

Guernsey Unemployment Bulletin

Issue date 23rd July 2020

The Guernsey Unemployment Bulletin provides headline information on unemployment in Guernsey using data sourced from Social Security.



States of Guernsey
Data and Analysis

1.1 Introduction

This second Unemployment Bulletin provides headline information on unemployment in Guernsey (including the islands of Guernsey, Herm, Jethou, Lihou and, in some cases, a small number of Alderney residents). The bulletin has been produced using data from the Committee for Employment & Social Security to provide more comprehensive information on unemployment trends than would typically be published.

The first edition of this bulletin was published in June 2020 and contained unemployment information for the end of March as well as weekly information for the period during lockdown up to and including the week ending 30th May 2020. This publication provides further information on unemployment, to the end of June 2020, along with historic figures.

The figures presented in this bulletin are based on administrative data relating to Unemployment Benefit and Income Support claimants across the whole population. Because of the need to handle a significantly increased volume of new claims during lockdown, the amount of information gathered from people applying for new claims as a result of COVID-19 was reduced to streamline the process. In addition, people were enrolled on Income Support benefit in circumstances which would not ordinarily occur – such as being furloughed without pay. The officers responsible for extracting unemployment numbers from the claims data have erred on the side of a claimant being unemployed if the classification is not clear. As a result of these factors, the figures presented in this bulletin may have been overstated relative to what they might have been if calculated under normal circumstances. The margin of error has now been reduced and should be minimal when the next bulletin is released.

Information on numbers of employers, employees and self-employees and the earnings of employees at the end of March 2020, will be included in the Population, Employment and Earnings Bulletin, which is due to be published in August and will be made available on www.gov.gg/population.

1.2 Headlines

- There were 1,135 people registered as wholly unemployed* at the end of June 2020, 839 more than at the same time a year earlier.
- 3.6% of the workforce were registered as wholly unemployed* at the end of June 2020, compared to 1.0% at the end of June 2019.
- A peak was seen in the number of wholly unemployed* at the end of May 2020 (1,631 people, 5.2% of the workforce). Since then, there has been a reduction of 496 people or 1.6 percentage points. The week ending 4th July saw the largest weekly decrease in the number of people wholly unemployed*, with 167 fewer people registered as unemployed compared to the end of the previous week.
- The number of wholly unemployed* people during the snapshot week at the end of June 2020 was fewer across all age groups, for both men and women, than at the end of May 2020.
- As at the end of June 2020, 26% of people claiming Unemployment Benefit had skills relating to administration and finance, 16% construction and trade, 15% retail and 11% catering and hospitality.

*The "wholly unemployed" figure used throughout this bulletin refers only to those that were registered as unemployed and did not do any work in the snapshot week. This includes anyone 'furloughed' as a result of the crisis (people technically still employed but without pay), anyone claiming a Hardship Benefit (the hardship fund was set up to provide emergency financial help for people who may not otherwise qualify for Unemployment Benefit, Sickness Benefit or Income Support), anyone who has either found work/returned to work, but yet to receive a wage and all Alderney Income Support claims created after 25th March.

2.1 Unemployment trends

Table 2.1.1 Percentage of workforce registered as unemployed at end of June

	Wholly unemployed	% of workforce	Total registered unemployed*	% of workforce
Q2 1966			25	
Q2 1967			45	
Q2 1968			81	
Q2 1969			48	
Q2 1970			75	
Q2 1971			61	
Q2 1972			76	
Q2 1973			29	
Q2 1974			24	
Q2 1975			50	
Q2 1976			100	
Q2 1977			193	
Q2 1978			98	
Q2 1979			35	
Q2 1980			169	
Q2 1981			540	
Q2 1982			566	
Q2 1983			642	
Q2 1984			422	
Q2 1985			259	
Q2 1986			214	
Q2 1987			75	
Q2 1988			58	
Q2 1989			64	
Q2 1990			104	
Q1 1991			231	
Q2 1992			367	
Q2 1993			424	
Q2 1994			307	1.0
Q2 1995			217	0.7
Q2 1996			178	0.6
Q2 1997			173	0.6
Q2 1998			114	0.4
Q2 1999			88	0.3
Q2 2000			105	0.3
Q2 2001			75	0.2
Q2 2002			93	0.3
Q2 2003			74	0.2
Q2 2004			108	0.3
Q2 2005			159	0.5
Q2 2006			188	0.6
Q2 2007	179	0.6	226	0.8
Q2 2008	182	0.6	266	0.9
Q2 2009	330	1.1	431	1.5
Q2 2010	329	1.1	492	1.7
Q2 2011	281	1.0	461	1.6
Q2 2012	357	1.2	552	1.9
Q2 2013	411	1.4	628	2.2
Q2 2014	343	1.2	613	2.1
Q2 2015	340	1.2	632	2.1
Q2 2016	381	1.2	670	2.2
Q2 2017	321	1.0	615	2.0
Q2 2018	300	1.0	723	2.3
Q2 2019	296	1.0	771	2.5
Q2 2020	1,135	3.6	1,677	5.3

The total number of people registered as unemployed has been available since 1966*. This was the headline measure for unemployment until 2007 when a new measure, aligning with the definition used by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), was introduced. This figure, of “wholly unemployed”, includes only those that were registered as unemployed and did not do any work in the snapshot week. It should be noted that the ILO measure is based on survey data (i.e. a sample of the population, who are asked to self-classify their employment status), whereas the information in this bulletin is based on administrative data relating to Unemployment Benefit and Income Support claimants across the whole population (see [page 2](#) for more information on "wholly unemployed").

As shown in [Table 2.1.1](#), there were 1,135 people registered as "wholly unemployed" during the week ending 4th July 2020, 839 more than at the same time a year earlier. 3.6% of the workforce were registered as wholly unemployed at the end of June 2020. This compares to 1.0% at the end of June 2019.

The number of "total registered unemployed"* people accounted for 5.3% of the workforce at the end of June 2020, 2.8 percentage points higher than at the same time the previous year and the highest since records began in 1994 (see [Table 2.1.1](#)).

The number of people unemployed, as presented in [Table 2.1.1](#), is displayed in a chart on [page 4](#).

Unemployment figures between 7th March 2020 and 4th July 2020 are presented weekly on [page 5](#).

*The definition of what comprises "total registered unemployed" has gradually expanded over time to include those on government training schemes for the unemployed, anybody in part-time or casual employment who is available to work additional hours and still eligible to claim job seekers' benefit to supplement their income, and those who are fully employed and eligible for Income Support (previously Supplementary Benefit) on top of their low earnings. Additionally, the introduction of the Income Support scheme in 2018 included a work requirement for all claimants of working age. These factors may partly account for the increasing trend in unemployment seen in [Table 2.1.1](#)

2.1 Unemployment trends

Figure 2.1.1 Number of people registered as unemployed

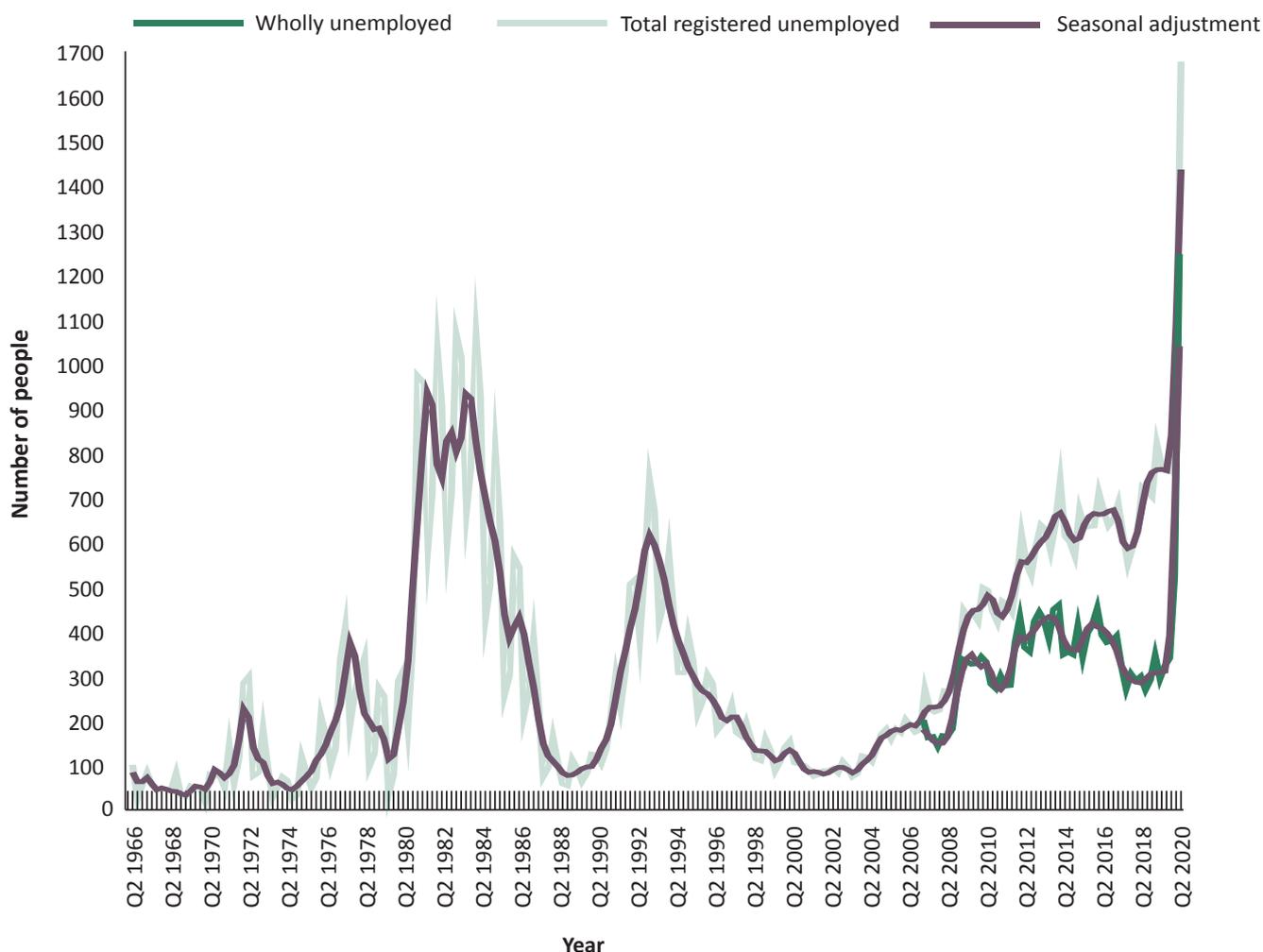


Figure 2.1.1 shows that there was a dramatic increase in the number of people registered as wholly unemployed between the end of March 2020 and the end of June 2020. This figure includes only those that were registered as unemployed and did not do any work in the snapshot week. The number of people wholly unemployed at the end of June 2020 (1,135 people) was nearly triple the next highest June wholly unemployed figure (411 people in June 2013).

Data on the "total registered unemployed"* has been available since 1966. As shown in Figure 2.1.1 and Table 2.1.1 on page 3, there was a total of 1,677 people registered as unemployed* at the end of June 2020. This figure is over 50% higher than the previous peak in total registered unemployed*, recorded in December 1983. The trend in unemployment when adjusted to account for seasonal variation is also shown in Figure 2.1.1.

Page 5 provides information on the number of people unemployed during Guernsey's lockdown between March 2020 and June 2020.

*The definition of what comprises "total registered unemployed" has gradually expanded over time to include those on government training schemes for the unemployed, anybody in part-time or casual employment who is available to work additional hours and still eligible to claim job seekers' benefit to supplement their income, and those who are fully employed and eligible for Income Support (previously Supplementary Benefit) on top of their low earnings. Additionally, the introduction of the Income Support scheme in 2018 included a work requirement for all claimants of working age. These factors may partly account for the increasing trend in unemployment seen in Figure 2.1.1.

2.2 Unemployment - weekly snapshots

Table 2.2.1 Percentage of workforce registered as unemployed at weekly snapshots (between March 2020 and June 2020)

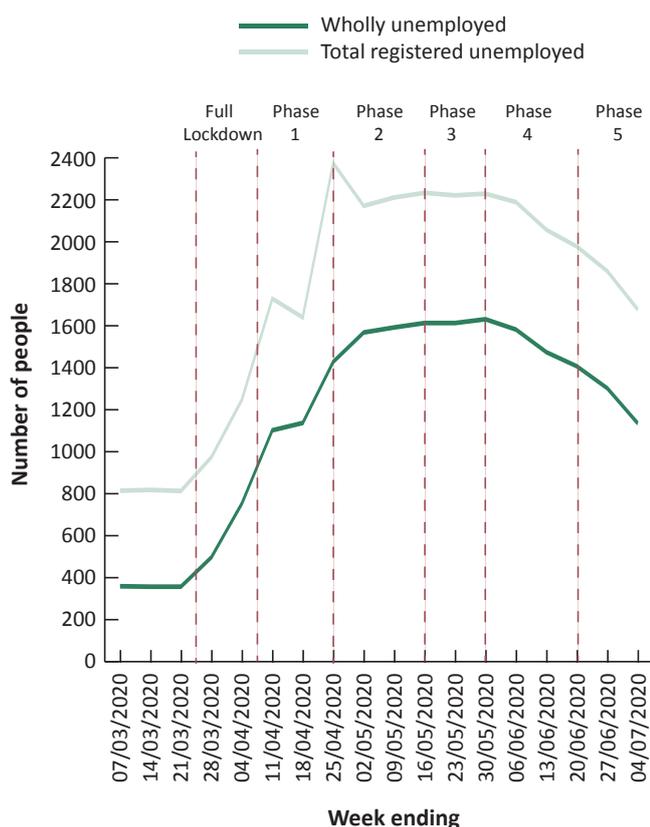
	Wholly unemployed*	% of workforce	Total registered unemployed*	% of workforce
07/03/2020	359	1.1	814	2.6
14/03/2020	357	1.1	818	2.6
21/03/2020	357	1.1	813	2.6
28/03/2020	497	1.6	974	3.1
04/04/2020	753	2.4	1,247	4.0
11/04/2020	1,102	3.5	1,729	5.5
18/04/2020	1,137	3.6	1,640	5.2
25/04/2020	1,428	4.5	2,374	7.5
02/05/2020	1,568	5.0	2,171	6.9
09/05/2020	1,592	5.1	2,211	7.0
16/05/2020	1,613	5.1	2,233	7.1
23/05/2020	1,613	5.1	2,221	7.1
30/05/2020	1,631	5.2	2,229	7.1
06/06/2020	1,582	5.0	2,189	7.0
13/06/2020	1,474	4.7	2,057	6.5
20/06/2020	1,407	4.5	1,977	6.3
27/06/2020	1,302	4.1	1,860	5.9
04/07/2020	1,135	3.6	1,677	5.3

The Bailiwick of Guernsey went into lockdown on 25th March 2020 in order to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Restrictions on all but essential business activities were imposed and all non-essential shops and community spaces were told to close. People were required to stay at home except for limited purposes and all gatherings of more than two people in public were prohibited.

Table 2.2.1 and Figure 2.2.1 show the number of people registered as unemployed at the end of each week during March, April, May and June 2020. It can be seen that the number of people unemployed rose sharply between the week ending 21st March and the week ending 11th April, during which full lockdown was in force.

During the week ending 4th July, 3.6% of the workforce (1,135 people) were wholly unemployed* compared to 5.2% during the last week of May, 5.0% at the end of April and 1.6% at the end of March (see **Table 2.2.1**).

Figure 2.2.1 Number of people registered unemployed at weekly snapshots (between March 2020 and June 2020)



During April 2020, the total number of people registered unemployed* reached a peak of 2,374 (7.5% of the workforce). This is the highest level of unemployment seen since data first became available in 1966.

Figure 2.2.1 shows a steady decrease in the number of people unemployed during phase 4 and 5 of the exit from lockdown, when more businesses were allowed to reopen. However, levels of unemployment remain significantly higher than before 25th March, when lockdown was enforced.

Information on the number of people unemployed broken down by age and gender can be found on [page 6](#).

*See [pages 2 and 3](#) for more information on the difference between the "total registered unemployed" and "wholly unemployed".

2.3 Unemployment by age and gender

Section 2.3 shows the number of people wholly unemployed during the snapshot week at the end of March, April, May and June 2020, compared to the same time in 2019, broken down by age and gender.

The number of wholly unemployed people during the snapshot week at the end of June 2020 was fewer across all age groups, for both men and women, than at the end of May 2020 (see **Figure 2.3.1**).

The overall drop in unemployment between May 2020 and June 2020 was greater for males than for females. The total number of unemployed men fell by 313 people (a decrease of 34%) compared to a reduction of 183 unemployed women (a 26% decrease).

For females, the fall in unemployment was relatively consistent across all age groups with the largest change seen in the 30 to 39 age group (a 31% decrease since May 2020). The largest percentage change in unemployment for males between May and June 2020, was also in this age category (a decrease of 42%).

The level of unemployment during the same months in 2019 is shown in **Figure 2.3.2**. There were significantly fewer people unemployed at the end of March, April, May and June in 2019 compared to the same months in 2020 (see **Figure 2.3.1**). In total, March 2019 saw the largest number of wholly unemployed people compared to April, May and June, however levels of unemployment were relatively stable across all four months in 2019, for all age groups.

Figure 2.3.1 Unemployment by age and gender during last week of March, April, May and June 2020

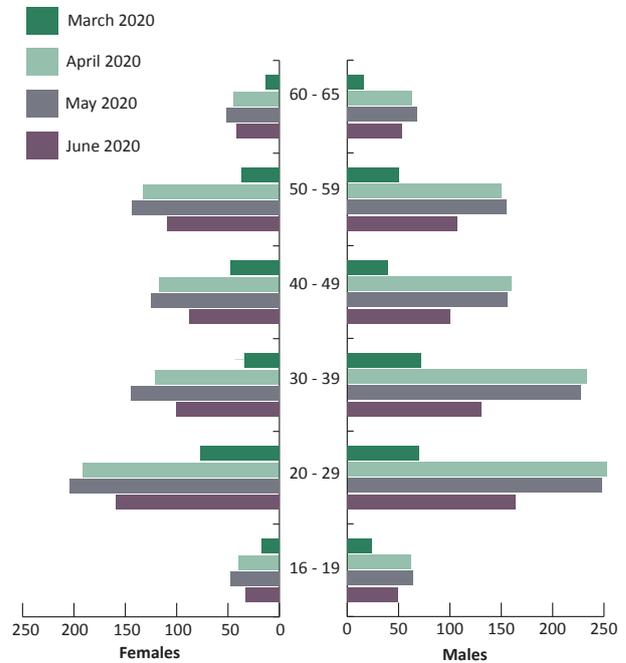
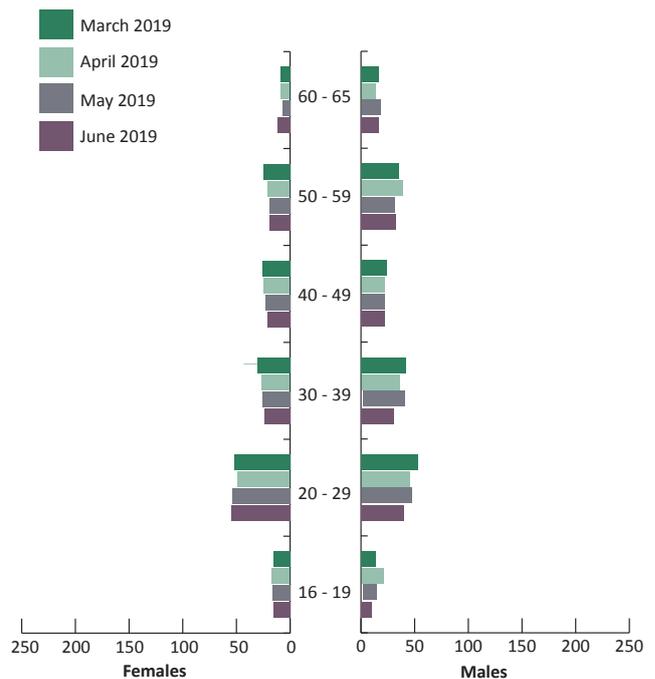


Figure 2.3.2 Unemployment by age and gender during last week of March, April, May and June 2019



3.1 Job vacancies

Figure 3.1.1 Number of positions advertised with the Job Centre and in the Guernsey Press each quarter

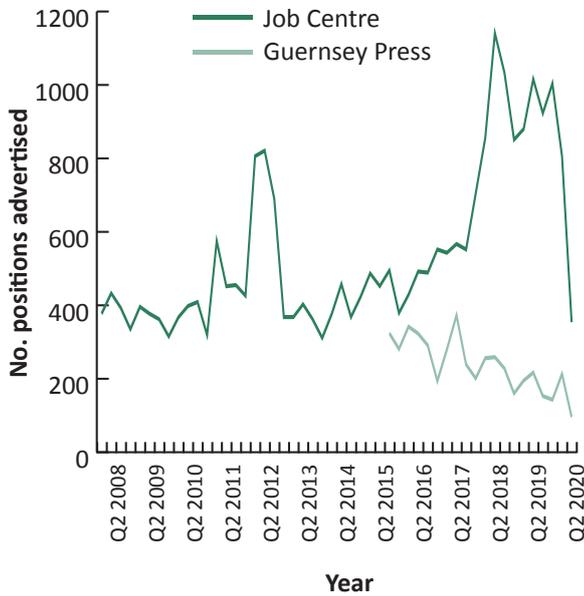


Figure 3.1.1 shows the number of positions advertised with the Guernsey Job Centre and, from September 2015, the Guernsey Press each quarter. Although this is not a complete representation of the total number of vacancies in the Island, it does provide an indication of the strength of the employment market.

There were 354 positions advertised with the Job Centre during Q2 2020, compared to 806 during Q1 2020 and 1,016 during Q2 2019. The number of vacancies advertised in the Guernsey Press (paper only, excluding online advertising) during Q2 2020 totalled 96, 117 fewer than the previous quarter and 121 fewer than at the same time the previous year.

There were 22, 84 and 248 positions advertised at the Job Centre in April, May and June 2020 respectively. Of these, 34% were in catering and hospitality and 21% in construction and trade (see Figure 3.1.2). Conversely, during Q1 2020, only 9% of positions advertised were in construction and trade and 20% were retail positions. Retail accounted for just 7% of positions in Q2 2020.

Figure 3.1.2 Type of positions advertised with the Job Centre during Q2

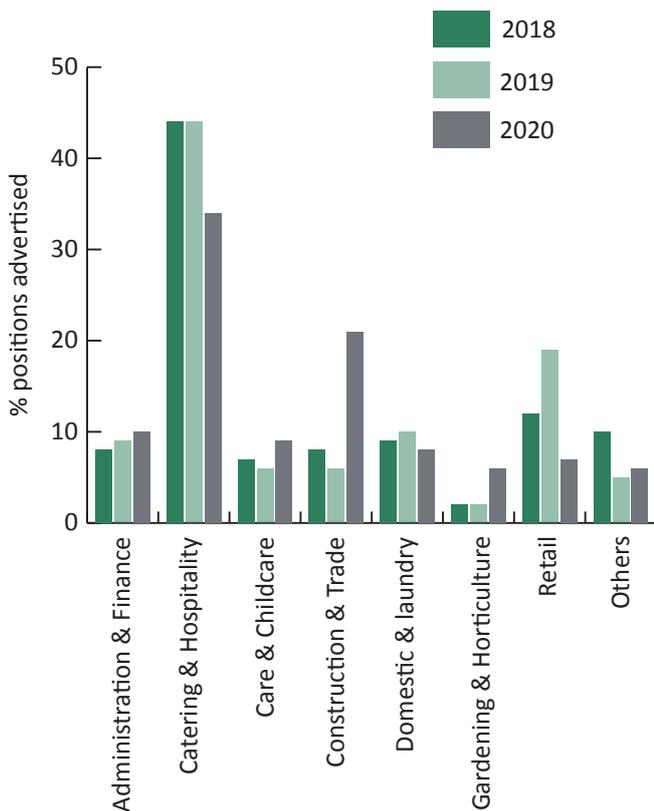


Figure 3.1.2 shows the type of positions advertised with the Job Centre during Q2 in 2018, 2019 and 2020. Construction and trade has seen the largest rise in advertised positions when compared to 2018 and 2019, whilst the catering & hospitality and retail sectors have seen the largest decrease.

See page 8 for more information on the function of the Job Centre and a further breakdown in the number of positions advertised there each month during lockdown.

As at 4th July, 26% of people claiming Unemployment Benefit had skills relating to administration and finance, 16% had experience in construction and trade, 15% in retail and 11% reported having skills in catering and hospitality.

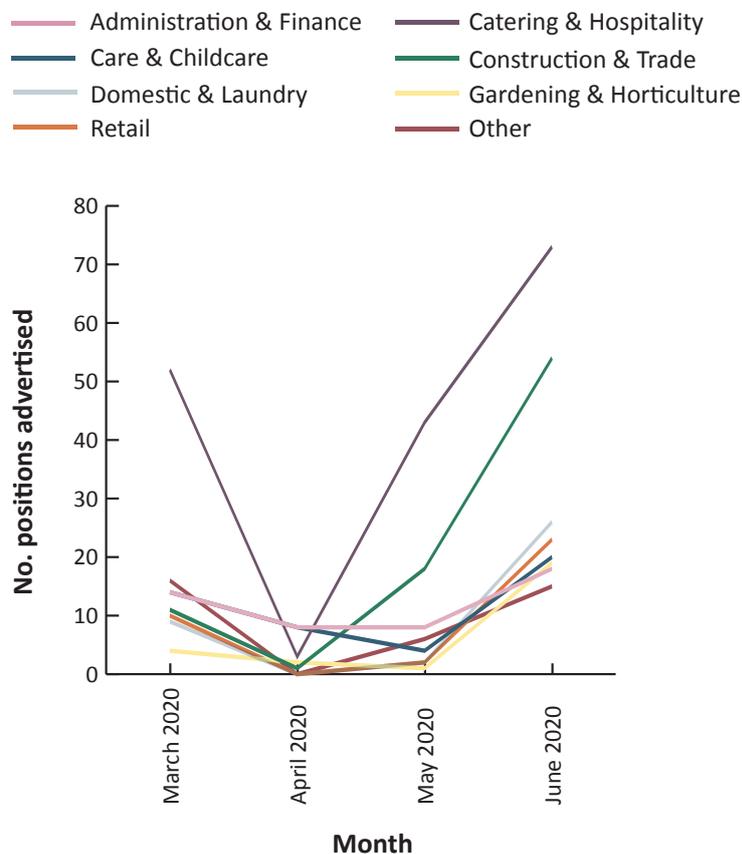
3.1 Job vacancies

Figure 3.1.3 shows the number of positions advertised with the Job Centre by sector during March, April, May and June 2020. It can be seen that there was a sharp decrease in the number of positions advertised across all sectors between March and April.

Between April and June, all sectors saw an increase in the number of positions advertised, largely returning to the levels seen before lockdown. The catering & hospitality sector saw the largest increase in positions between April and June (an increase of 70) followed by construction & trade, domestic & laundry and retail (increases of 53, 26 and 23 positions respectively between April and June).

The number of construction & trade positions advertised in June (54 positions) was greater than before lockdown, when there were 28 and 34 positions advertised in January and February respectively.

Figure 3.1.3 Number of positions advertised with the Job Centre during March, April, May and June 2020 by sector



3.2 Job Centre function

The Job Centre offers support for working age people; to help them improve their chances of starting work or increasing their hours of work. Job Centre clients are either supported by an Employment Advisor, Work Rehabilitation Officer or Case Worker (if with other agencies). Job Centre Advisors assist people in returning to mainstream employment by helping them prepare CVs, cover letters and to develop an action plan. Support is also available to people who have been away from the work place for some time.

The Job Centre continually seeks new training and work rehabilitation initiatives in order to meet the ever increasingly diverse requirements of both the job market and its customers. There are a range of schemes available to help individuals develop their skills and experience to help them find work. These include placement opportunities such as the Kickstart and Work2Benefit schemes and a range of free training courses designed to teach skills that are valuable to local employers. The Job Centre also offers a free vacancy and job matching service to local employers and hosts regular Job Fairs to give job seekers and employers the opportunity to connect.

4.1 Contact details

You may also be interested in other publications from States of Guernsey Data and Analysis Services, which are all available online at www.gov.gg/data. Please contact us for further information.

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For more information
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