

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

APRIL 2014

HIE Research and Economics Team

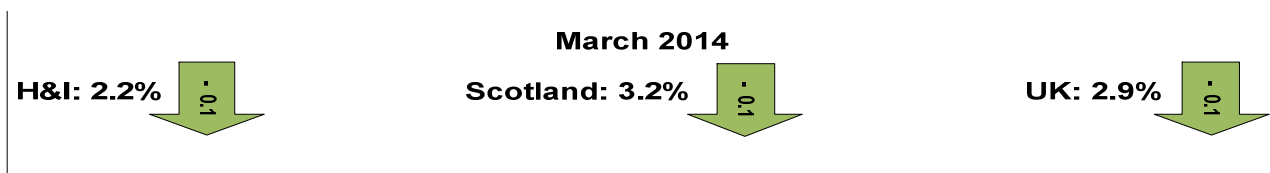


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The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count figures. The Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. The Department for Work and Pensions introduced a new benefit,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

The March 2014 claimant count unemployment figures* were released on 16th April 2014.

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.

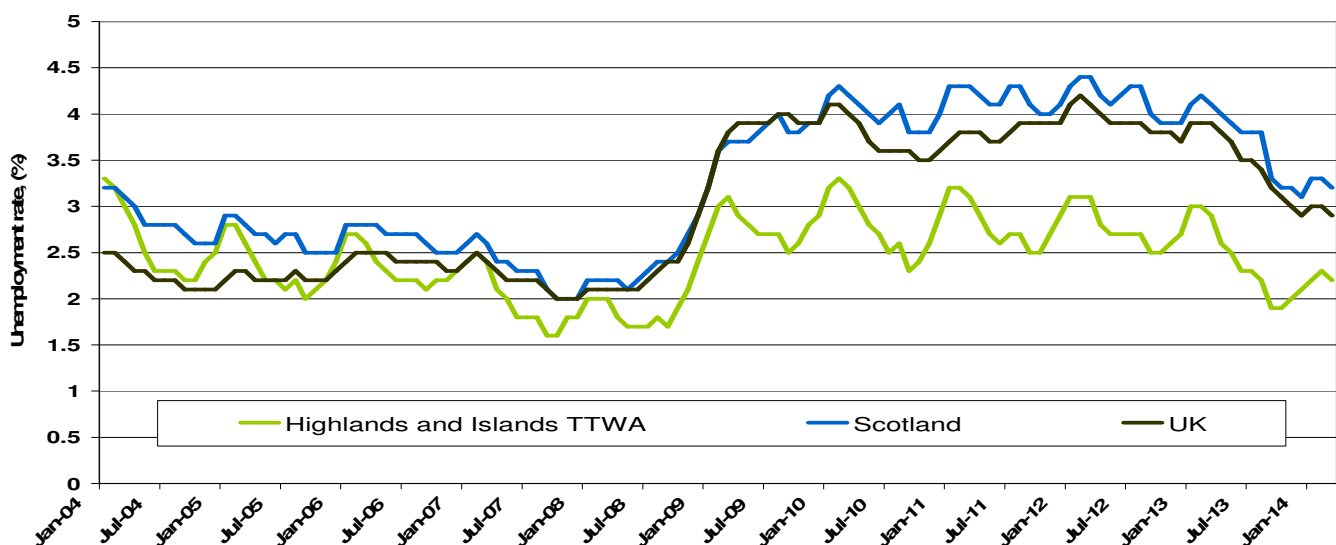


In March 2014, the average claimant count unemployment rate for the Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **2.2%**, which was below the rates for both Scotland (**3.2%**) and the UK's (**2.9%**). The region's rate fell by 0.1% on the previous month and was lower than a year earlier (2.9% in March 2013).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in March 2014 were Dunoon & Bute (4.0%), Wick (3.9%), Invergordon (3.8%) and Campbeltown (3.7%). Seven TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in March 2014 lower than 2.2% – Moray (2.0%), Ullapool & Gairloch (1.8%), Inverness & Dingwall (1.6%), Mull & Islay (1.3%), Badenoch and Orkney Islands both (1.2%) and Shetland Islands (1.0%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment benefit in the HIE area^ in March 2014 was 6,181. Out of the total, some 2,270 were long term unemployed** and 1,335 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.

** 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 2014		February 2014	March 2013	Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Dunoon & Bute	518	4.0	4.1	5.5	-15	-0.1	-189	-1.5
Wick	283	3.9	4.0	4.5	-9	-0.1	-44	-0.6
Invergordon	499	3.8	3.6	3.9	28	0.2	-20	-0.1
Campbeltown	179	3.7	3.9	3.8	-9	-0.2	-3	-0.1
Eilean Siar	489	3.0	3.0	3.1	8	0.0	-12	-0.1
Thurso	270	2.9	3.0	3.1	-9	-0.1	-19	-0.2
Skye & Lochalsh	235	2.9	3.0	3.6	-13	-0.1	-61	-0.7
Dornoch & Lairg	156	2.7	3.0	2.7	-16	-0.3	1	0.0
Lochgilphead	158	2.5	2.6	2.7	-6	-0.1	-12	-0.2
Lochaber	270	2.2	2.6	3.3	-48	-0.4	-131	-1.1
Oban	234	2.2	2.3	2.9	-11	-0.1	-84	-0.7
Moray	1,111	2.0	2.0	2.6	12	0.0	-310	-0.6
Ullapool & Gairloch	93	1.8	2.0	2.8	-9	-0.2	-48	-1.0
Inverness & Dingwall	1,164	1.6	1.7	2.6	-63	-0.1	-738	-1.0
Mull & Islay	62	1.3	1.5	1.9	-13	-0.2	-33	-0.6
Badenoch	96	1.2	1.4	2.4	-18	-0.2	-99	-1.2
Orkney Islands	150	1.2	1.2	1.5	-6	0.0	-37	-0.3
Shetland Islands	143	1.0	0.9	1.6	21	0.1	-87	-0.6
Highlands and Islands TTWA	6,110	2.2	2.3	2.9	-176	-0.1	-1,926	-0.7
Scotland	110,722	3.2	3.3	4.1	-3,687	-0.1	-32,243	-0.9
United Kingdom	1,196,269	2.9	3.0	3.9	-47,165	-0.1	-388,199	-1.0

Source: ONS

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	747	3.2	-33	-4.2	-69	-8.5	340	170
Innse Gall	489	3.1	8	1.7	-12	-2.4	235	80
Argyll and the Islands	1,222	2.8	-62	-4.8	-333	-21.4	520	265
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	560	2.3	-71	-11.3	-233	-29.4	175	100
Moray	1,111	2.0	12	1.1	-310	-21.8	345	305
Inner Moray Firth	1,759	1.9	-53	-2.9	-857	-32.8	570	340
Orkney	150	1.2	-6	-3.8	-37	-19.8	50	40
Shetland	143	1.0	21	17.2	-87	-37.8	35	35

*Calculated rate, as a % of working age population

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Contact us at hieresearch@hient.co.uk

