

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

APRIL 2015

HIE Research and Economics Team

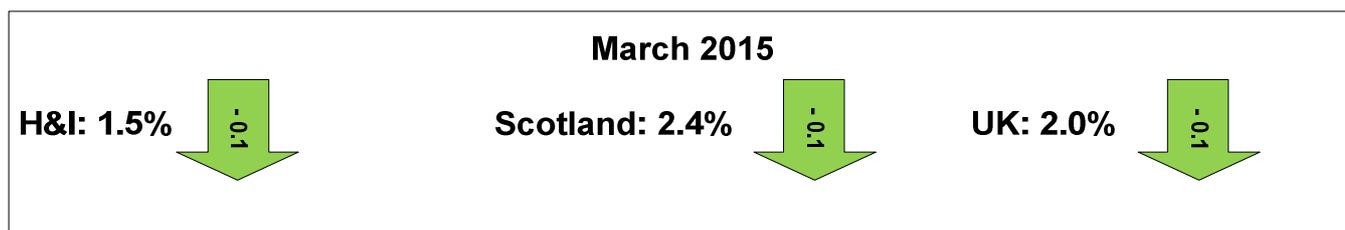


UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

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 March 2015 claimant count unemployment figures* were released on 17th April 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.

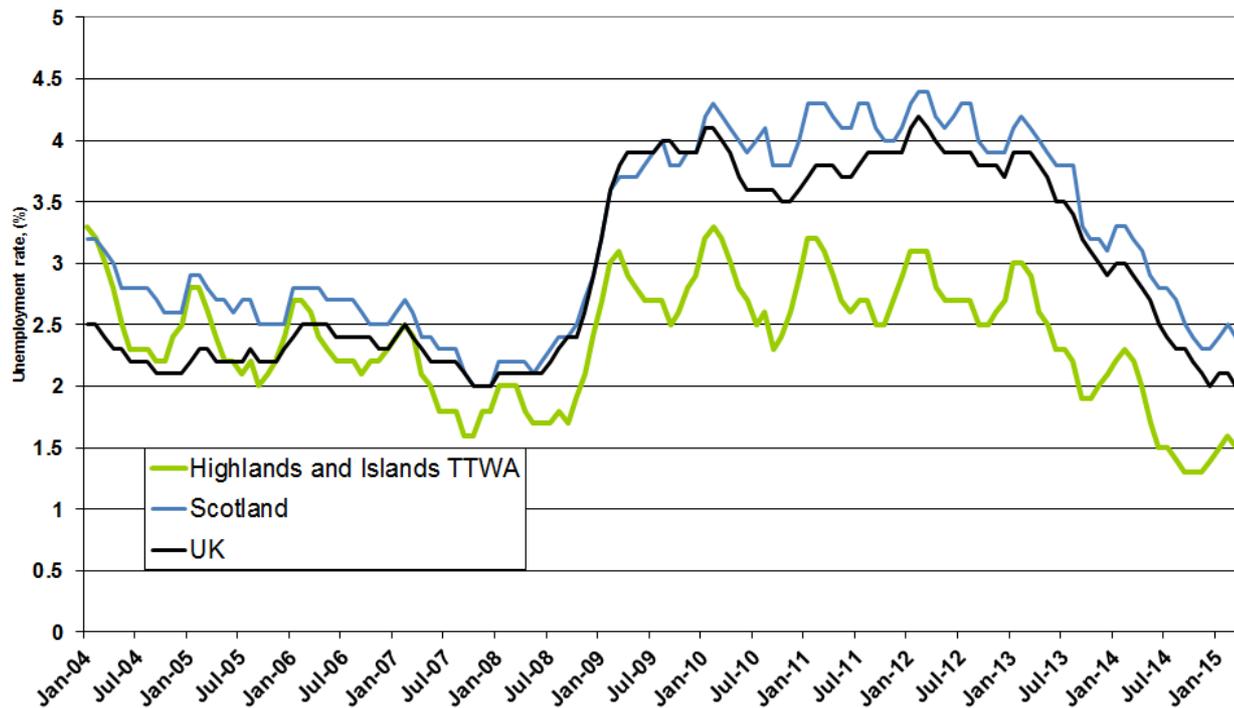


In March 2015, the average claimant count unemployment rate for the Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **1.5%**, which was below the rates for both Scotland (**2.4%**) and the UK (**2.0%**). The region's rate was lower than the previous month and that of a year earlier (2.1% in March 2014).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in March 2015 were Dunoon & Bute (2.8%), Invergordon and Campbeltown (both with 2.6%) and Wick (2.5%). Six TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in March 2015 lower than 1.5% – Mull & Islay (1.2%); Ullapool & Gairloch (1.1%); Inverness & Dingwall (0.9%); Badenoch (0.8%) and Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands (both with 0.7%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment benefit in the HIE area^ in March 2015 was 4,389. Out of the total, some 1,530 were long term unemployed** and 845 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 | March 2015 | | February 2015 | | March 2014 | | Monthly change | | Annual change | |
|----------------------------|------------|------|---------------|------|------------|------|----------------|------|---------------|--|
| | number | rate | rate | rate | number | rate | number | rate | | |
| Dunoon & Bute | 347 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 4.2 | -14 | -0.1 | -171 | -1.4 | | |
| Invergordon | 355 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 3.6 | -22 | -0.1 | -144 | -1.0 | | |
| Campbeltown | 116 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 3.9 | 2 | 0.1 | -63 | -1.3 | | |
| Wick | 194 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 3.7 | -11 | -0.2 | -89 | -1.2 | | |
| Eilean Siar | 391 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 7 | 0.0 | -98 | -0.6 | | |
| Skye & Lochalsh | 163 | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.9 | -27 | -0.3 | -72 | -0.9 | | |
| Thurso | 190 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 2.8 | -19 | -0.2 | -80 | -0.8 | | |
| Lochaber | 220 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 2.2 | -30 | -0.2 | -50 | -0.4 | | |
| Lochgilphead | 102 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.7 | 1 | 0.1 | -56 | -0.9 | | |
| Dornoch & Lairg | 99 | 1.7 | 2.2 | 2.7 | -25 | -0.5 | -57 | -1.0 | | |
| Moray | 922 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.9 | -10 | 0.0 | -189 | -0.3 | | |
| Oban | 160 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 2.2 | -25 | -0.2 | -74 | -0.7 | | |
| Mull & Islay | 55 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 0 | 0.0 | -7 | -0.2 | | |
| Ullapool & Gairloch | 56 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.8 | -6 | -0.1 | -37 | -0.7 | | |
| Inverness & Dingwall | 673 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.5 | -55 | -0.1 | -491 | -0.6 | | |
| Badenoch | 71 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 1.1 | -4 | -0.1 | -25 | -0.3 | | |
| Orkney Islands | 99 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 1.1 | -5 | -0.1 | -51 | -0.4 | | |
| Shetland Islands | 105 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 9 | 0.1 | -38 | -0.3 | | |
| Highlands and Islands TTWA | 4,318 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 2.1 | -234 | -0.1 | -1,792 | -0.6 | | |
| Scotland | 84,453 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 3.2 | -2,167 | -0.1 | -26,269 | -0.8 | | |
| United Kingdom | 826,849 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.9 | -31,495 | -0.1 | -369,420 | -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 | 391 | 2.4 | 7 | 1.8 | -98 | -20.0 | 180 | 50 |
| Caithness and Sutherland | 503 | 2.1 | -59 | -10.5 | -244 | -32.7 | 265 | 90 |
| Argyll and the Islands | 851 | 2.0 | -37 | -4.2 | -371 | -30.4 | 350 | 175 |
| Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross | 419 | 1.7 | -59 | -12.3 | -141 | -25.2 | 120 | 55 |
| Moray | 922 | 1.7 | -10 | -1.1 | -189 | -17.0 | 255 | 240 |
| Inner Moray Firth | 1,099 | 1.2 | -81 | -6.9 | -660 | -37.5 | 310 | 190 |
| Orkney | 99 | 0.8 | -5 | -4.8 | -51 | -34.0 | 35 | 20 |
| Shetland | 105 | 0.7 | 9 | 9.4 | -38 | -26.6 | 15 | 25 |

Research and Economics
April 2015

Contact us at hieresearch@hient.co.uk

