

# UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

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HIE Research and Economics Team



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The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit figures rather than job seekers allowance.

Since 1996, unemployment has been measured as a count of the number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). However, the UK Government introduced a new benefit, Universal Credit, in May 2013 which has had a phased introduction across the country. The Claimant Count will now be a measure of all those in receipt of Universal Credit who are out of work, including income based JSA claimants. Contribution based JSA claimants will be measured separately.

JSA figures continue to be published, although they now form a subset of the new Claimant Count data, which the ONS believe to be the best measure of the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits.

The January 2017 claimant count figures were released on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

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

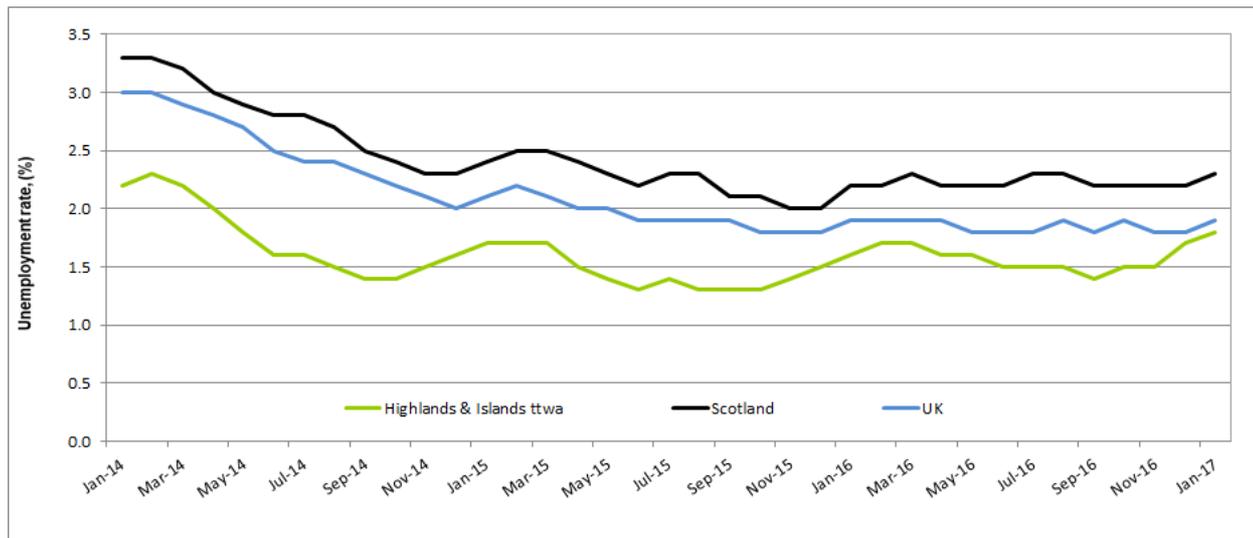


In January 2017, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **1.8%**, which was below the rates for both Scotland (**2.3%**) and the UK (**1.9%**). The region's rate was higher than that of the previous month (1.7% in December 2016), and that of a year earlier (1.6% in January 2016).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in January 2017 were Alness & Invergordon (3.2%); Dunoon & Rothesay (2.7%) and Wick (2.4%). Ten TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in January 2017 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (1.8%) – Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh (1.7%); Lochgilphead and Ullapool (both with 1.6%); Fort William and Oban (both with 1.5%); Aviemore & Grantown on Spey (1.4%); Orkney Islands and Portree (both with 1.0%); Shetland Islands (0.9%) and Mull & Islay (0.8%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area in January 2017 was 5,235. Out of the total, 985 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2017)



\* Based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit and, produced monthly by ONS.

^ As defined by Scottish datazones.

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count and universal credit allowance rates for each of the 19 TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands.

Table 1 - Unemployment by TTWA

| Travel to Work Area          | January 2017 |      | December 2016 |      | January 2016 |      | Monthly change |      | Annual change |      |
|------------------------------|--------------|------|---------------|------|--------------|------|----------------|------|---------------|------|
|                              | number       | rate | rate          | rate | number       | rate | number         | rate | number        | rate |
| Alness & Invergordon         | 430          | 3.2  | 2.9           | 2.7  | 40           | 0.3  | 70             | 0.5  |               |      |
| Dunoon & Rothesay            | 315          | 2.7  | 2.6           | 3.3  | 20           | 0.1  | -60            | -0.6 |               |      |
| Wick                         | 185          | 2.4  | 2.1           | 2.5  | 25           | 0.3  | -5             | -0.1 |               |      |
| Golpsie & Brora              | 120          | 2.2  | 2.0           | 1.8  | 10           | 0.2  | 20             | 0.4  |               |      |
| Campbeltown                  | 90           | 2.1  | 2.0           | 2.2  | 0            | 0.1  | -10            | -0.1 |               |      |
| Thurso                       | 190          | 2.1  | 2.1           | 2.2  | 0            | 0.0  | -10            | -0.1 |               |      |
| Elgin                        | 1,195        | 1.9  | 1.6           | 1.6  | 170          | 0.3  | 205            | 0.3  |               |      |
| Eilean Siar                  | 305          | 1.9  | 1.9           | 2.2  | 0            | 0.0  | -45            | -0.3 |               |      |
| Inverness                    | 1,380        | 1.8  | 1.7           | 1.3  | 105          | 0.1  | 370            | 0.5  |               |      |
| Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh | 70           | 1.7  | 1.5           | 1.8  | 5            | 0.2  | -5             | -0.1 |               |      |
| Lochgilphead                 | 90           | 1.6  | 1.5           | 1.4  | 5            | 0.1  | 10             | 0.2  |               |      |
| Ullapool                     | 65           | 1.6  | 1.5           | 1.6  | 5            | 0.1  | 0              | 0.0  |               |      |
| Fort William                 | 195          | 1.5  | 1.4           | 1.8  | 15           | 0.1  | -30            | -0.3 |               |      |
| Oban                         | 150          | 1.5  | 1.2           | 1.4  | 25           | 0.3  | 10             | 0.1  |               |      |
| Aviemore & Grantown on spey  | 115          | 1.4  | 1.3           | 1.0  | 0            | 0.1  | 30             | 0.4  |               |      |
| Orkney Islands               | 130          | 1.0  | 1.0           | 0.8  | -5           | 0.0  | 25             | 0.2  |               |      |
| Portree                      | 45           | 1.0  | 0.9           | 1.4  | 0            | 0.1  | -20            | -0.4 |               |      |
| Shetland                     | 135          | 0.9  | 0.8           | 0.8  | 15           | 0.1  | 10             | 0.1  |               |      |
| Mull & Islay                 | 35           | 0.8  | 0.8           | 0.7  | 0            | 0.0  | 5              | 0.1  |               |      |
| Highlands and Islands TTWA   | 5,250        | 1.8  | 1.7           | 1.6  | 445          | 0.1  | 580            | 0.2  |               |      |
| Scotland                     | 78,615       | 2.3  | 2.2           | 2.2  | 3,250        | 0.1  | 2,385          | 0.1  |               |      |
| United Kingdom               | 774,200      | 1.9  | 1.8           | 1.9  | 22,075       | 0.1  | 1,060          | 0.0  |               |      |

Table 2 shows the total claimant count and universal credit unemployment, by number and rate over the month and year and youth unemployment by HIE area office.

Table 2 - Unemployment by Area Office - January 2017

| HIE Area Office                | Total Unemployment |       | Monthly change |      | Annual change |       | Youth Unemployment (18-24) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------|----------------|------|---------------|-------|----------------------------|
|                                | number             | rate* | number         | %    | number        | %     | number                     |
| Caithness and Sutherland       | 520                | 2.2   | 35             | 7.2  | 10            | 2.0   | 95                         |
| Inner Moray Firth              | 1,935              | 2.0   | 150            | 8.4  | 470           | 32.1  | 335                        |
| Innse Gall                     | 305                | 1.9   | 0              | 0.0  | -45           | -12.9 | 45                         |
| Argyll and the Islands         | 740                | 1.9   | 55             | 8.0  | -55           | -6.9  | 145                        |
| Moray                          | 1,120              | 1.9   | 155            | 16.1 | 190           | 20.4  | 265                        |
| Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross | 350                | 1.5   | 25             | 7.7  | -45           | -11.4 | 40                         |
| Orkney                         | 130                | 1.0   | -5             | -3.7 | 25            | 23.8  | 30                         |
| Shetland                       | 135                | 0.9   | 15             | 12.5 | 10            | 8.0   | 30                         |

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