



Heading out A sculpture of the late poet Benjamin Zephaniah by George Triggs has gone on public display for the first time at TM Gallery, central London

Majority of benefit claimants are not required to seek work

Geraldine Scott Assistant Political Editor

Benefits claimants who are not expected to look for work now outnumber jobseekers by almost three to one.

More than half of the record 8.4 million people claiming universal credit were in the no work-related requirements category in May, compared with about 1.6 million required to search for work. The proportion with no requirement to work has risen from 46 per cent last summer to 51 per cent, according to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) figures.

The rise has been driven in large part by people moving from older benefits to universal credit. In February, 1.7 million claimants had joined universal credit through the managed migration programme, of whom 1.2 million, seven in ten, were in the group not required to work.

The latest figures, for May, showed the

overall universal credit caseload had risen by 700,000 in a year, from 7.7 million in May last year to 8.4 million.

Meanwhile, 3.1 million claimants — 37.7 per cent — were in employment in April, down from 3.2 million and 41.9 per cent a year earlier.

Claimants categorised as not required to seek work include people whose health or caring responsibilities prevents them, some full-time students, people over state pension age, parents of children aged under one and those assessed as having no prospect of work.

Those who receive the benefit for health reasons can be reassessed. Ministers are increasing reassessments for other claimants while introducing a scheme that stops those who may try to work from having their benefits automatically reviewed, to encourage them back into the workplace.

Polling for Alan Milburn's government-commissioned review into youth

inactivity found that 27 per cent of Britons believed success depended mainly on hard work, while 50 per cent thought young people had fewer opportunities than in previous generations. A further 22 per cent said success depended on who someone knew or their family background, while 5 per cent believed talent was the main factor. Half said that young people had fewer opportunities now. Among those aged 16 to 24 the figure was 56 per cent, compared with 47 per cent among those 55 to 75.

Milburn's interim report in May found more than one million 16 to 24-year-olds were not in education, employment or training.

The former Labour health secretary, who was commissioned by the government last year to investigate the rise in young people outside work and education, said: "More and more people believe hard work is not rewarded. That

undermines the promise that has been at the heart of our country's social contract — that if you put in effort, you will be able to get ahead, and that each generation should do better than the last. That promise is being broken."

The government said it was spending £2.5 billion on youth employment reforms intended to support almost one million young people and create up to 500,000 opportunities to earn or learn.

It also announced a £2,000 incentive for small businesses taking on a 16 to 24-year-old apprentice and planned to extend its jobs guarantee from the autumn to eligible 18 to 24-year-olds who had been on universal credit and looking for work for 18 months.

A DWP spokesman said: "Nearly 80 per cent of the increase in universal credit cases since July 2024 is driven by people moving from legacy benefits — a transition started by the previous government."

Flight crew face greatest cancer risk from radiation

Poppy Koronka Health Correspondent

Pilots and flight attendants have a greater risk of radiation-related cancer deaths than other professions, a study from Harvard has found.

Researchers examined more than 500 occupations in the United States, finding that flight attendants and pilots had the highest and second-highest proportion of radiation-related cancer deaths, respectively.

The study, published in *Jama*

Internal Medicine, examined data from the National Vital Statistics System to look at the death certificates of 13 million people across 503 occupations, including 14,190 pilots and 7,170 flight attendants between 2020 and 2024.

The researchers found that flight crew had significantly higher rates of radiation-related cancers such as breast cancer, central nervous system cancer, prostate cancers and melanoma, but not other radiation-related cancers such as lymphoma and leukaemia.

Pilots were found to have a higher rate of leukaemia deaths. About 6.9 per cent of deaths among flight attendants and 6.7 per cent among pilots were from radiation-related cancers.

The rates were higher than those of other radiation-exposed professions, such as nuclear technologists, as well as those not exposed to radiation, including aircraft mechanics and assemblers. Nuclear technologists are exposed to a high level of radiation, but are screened for radiation-related cancers.

Rates of non-radiation-related cancer deaths among aircrew members were similar to the general population. The Harvard Medical School team highlighted that flight crews accrued an estimated 3–6 millisieverts of radiation each year, which they compared with "the 0.4 millisieverts received by an air traveller taking ten cross-country round-trip flights per year".

About 530,000 people are employed in airlines, airports and aerospace in Britain, according to Airlines UK.

Quintagram® No 2650

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Of the smallest amount (5)

2 Legally positioned in football (6)

3 Centrally directed or disposed (6)

4 Flow control devices in a lock (7)

5 Nonagenarian's decade (8)

A	A	C	D	D	E	E	E
E	E	I	I	I	I	I	L
L	N	N	N	N	O	R	S
S	S	S	S	T	T	U	W

Solutions see T2 MindGames p15
Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

Renewables boss guilty

A renewables boss later convicted of possessing indecent images of children asked a computer shop to wipe his hard drives, unaware the assistant was a special constable. Alexander Hensher, 48, pleaded guilty at Weymouth magistrates' court. He received a 12-month community order, 100 hours of unpaid work and a sexual harm prevention order.

Iron Age 'hot tub'

A stone-lined hollow found in Sutherland containing a woman's skeleton may have been a hot tub. Lachlan McKeggie, of Highland Archaeology Services, said: "When site staff first saw the pit and how well the stone lining was built they thought it might be modern, but the finds inside, and this style of building, all point to an Iron Age date."

West London stabbing

A man, 48, has been arrested on suspicion of murder after two women were stabbed in west London. Police were called yesterday morning to Askew Road in Shepherd's Bush and found two women, 52 and 32, wounded. The older woman was pronounced dead. Anyone with information should contact police quoting reference 1673/18AUG.

All in for 'WC' hankies

A set of Winston Churchill's personalised handkerchiefs fetched £2,580 and one of his cigars — plus a half-smoked stub — went for £1,190 at an auction by Sworders in Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex. They were sold by the grandson of Charles Wootton, a gardener who worked at Churchill's Chartwell country home in Kent for decades.

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