

Citizens Advice coronavirus data report

Data trends in December 2020

**citizens
advice**



December 2020



4.2 million

views of our website

Most viewed advice pages

1. Check if you have to self-isolate because of coronavirus
2. Preparing to apply for pre-settled and settled status
3. Coronavirus - getting benefits if you're self isolating
4. Reporting to Trading Standards
5. If your post sent with Royal Mail hasn't arrived



124,665

people given advice on the phone, email or webchat

Top issues advisers helped with

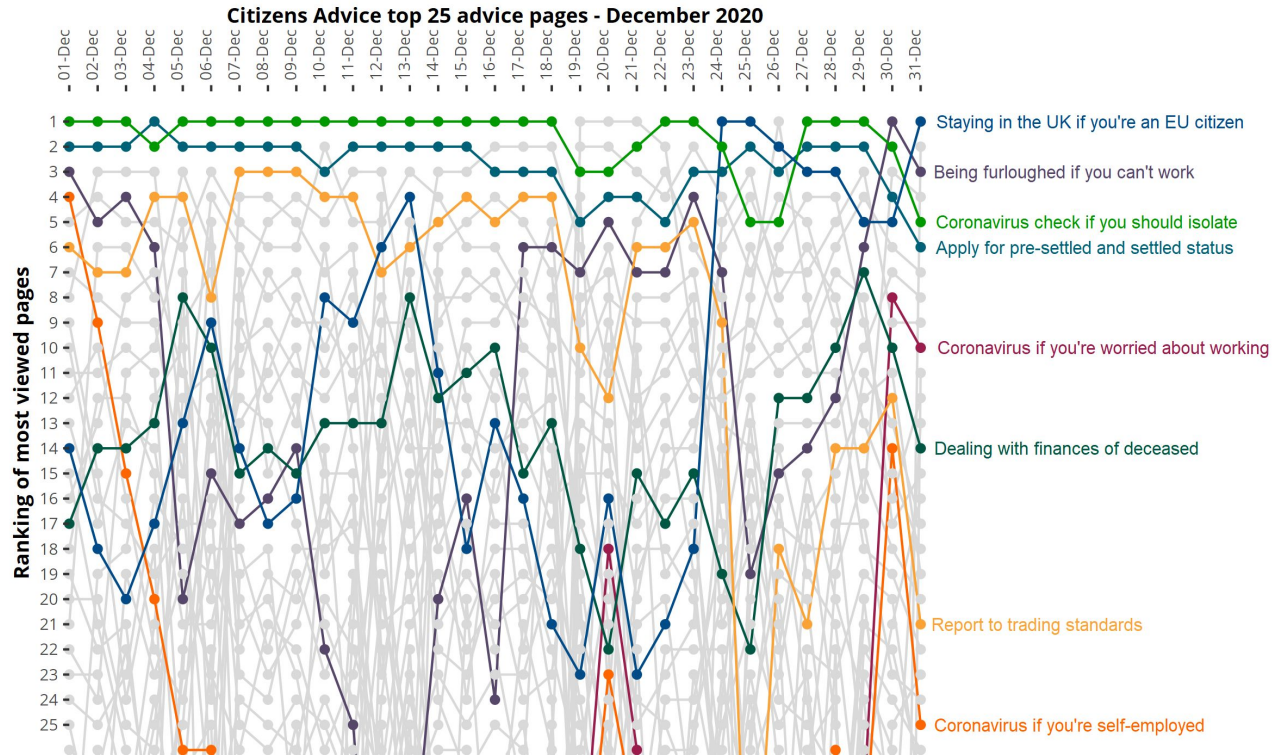
1. Benefits and tax credits
 2. Universal Credit
 3. Debt
-



Top search term:

"PIP"

Top advice pages on Citizens Advice's website



Our page on 'checking if you should self isolate', was consistently in the top 5 pages, continuing November's trend.

Pages relating to Brexit and immigration remained in the top 25, as we reached the end of the transition period, especially in the latter half of December.

We also saw an increase in views to our pages around the Royal Mail delays and related consumer issues during 11-18 December.

The weekend before Christmas saw a flurry of views to our 'Coronavirus - meeting with people' page due to the change in Lockdown tiers for some regions.

Top search terms

Top searches on Citizens Advice's website:

Change from November to December:

① PIP	↓ 25%
② Housing	↓ 8%
③ Universal Credit	↓ 34%
④ Divorce	↓ 29%
⑤ Debt	↓ 38%

Website traffic always dips in December, hence the decrease in searches on our website. There has been a below average dip in housing searches.

Top incoming Google searches :

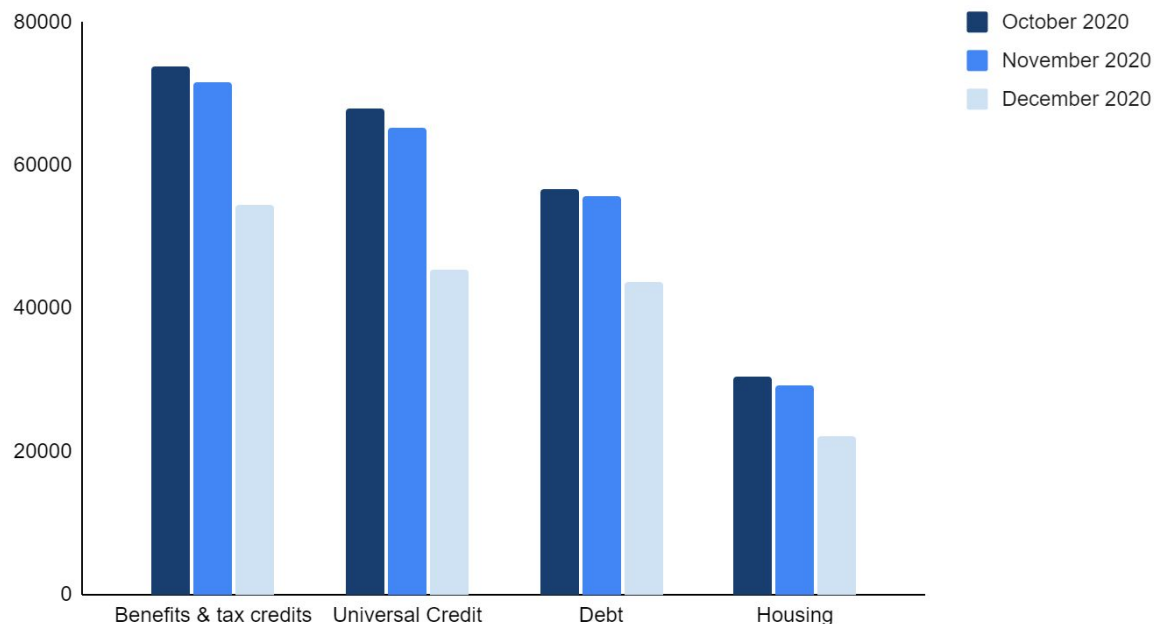
Change from November to December:

① Trading Standards	↓ 2%
② PIP rates	↓ 14%
③ IVA	↓ 18%
④ Post box collection times	↑ 27%
⑤ Royal Mail delays	↑ 652%

Other searches that saw an increase in clicks through to our website are 'settled status' (71%), 'pre settled status' (48%), 'bankruptcy' (20%) and 'scam website check' (73%)

Advice given by local offices

Top advice issues in October, November and December 2020



Top four advice areas



In December, our advisers supported more than **124,000 people**, despite working days lost to bank holidays.

Our top four advice areas were **benefits and tax credits** (54,582 issues), **Universal Credit** (45,330 issues), **debt** (43,597 issues) and **housing** (22,144 issues).

In December 2019, our top four advice areas in order were **benefits and tax credits**, **debt**, **Universal Credit** and **housing**.

Spotlight on furlough

Lisa's Story

Lisa works full-time in a factory. The latest restrictions meant she needed to stay at home to look after her daughter so she asked her employer if she could be furloughed. Her employer refused the request, instead offering a week's paid leave followed by unpaid leave. This is not financially viable for Lisa and her daughter.

With support from Citizens Advice, Lisa is going to ask her employer to reconsider her furlough request. But this decision is at her employer's discretion - they may just refuse it again. In the meantime, Lisa is considering applying for an emergency advance on her Universal Credit. But this is a loan and she's worried about how she would cover her living costs during the repayment period.

Our page on [furlough](#) was viewed 65,000 times in the first two weeks of January, a 375% increase on the same period last month.

The main reason people are seeking advice on furlough is currently due to childcare and school closure reasons. Beyond that, we're seeing an increase in people who have started a new job but are now ineligible for furlough because of the cutoff date.

Spotlight on lockdown furlough search terms

(% of all clicks on furlough search terms)

Furlough search terms (incoming Google searches)	Lockdown 1 (11 - 17 May 2020)	Lockdown 2 (2 - 8 Nov 2020)	Lockdown 3 (4 - 10 Jan 2021)
Contain 'ask' or 'request' (<i>'can I ask to be furloughed', 'can I request my employer to furlough me' etc.</i>)	2%	10%	30%
Contain 'another' or 'second' or 'else' (<i>'can I get another/second job if I'm furloughed', 'can I work elsewhere on furlough' etc.</i>)	13%	24%	12%
Contain 'won't' or 'refuse' (<i>'my employer won't furlough me', 'can my employer refuse to furlough me' etc.</i>)	3%	3%	8%
Contain 'redundant' or "sacked" (<i>'can you be made redundant on furlough', 'can I be sacked on furlough' etc.</i>)	24%	4%	2%
Contain 'work' only (<i>'can I work on furlough', 'can you work while furloughed' etc.</i>)	25%	16%	10%

The table to the left shows how the nature of furlough search terms has changed. To do this we took a snapshot view of the three weeks when the furlough page had the highest traffic across each English lockdown.

When the scheme was announced, the most clicked on furlough search terms were around being made redundant on furlough and working on furlough.

This shifted to queries around getting another/second job on furlough during the start of the second lockdown.

During the current lockdown, the most clicked on queries are around asking an employer to be furloughed.