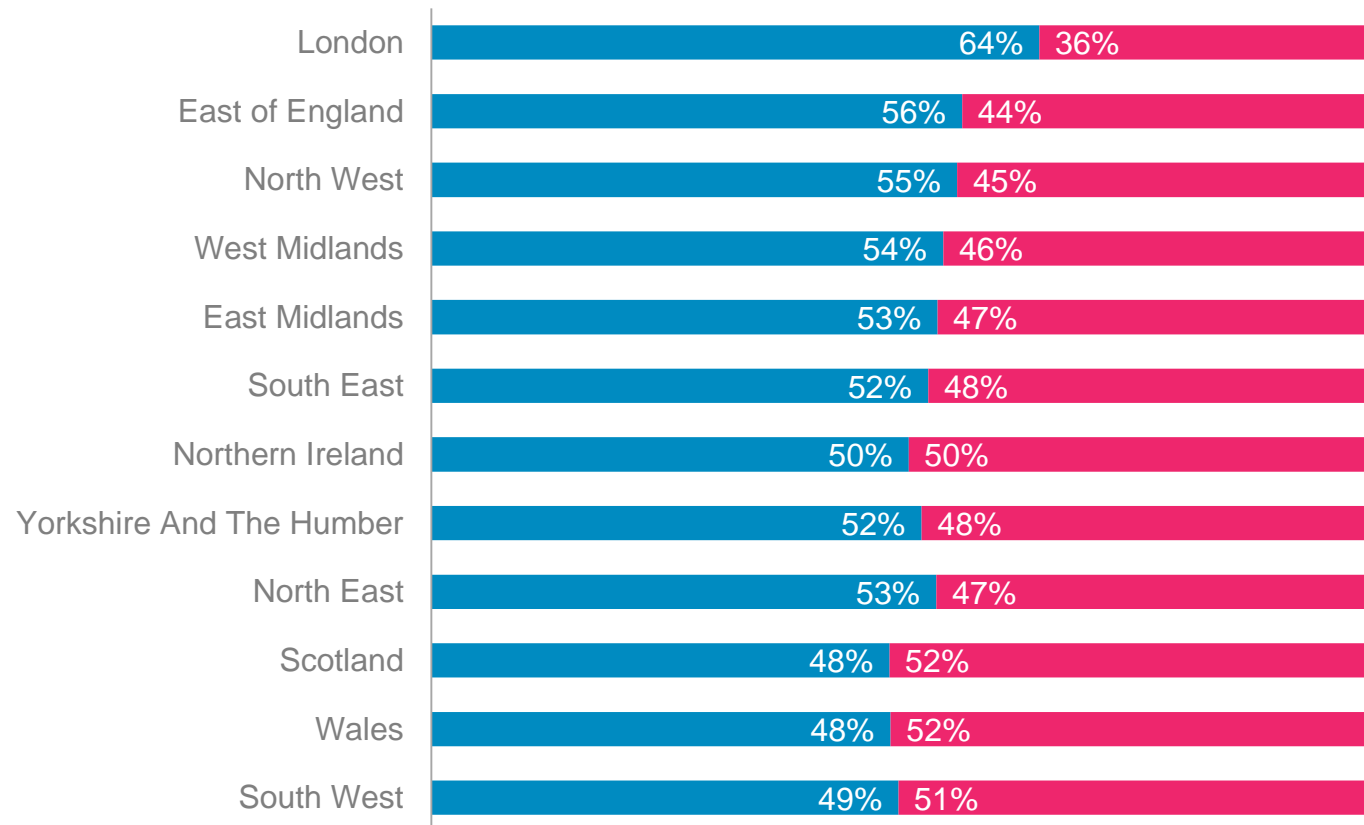


Note: 3-digit sub-sector breakdowns are not available at a London level

# The rate of employments on full furlough also remained high in London compared to other regions/countries

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

% of total furloughed employments, at 31 August 2021 (provisional)



At 31 August 2021:

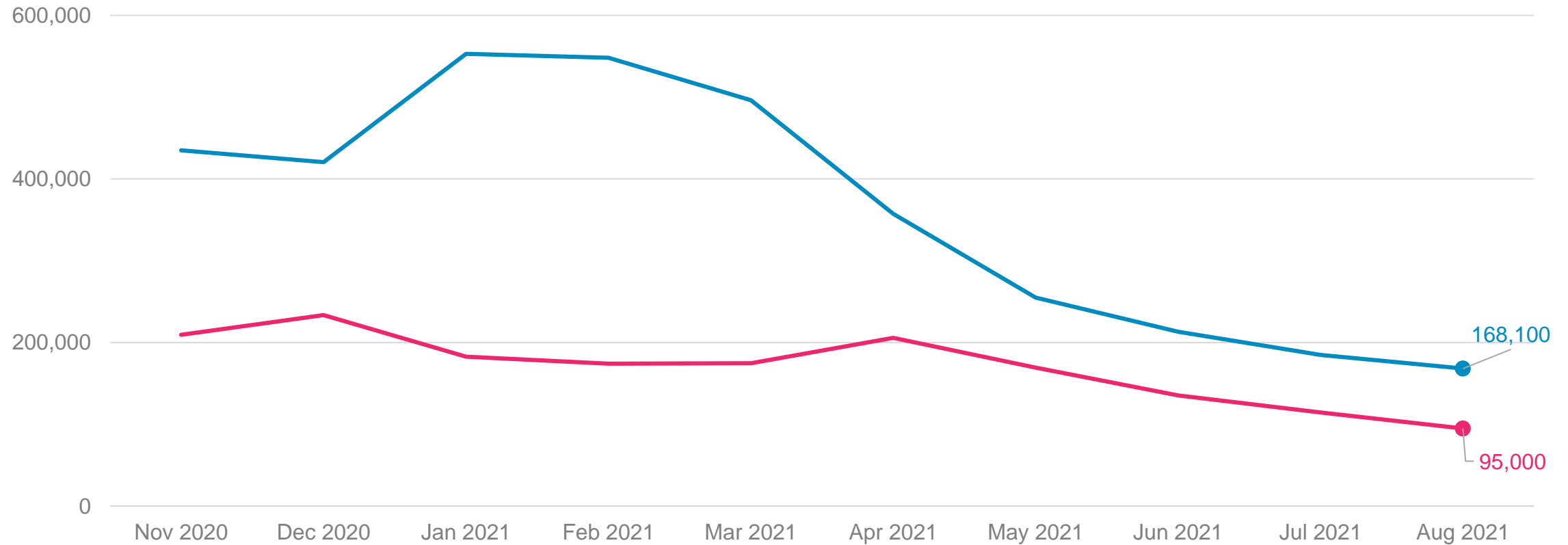
- The proportion of employments on full furlough in London increased 2pp from July.
- At 64%, the capital continued to record the highest proportion of staff on full furlough of any UK region/country. That is almost 10 percentage points higher than the UK average of 55%.
- The number of employments on flexible furlough reduced by 17% in August compared to a 9% reduction for those on full furlough.
- The following slide shows the trend in partial and full furlough since the end of November 2020.



# The number of employments on full and partial furlough have declined at broadly similar rates in recent months

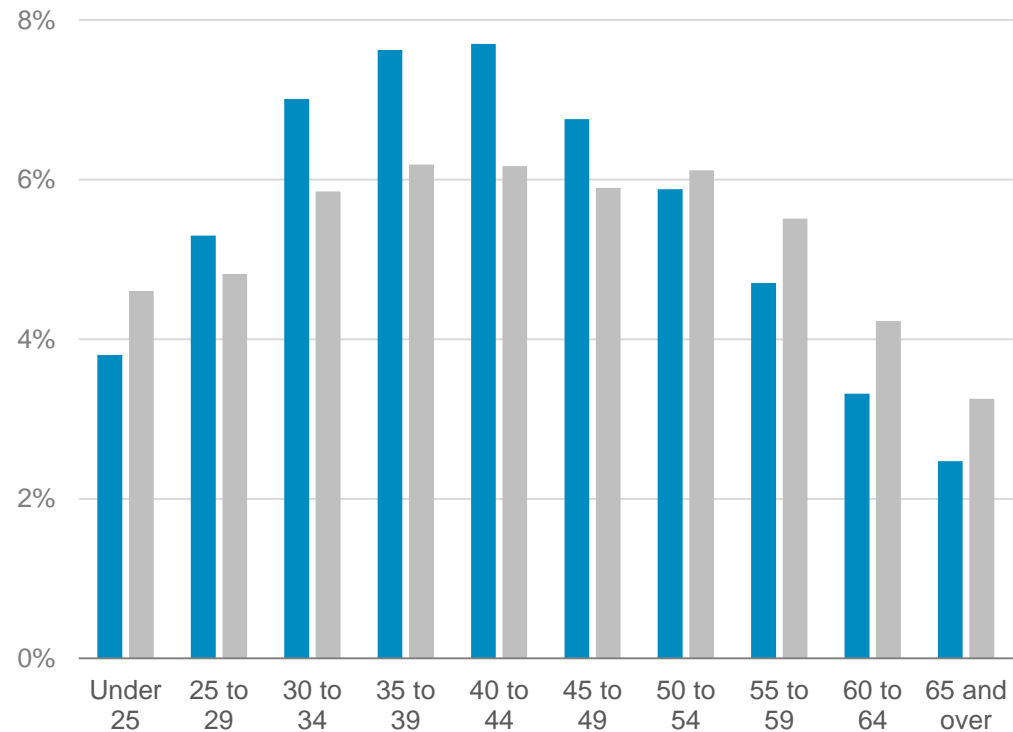
## Full and partial furlough levels in London since November 2020

August 2021 data is provisional

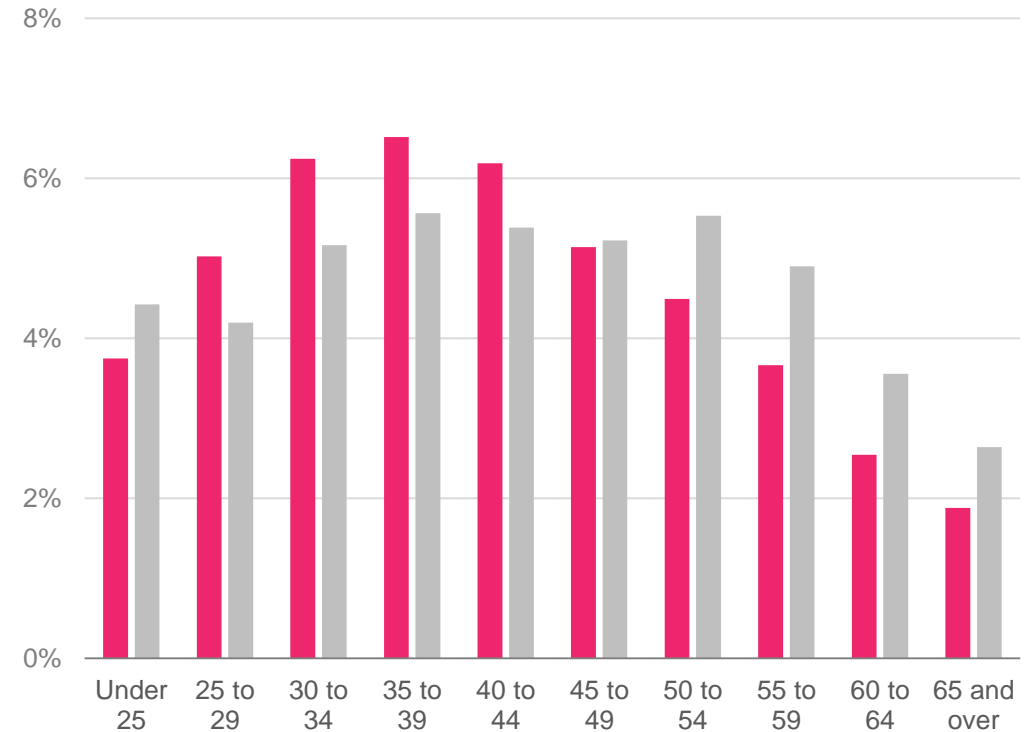


# A relatively high share of London staff on furlough at the end of August were male and aged between 25 and 49

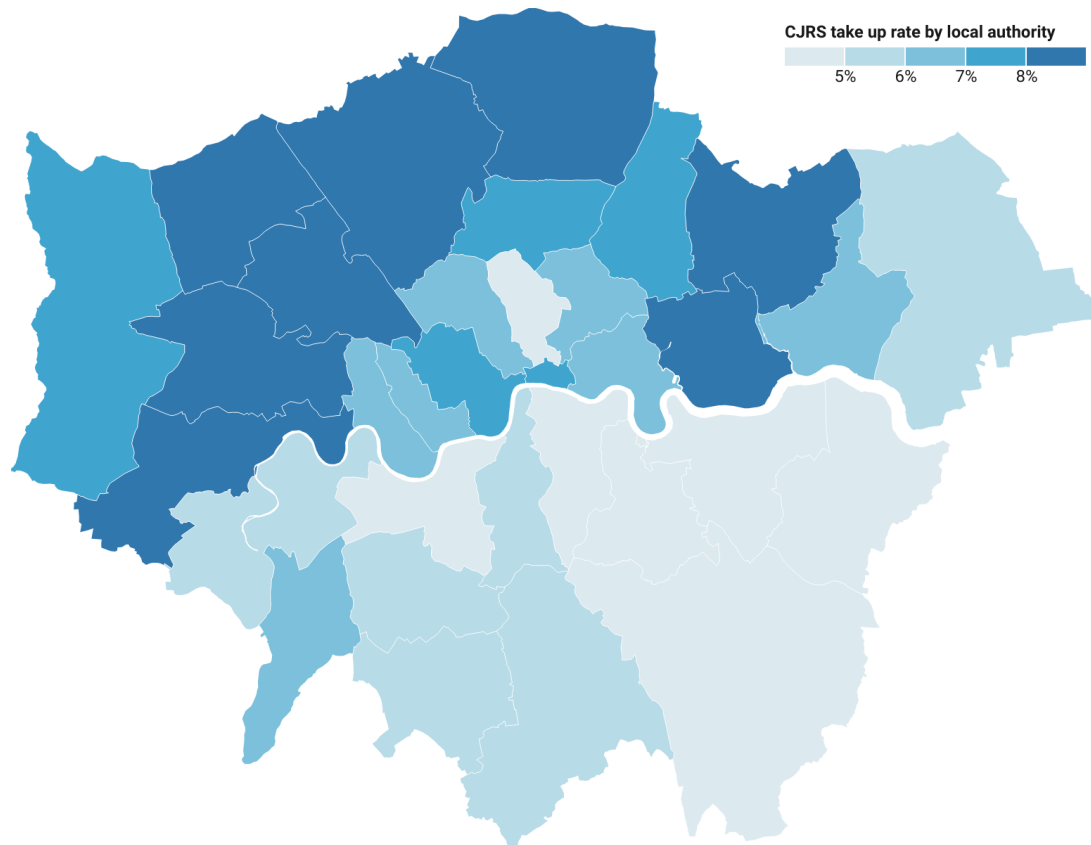
**Furlough by age group: Males - London and UK**  
% of total furloughed employments, at 31 August 2021  
(provisional)



**Furlough by age group: Females - London and UK**  
% of total furloughed employments, at 31 August 2021  
(provisional)



# North and North West Outer London continued to have the highest furlough take-up rates in the capital



Map data: © Crown copyright and database right 2018 • Created with Datawrapper

Note: City of London and Westminster rates not separated in HMRC data

At August 31:

- Barnet, Brent, Hounslow, Newham and Redbridge continued to record the highest take-up rates in London – all at 9%, down from 10%.
- Bexley recorded the lowest take-up rate in London with around 5% of eligible employments on furlough.
- Barnet recorded the highest number of employments on furlough of any London borough with 14,300, followed by Newham (13,700) and Ealing (13,300).

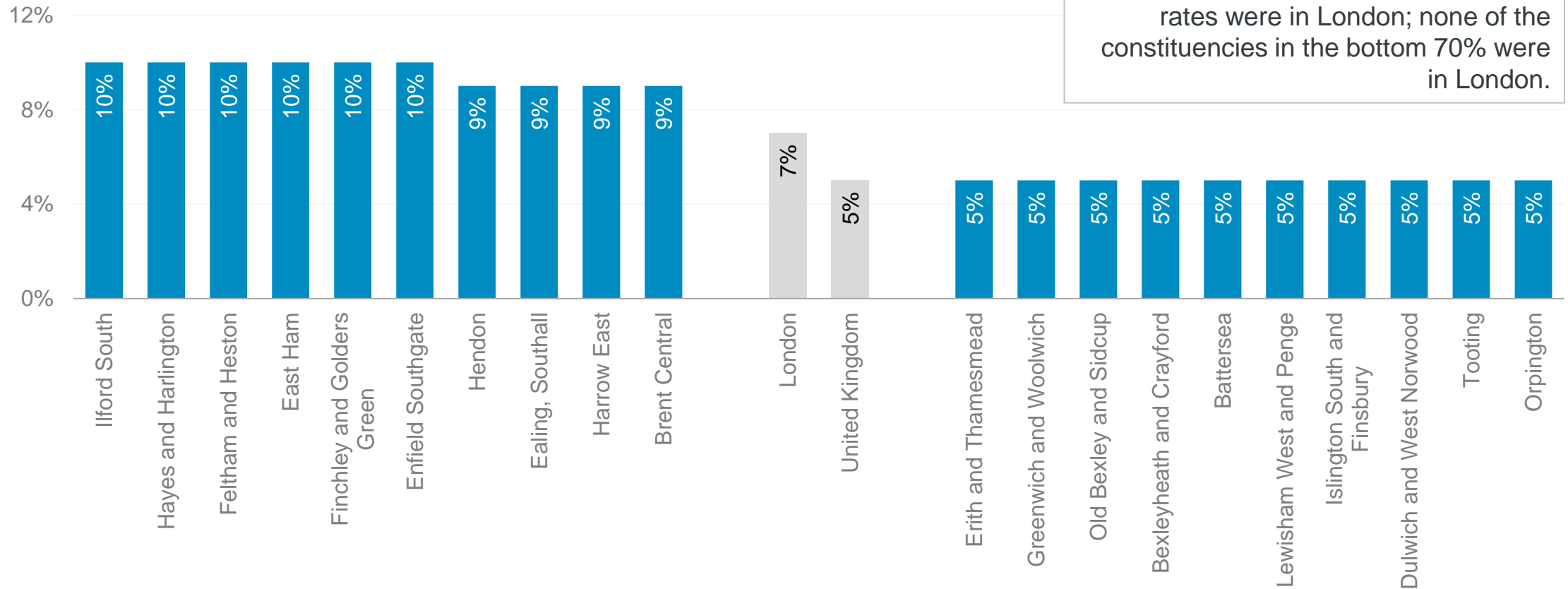
Between July 31 and August 31:

- Take-up rates declined in nearly all London boroughs, with Ealing recording the steepest fall of 2 percentage points.

Note – many of the local authorities with higher proportions of eligible jobs on furlough in August were near airports. This includes Hounslow, Ealing and Hillingdon near Heathrow Airport, and Newham and Redbridge near London City Airport

# London continued to dominate the highest furloughed areas – 14 of the top 15 UK constituencies with the highest furlough rates were in the capital

**Top and bottom 10 London furlough take-up rates by parliamentary constituency**  
at 31 August 2021 (provisional)





# 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 analysis of the latest Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). Previous briefings and other labour market analysis can be found on our [COVID-19 labour market analysis page](#).



## Notes on the data

This briefing provides analysis of official statistics [published by HMRC](#) based on administrative data from CRJS claims. This release provides analysis of claims for periods up to 31 August 2021. The data used includes claims submitted to HMRC by 14 September 2021.

The data for August 2021 is not yet fully complete as employers could file claims later with the agreement of HMRC if they had a reasonable excuse. Claims for August 2021 could also be amended until 28 September 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. It should be noted that:

- 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 operational activities of the individuals on furlough. It reflects the main operation of employers' rather than workers' activities.



## Key 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.