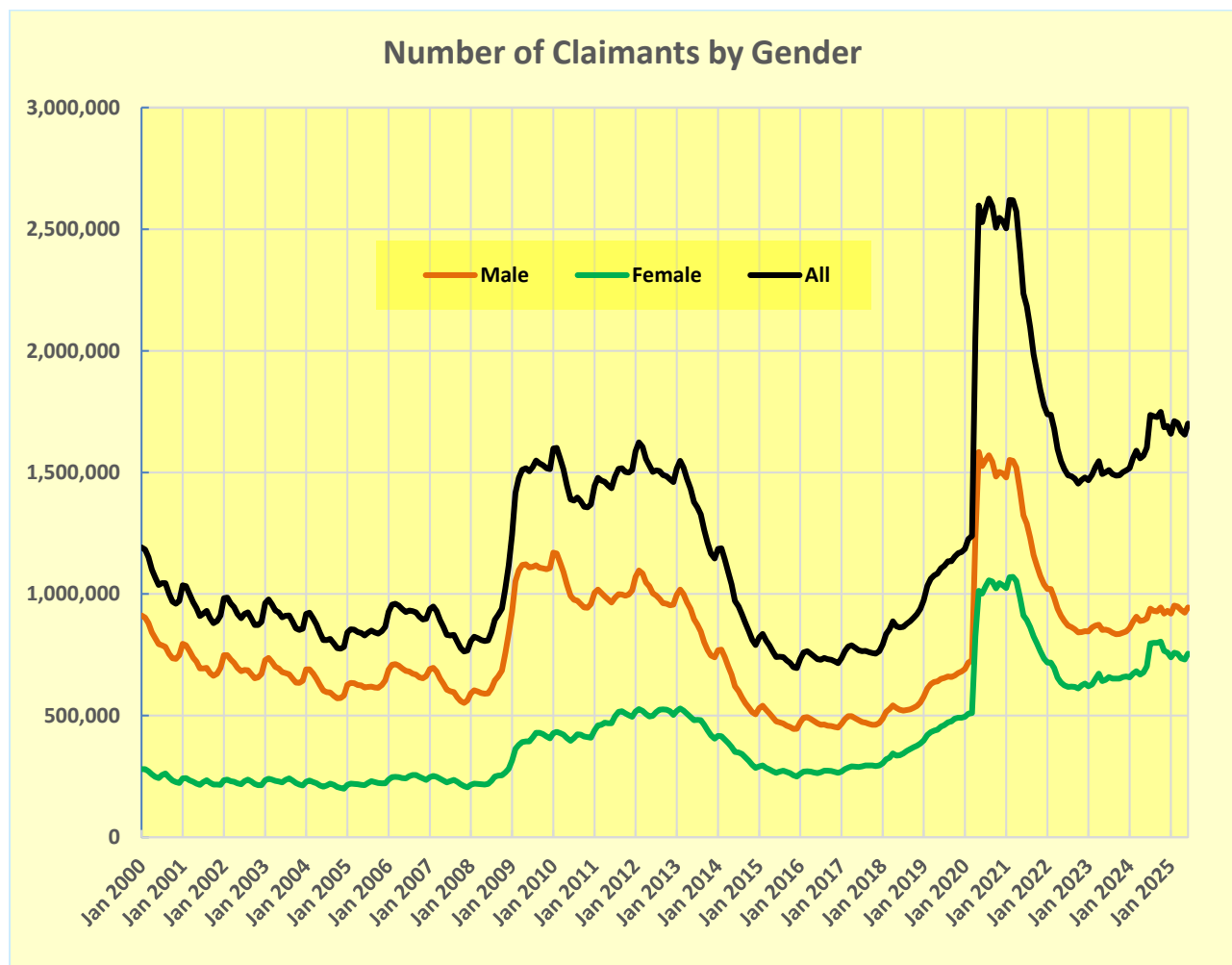


Trends in Unemployment

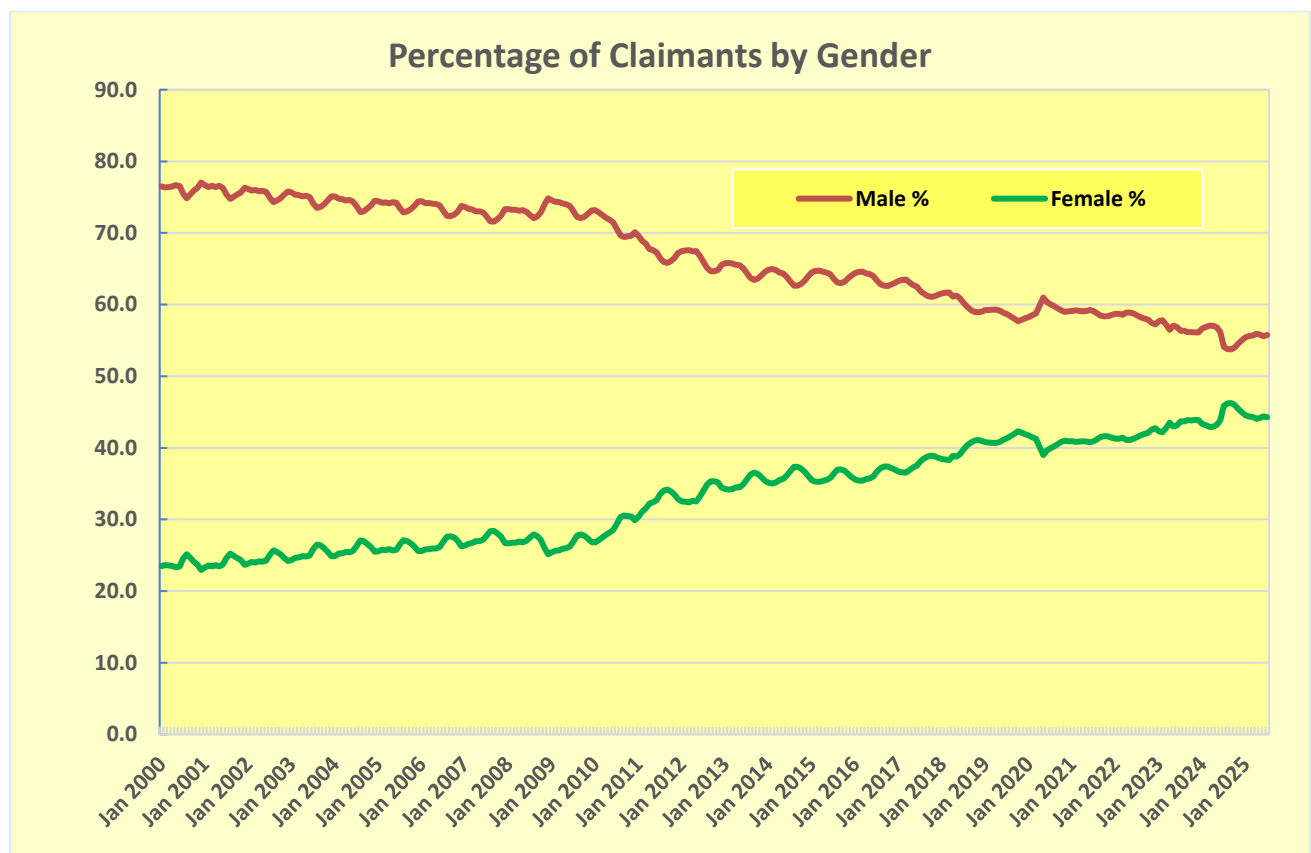
The Department of Work and Pensions publish monthly counts of the numbers of claimants broken out by gender and age in Great Britain. Figures going back to January 2000 have been extracted and are shown in the following charts. From April 2015, the Claimant count includes all Universal Credit claimants who are required to seek work and be available for work, as well as all Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants. JSA claimants are gradually being moved onto the Universal Credit system but there are still some on the old system. Prior to 2015 the figures are just those claimants who were on the old JSA scheme. The Claimant count includes people who claim unemployment-related benefits but who do not receive payment. For example, some claimants will have had their benefits stopped for a limited time period.

The first chart shows the number of claimants by gender.

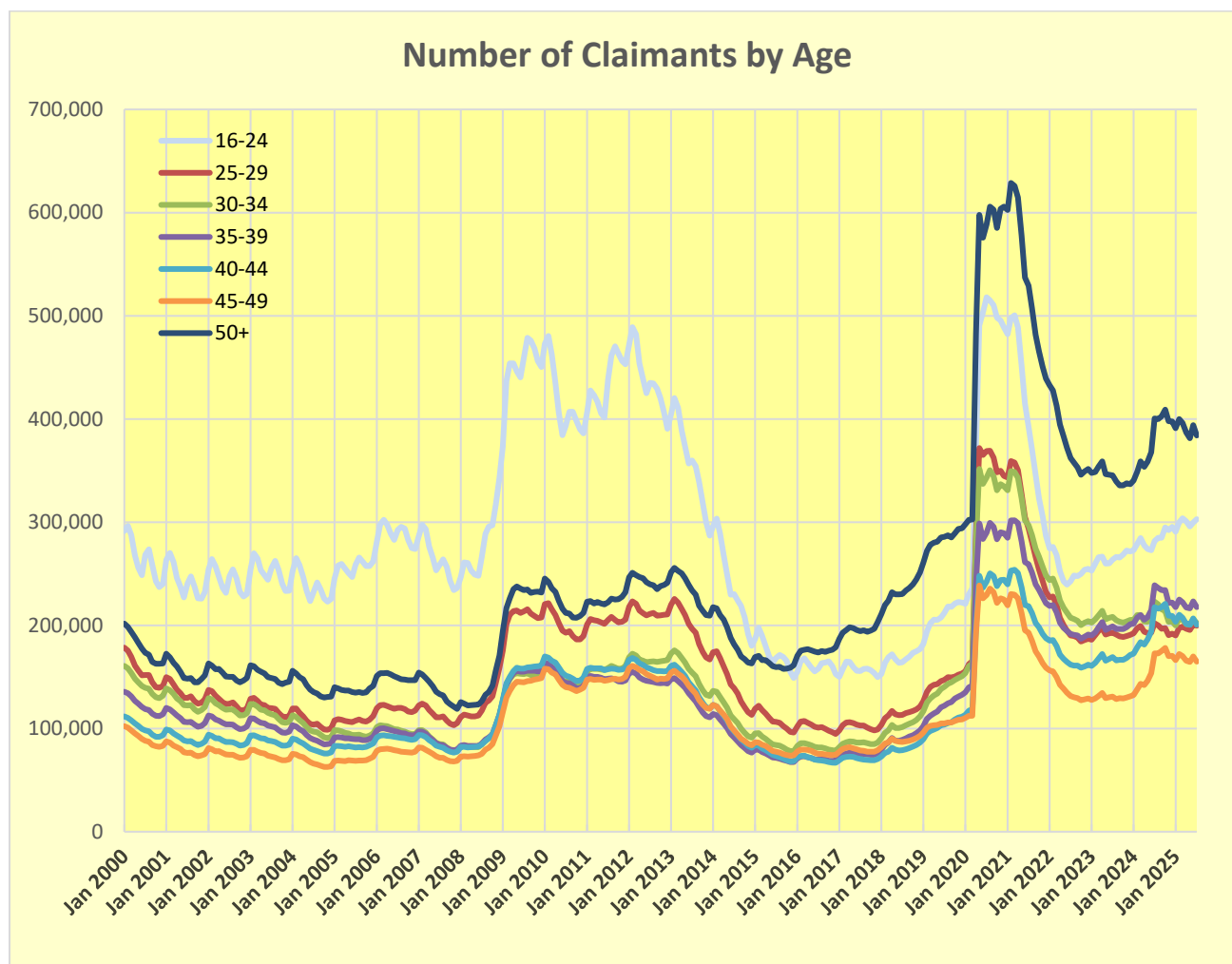


The chart shows the numbers of claimants since January 2000. Numbers rose in the recession of 2009 and 2010 and fell back around 2013 and then started to rise again around 2017, when the pandemic hit they rose dramatically before falling back in 2021. Even discounting the pandemic surge, a significant upwards trend in claimant numbers has taken place since about 2017.

The chart below shows the percentage of claimants by gender over time. What is interesting is the trend, in January 2000 females made up just under 25% of claimant numbers, but by July 2025 it had risen to around 44%. There has been a significant and steady increase. The reasons for this are probably quite complex and to do with factors like more women entering the labour market to help with household finances, falling birth rates, and the nature of work itself such as increased demand in the health and care sector. A larger female workforce, means of course the expectation that more may become unemployed.



The third chart shows the claimant numbers by age.



The chart shows that prior to about 2015 young claimants aged 16-24 were the largest claimant group and were badly affected by the recession of 2009 and 2010; but from around 2016 older claimants aged 50 and over became the largest group of claimants. From about 2017 claimant numbers in all age groups rose but the pandemic most affected the oldest and they have remained the largest claimant group. It is clear, that the over 50's are struggling to return to work.

David Griffiths
TRAC Consultancy
2nd September 2025