

Freedom of Information request 1424/2014

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Information request

'I am writing in response to your Freedom of Information request regarding Universal Credit and in particular:

- 1 Which Jobcentre Plus areas and Benefit Delivery Centres are currently piloting UC
- 2 What percentage of cases are expected to be processed by the end of the 2014 financial year
- 3 Which post code areas will begin roll out of UC
- 4 Of the number of claims processed and areas piloting UC which percentage of these occur in Scotland along with comparative figures in England and Wales with any data for Northern Ireland as existent
- 5 Which of the total statistics account for natural migration versus planned migration of UC in current in-house statistics.'

DWP response

As you may know Universal Credit went live in 4 Pathfinder locations in the North West of England from April 2013. I have outlined the response to your specific queries below:

- 1 The UC live service (this is not a pilot) expanded from the 4 original Pathfinder locations in Ashton under Lyne, Wigan, Warrington and Oldham to a further 6 Jobcentres from October 2013 to April 2014. These Jobcentres were in; Hammersmith, Rugby, Inverness, Harrogate, Bath and Shotton. To support the delivery of UC in the above locations UC Service Centres in Bolton and Glasgow were also opened in April 2013.
- 2 Late last year Ministers announced the expansion of Universal Credit throughout 2014 when we would start to take claims from couples and families and give wider geographic coverage across the North West of England. We are currently working on plans to deliver this expansion and we do not have details relating to the percentage of cases we expect to process by the end of the 2014 financial year at this stage.
- 3 Post code areas for UC are contained in Commencement Orders that are laid before Parliament. Commencement Orders are in place for the post code areas covered by the above Jobcentres. Further Commencement Orders will be laid as we start to implement plans to deliver UC more widely.

- 4 Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you. Official statistics covering the total live caseload and starts to Universal Credit, with breakdowns by Jobcentre Plus office, local authority, parliamentary constituency, gender, age band and duration can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>

These figures show that between the 29th April 2013 and the 31st January 2014, a total of **5,246** people started on Universal Credit of which **4%** of claims were processed at Inverness Jobcentre Plus office. All other claims were processed at offices located in England. Inverness began processing claims on the 28th November 2013 and covers the following postcodes:

IV1, IV2, IV3, IV4, IV5, IV8, IV9, IV10, IV11, IV12, IV13, IV21, IV22, IV26, IV54, IV63

Shotton is the first Jobcentre Plus office in Wales to implement Universal Credit, starting to process claims on Monday 7th April 2014. Universal Credit is yet to roll out in Northern Ireland.

- 5 The eligibility criteria for Universal Credit is currently restricted to newly unemployed people who would formerly have made a straightforward claim for Jobseeker's Allowance and who meet certain additional criteria. No claimants have been migrated from their existing benefit claim to Universal Credit. More information can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/overview>