

# UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

## FEBRUARY 2015

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HIE Research and Economics Team



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The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count figures. The Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) introduced a new benefit, Universal Credit, in April 2013. At present Universal Credit benefit is not included in the Claimant Count figures. Office for National Statistics (ONS) and DWP are working to include jobseeker Universal Credit claims in the Claimant Count as soon as possible.

The January 2015 claimant count unemployment figures\* were released on 18th February 2015.

As illustrated by the chart below, the Highlands and Islands continues to have significantly lower unemployment than either Scotland or the UK - a trend which has been fairly constant since the recession.

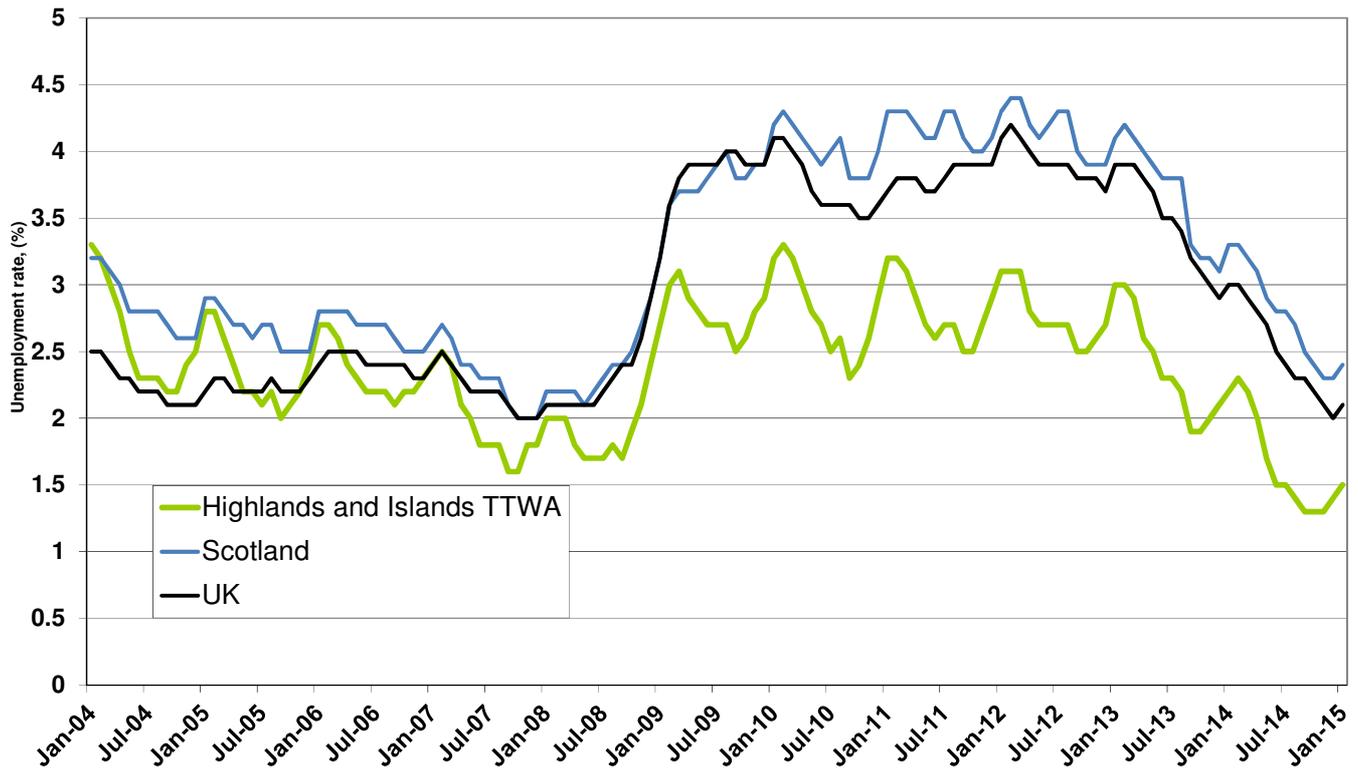


In January 2015, the average claimant count unemployment rate for the Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **1.5%**, which was below the rates for both Scotland (**2.4%**) and the UK (**2.1%**). The region's rate was higher than the previous month but lower than a year earlier (2.2% in January 2014).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in January 2015 were Wick (2.8%); Dunoon & Bute and Invergordon (both with 2.7%) and Campbeltown (2.6%). Six TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in January 2015 lower than 1.5% – Ullapool & Gairloch, Inverness & Dingwall and Mull & Islay (all with 1.0%); Orkney Islands (0.9%); Badenoch (0.8%) and Shetland Islands (0.6%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment benefit in the HIE area^ in January 2015 was 4,430. Out of the total, some 1,505 were long term unemployed\*\* and 885 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2004-2015)



\* Based on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) Claimant Count figures, produced monthly by ONS.

^ As defined by Scottish datazones.

\*\*1 For the purpose of this analysis, long-term unemployment (LTU) is defined as 'all those who have been unemployed and claiming benefit for over 6 months'.

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count rates for each of the 18 TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands.

Table 1 - Unemployment by TTWA

Travel to Work Area	January 2015		December 2014	January 2014	Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Wick	217	2.8	2.8	3.7	1	0.0	-64	-0.9
Dunoon & Bute	327	2.7	2.7	4.2	-1	0.0	-184	-1.5
Invergordon	377	2.7	2.5	2.9	28	0.2	-21	-0.2
Campbeltown	118	2.6	2.4	4.1	8	0.2	-69	-1.5
Skye & Lochalsh	187	2.3	2.2	3.1	9	0.1	-62	-0.8
Eilean Siar	378	2.2	2.1	2.9	28	0.1	-104	-0.7
Thurso	199	2.1	2.0	3.0	2	0.1	-89	-0.9
Lochgilphead	114	2.0	2.0	2.7	-1	0.0	-44	-0.7
Dornoch & Lairg	111	2.0	2.0	2.8	-1	0.0	-46	-0.8
Lochaber	245	2.0	1.9	2.4	8	0.1	-50	-0.4
Oban	187	1.8	1.5	2.4	25	0.3	-65	-0.6
Moray	865	1.5	1.3	1.9	106	0.2	-251	-0.4
Ullapool & Gairloch	53	1.0	1.0	2.1	0	0.0	-56	-1.1
Inverness & Dingwall	736	1.0	0.9	1.7	43	0.1	-524	-0.7
Mull & Islay	45	1.0	1.0	1.6	-1	0.0	-28	-0.6
Orkney Islands	115	0.9	0.8	1.1	4	0.1	-28	-0.2
Badenoch	65	0.8	0.7	1.2	2	0.1	-40	-0.4
Shetland Islands	91	0.6	0.5	0.9	16	0.1	-45	-0.3
Highlands and Islands TTWA	4,430	1.5	1.4	2.2	276	0.1	-1,770	-0.7
Scotland	84,304	2.4	2.3	3.3	4,541	0.1	-29,404	-0.9
United Kingdom	852,934	2.1	2.0	3.0	29,054	0.1	-389,978	-0.9

Table 2 shows the total claimant count unemployment, by number and rate over the month and year, long-term unemployment (LTU) and youth unemployment by HIE area office.

Table 2 - Unemployment by Area Office

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		LTU	Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number	number
Innse Gall	378	2.4	28	8.0	-104	-21.6	180	60
Caithness and Sutherland	547	2.3	0	0.0	-221	-28.8	265	120
Argyll and the Islands	858	2.0	45	5.5	-397	-31.6	340	190
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	465	1.9	19	4.3	-146	-23.9	105	65
Moray	865	1.6	106	14.0	-251	-22.5	250	230
Inner Moray Firth	1,178	1.3	73	6.6	-585	-33.2	320	175
Orkney	115	0.9	4	3.6	-28	-19.6	30	25
Shetland	91	0.6	16	21.3	-45	-33.1	15	20

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