

More people out of work in London than anywhere in the UK

More people were out of work in [London](#) than anywhere else in the country even before the [Plan B](#) “work from home” advice once again emptied the streets of the capital, latest official figures have revealed.

The jobless rate in London was 5.4 per cent in the three months to October, higher than any other region in the UK, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

This compares to a national rate of 4.2 per cent and only 4 per cent in the south east.

It means there were 272,000 people looking for work during the quarter, more than any other region.

London was hardest hit by the three Covid lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 as tens of thousands of jobs were lost in vulnerable sectors, such as hospitality and retail, that were most badly hit by the shutdowns.

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The capital's economy was starting to recover strongly during the summer and autumn.

As a result, the jobless rate was down from six per cent in the previous three months as restaurants, pubs, hotels and bars reopened and started taking on staff again.

But there are now fears that the revival will be thrown into reverse by the latest restrictions to slow the spread of the Omicron variant.

Nationally, the labour market figures painted a robust picture of recovery with the economy easily riding out the end of the furlough scheme in September.

By November there were 29.4 million employees in the UK, up 257,000 on October and 424,000 higher than pre-pandemic levels.

The [employment](#) rate rose 0.2 per cent in the August to October quarter to 75.5 per cent while the unemployment rate dropped 0.4 per cent to 4.2 per cent.

The number of job vacancies rose again to a record high of 1.219 million in the three months to November, 434,500 above pre-Covid levels. However, there are signs the surge in vacancies that followed the reopening of the economy in the summer has peaked, according to the ONS.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said: "The jobs outlook remains strong thanks to our £400 billion economic support package, Plan for Jobs and fantastic vaccine programme; the unemployment rate fell to 4.2 per cent, employee numbers grew at a record rate in November and redundancies are below pre-pandemic levels.

"To keep safeguarding our economic recovery and the lives and livelihoods of the British people, I am now calling on

everyone to keep playing their part and Get Boosted Now.”