

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

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HIE Research and Economics Team

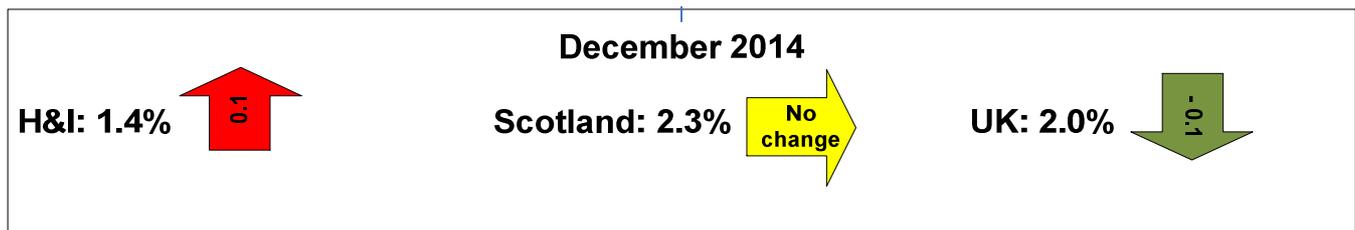


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The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count figures. The Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) introduced a 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 December 2014 claimant count unemployment figures* were released on 21st January 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.

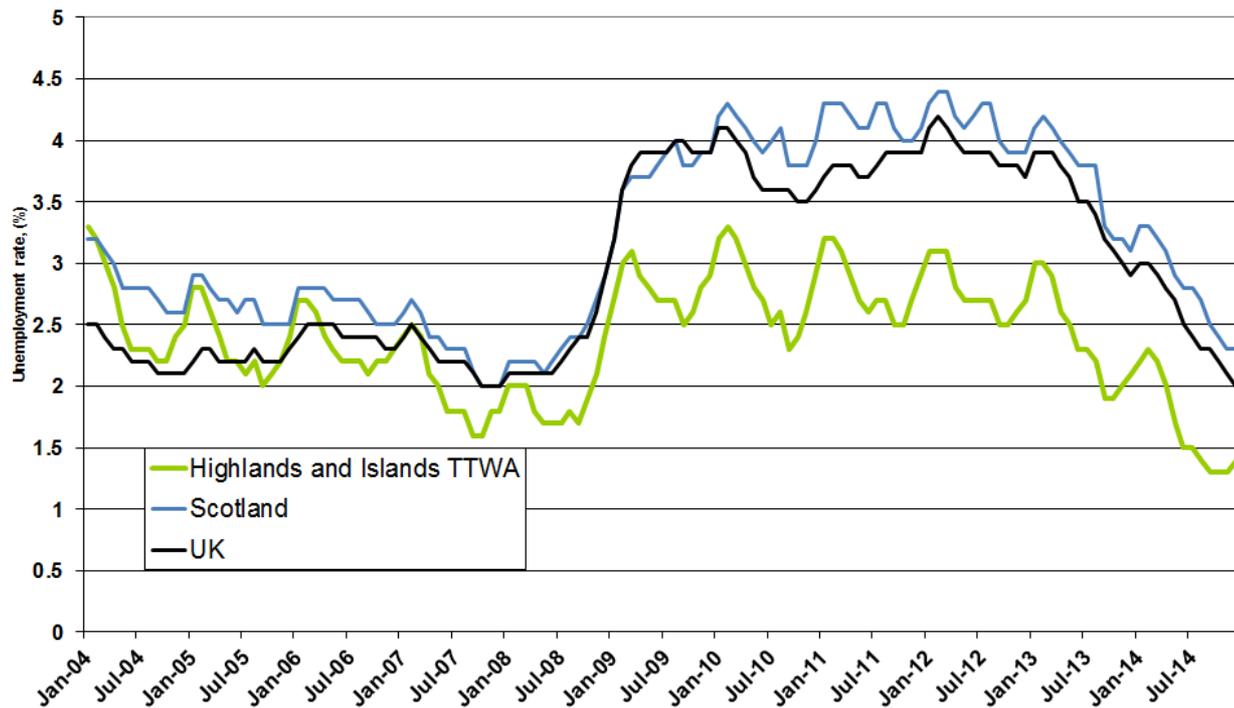


In December 2014, the average claimant count unemployment rate for the Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **1.4%**, which was below the rates for both Scotland (**2.3%**) and the UK (**2.0%**). The region's rate was higher than the previous month but lower than a year earlier (2.1% in December 2013).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in December 2014 were Wick (2.8%); Dunoon & Bute (2.7%); Invergordon (2.5%) and Campbeltown (2.4%). Seven TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in December 2014 lower than 1.4% – Moray (1.3%); Ullapool & Gairloch and Mull & Islay (both with 1.0%); Inverness and Dingwall (0.9%); Orkney Islands (0.8%); Badenoch (0.7%) and Shetland Islands (0.5%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment benefit in the HIE area[^] in December 2014 was 4,206. Out of the total, some 1,490 were long term unemployed** and 800 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2004-2014)



* 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	December 2014		November 2014		December 2013		Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate		
Wick	216	2.8	2.7	3.8	10	0.1	-72	-1.0		
Dunoon & Bute	328	2.7	2.6	4.1	4	0.1	-172	-1.4		
Invergordon	349	2.5	2.0	2.6	67	0.5	-5	-0.1		
Campbeltown	110	2.4	2.6	4.1	-9	-0.2	-74	-1.7		
Skye & Lochalsh	178	2.2	2.0	3.0	19	0.2	-65	-0.8		
Eilean Siar	350	2.1	2.1	2.8	5	0.0	-123	-0.7		
Thurso	197	2.0	2.0	3.0	8	0.0	-93	-1.0		
Lochgilphead	115	2.0	1.7	2.8	15	0.3	-45	-0.8		
Dornoch & Lairg	112	2.0	1.7	2.6	13	0.3	-34	-0.6		
Lochaber	237	1.9	1.5	2.3	47	0.4	-48	-0.4		
Oban	162	1.5	1.5	2.3	4	0.0	-79	-0.8		
Moray	759	1.3	1.2	1.7	65	0.1	-217	-0.4		
Ullapool & Gairloch	53	1.0	1.0	2.2	1	0.0	-58	-1.2		
Mull & Islay	46	1.0	0.8	1.5	10	0.2	-21	-0.5		
Inverness & Dingwall	693	0.9	0.8	1.6	59	0.1	-514	-0.7		
Orkney Islands	111	0.8	0.8	1.0	9	0.0	-23	-0.2		
Badenoch	63	0.7	0.7	1.3	3	0.0	-47	-0.6		
Shetland Islands	75	0.5	0.6	0.9	-11	-0.1	-64	-0.4		
Highlands and Islands TTWA	4,154	1.4	1.3	2.1	319	0.1	-1,754	-0.7		
Scotland	79,763	2.3	2.3	3.1	-785	0.0	-28,521	-0.8		
United Kingdom	823,880	2.0	2.1	2.9	-24,205	-0.1	-377,632	-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
Caithness and Sutherland	547	2.3	31	6.0	-223	-29.0	255	115
Innse Gall	350	2.2	5	1.4	-123	-26.0	180	50
Argyll and the Islands	813	1.9	19	2.4	-412	-33.6	335	180
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	446	1.9	67	17.7	-147	-24.8	100	70
Moray	759	1.4	65	9.4	-217	-22.2	240	190
Inner Moray Firth	1,105	1.2	129	13.2	-566	-33.9	330	160
Orkney	111	0.9	9	8.8	-23	-17.2	35	20
Shetland	75	0.5	-11	-12.8	-64	-46.0	15	15

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