

# Unemployment digest



## Summary

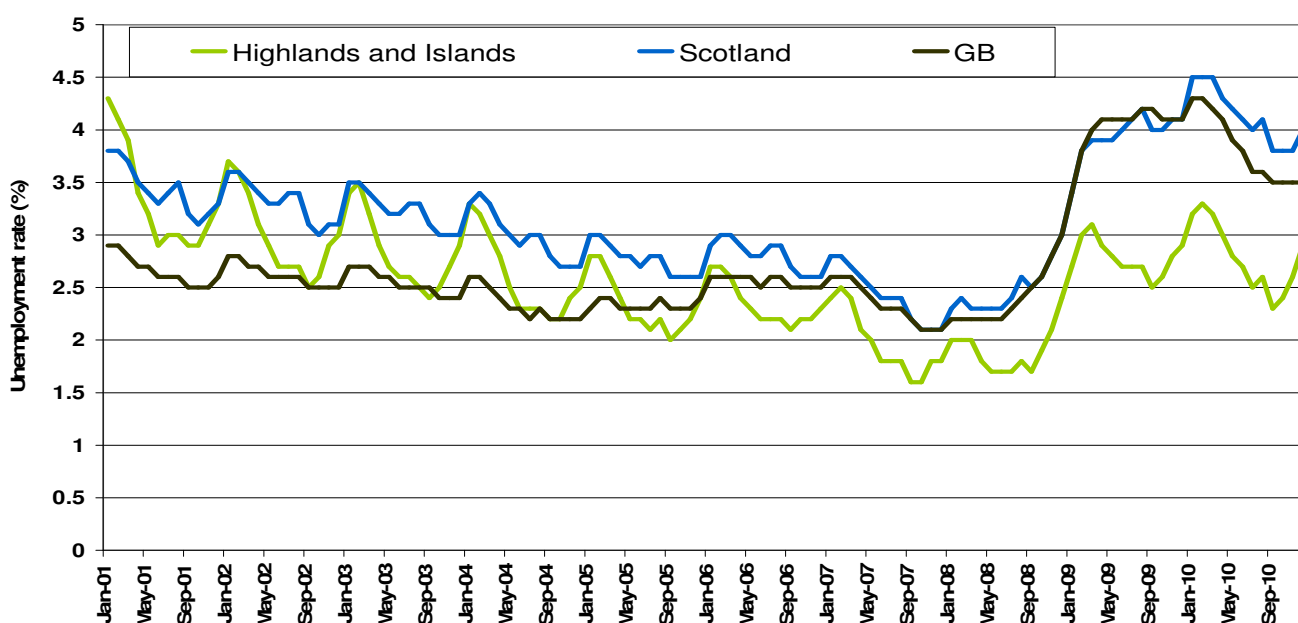
The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count figures. The Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) Claimant Count records the number of people claiming JSA and National Insurance (NI) credits at Job Centre Plus local offices. HIE continue to use the Claimant Count data as it is available at a more local level than the ILO unemployment rate statistics provided by ONS. Claimant Count statistics are available monthly at Area Office and Travel to Work area level. This means we are able to identify, interpret and respond to changes in very local labour markets.

The December 2010 unemployment figures were released on 19th January 2011. Over the month, November 2010 to December 2010, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Great Britain rose by 0.9% from 1,356,439 to 1,368,310 (11,871 claimants). This figure is 9.6% lower than the same period last year, where the number of claimants stood at 1,513,921, a decrease of 145,611 claimants.

The number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Scotland also rose over the month November to December 2010, rising 3.8% from 131,271 to 136,200 claimants. This figure is 1.8% higher than the same period last year, where the number of claimants stood at 133,738, an increase of 2,462 claimants.

The unemployment rate for the Highlands and Islands also rose over the month, rising 12.6% (921 claimants) to 8,211 claimants. This figure is 5.4% (420 claimants) higher than the same period last year, where the total number of claimants stood at 7,791.

**Figure 1 - TTWA Unemployment rates (%): 2001-2010**



Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Note: Working age is defined as 16-64 for both men and women

## Table 1 – Unemployment rates by TTWA

Table 1 below illustrates the Claimant Count rates for December 2010, using the 2001 TTWAs (Travel to Work Areas). The Claimant Count rates are compared with November 2010 and December 2009 to highlight the monthly and annual changes. The TTWAs are ranked in descending order by the December 2010 figure.

Area	December 2010	November 2010	December 2009
Dunoon & Bute	4.9	4.6	4.5
Invergordon	4.3	4.1	4.2
Wick	4.2	3.9	4.6
Campbeltown	3.7	3.6	4.0
Skye & Lochalsh	3.6	3.1	3.2
Thurso	3.5	3.2	3.0
Eilean Siar	3.3	3.1	3.5
Dornoch & Lairg	3.2	3.1	3.5
Lochaber	3.2	2.7	2.9
Inverness & Dingwall	2.9	2.5	2.6
Oban	2.6	2.4	2.5
Ullapool & Gairloch	2.6	2.1	2.2
Lochgilphead	2.5	2.2	2.3
Moray	2.5	2.1	2.5
Badenoch	2.1	1.7	2.1
Mull & Islay	2.0	1.8	1.9
Orkney Islands	1.6	1.5	1.3
Shetland Islands	1.4	1.5	1.3
<b>HIE TTWAs</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.8</b>
Highland	3.2	2.8	2.9
Scotland	4.0	3.8	3.9
Great Britain	3.5	3.5	3.9

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Over the month November to December 2010, the claimant count rose in 17 and fell in the remaining 1 TTWA. Skye & Lochalsh, Lochaber and Ullapool & Gairloch all shared the highest increase over the month, rising 0.5%. Shetland Islands was the only area to decrease over the month, falling 0.1% from 1.5% to 1.4%.

Over the year to December 2010, the claimant count rose in 12, fell in 4 and was static in the remaining 2 TTWAs – Moray and Badenoch. Thurso had the greatest increase over the year, rising 0.5% from 3.0% to 3.5%. Wick had the greatest decrease over the year, falling 0.4% from 4.6% to 4.2%.

## Table 2 – Number of unemployed by Area Office

Table 2 below traces changes in the numbers (not rates) of unemployed people claiming benefits in the Highlands and Islands Enterprise Area Offices (AOs) between November 2010 and December 2010. A yearly comparison between December 2009 and December 2010 is also provided. The AOs are ranked in descending order by the size of the annual change in the number of unemployed, displayed in the right hand column.

Area Office	Number claiming unemployment benefit (December 2010)	% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (Nov 10 - Dec 10)	% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (Dec 09 - Dec 10)
Orkney	205	6.2	21.3
Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross	777	19.2	11.3
Shetland	199	-4.3	9.3
Inner Moray Firth	2,797	15.1	9.3
Argyll and the Islands	1,424	7.9	4.8
Caithness and Sutherland	866	8.4	1.2
Moray	1,403	17.9	0.6
Innse Gall	540	8.7	-5.8
<b>HIE Area</b>	<b>8,211</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>5.4</b>
Highland	4,440	14.4	7.9
Scotland	136,200	3.8	1.8
Great Britain	1,368,310	0.9	-9.6

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Over the month to December 2010, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit rose in 7 of the 8 area offices. Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross had the greatest increase over the month, rising 19.2% from 652 to 777 claimants. Shetland was the only area office to decrease over the month, falling 4.3% from 208 to 199.

Over the year to December 2010, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit rose in 7, and fell in the remaining 1 area office. Orkney had the greatest increase over the year, rising 21.3% from 169 to 205 claimants. Innse Gall was the only area office to decrease over the year, falling 5.8% from 573 to 540 claimants.

### Table 3 – Long-term unemployment by Area Office

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 3 below shows the number of people who are long term unemployed in December 2010 in each of the AOs. It also highlights the percentage change in the number of those claiming long term unemployment benefit over the month (November 2010 to December 2010) and over the year (December 2009 to December 2010). The AOs are ranked by the right hand column, which contains the size of the annual percentage change in numbers of LTU.

Area Office	% Change in number of LTU		
	December 2010	(Nov 10 - Dec 10)	(Dec 09 - Dec 10)
Moray	345	0.0	7.8
Caithness and Sutherland	285	0.0	7.5
Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross	110	10.0	0.0
Argyll and the Islands	440	1.1	-3.3
Shetland	50	0.0	-9.1
Orkney	30	0.0	-14.3
Inner Moray Firth	535	-0.9	-14.4
Innse Gall	155	3.3	-26.2
<b>HIE Area</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>-6.0</b>
Highland	930	0.5	-7.0
Scotland	43,170	1.2	1.6
Great Britain	435,145	-2.6	-16.1

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Over the month November to December 2010, the number of long term unemployment benefit claimants rose in 3, fell in 1 and was static in the remaining 4 area offices – Moray, Caithness & Sutherland, Shetland and Orkney. Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross had the greatest increase over the month, rising 10.0% from 100 to 110 claimants. Inner Moray Firth was the only area to decrease over the month, falling 0.9% from 540 to 535 claimants.

Over the year to December 2010, the number of people claiming long-term unemployment benefit rose in 2, fell in 5 and was static in the remaining area office – Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross. Moray had the greatest increase over the year, rising 7.8% from 320 to 345 claimants. Innse Gall had the greatest decrease over the year, falling 26.2% from 210 to 155 claimants.

Heather Smith – Research Assistant  
 Kateryna McKinnon – Economist

[heather.smith@hient.co.uk](mailto:heather.smith@hient.co.uk)

Tel: (01463) 244320

[kateryna.mckinnon@hient.co.uk](mailto:kateryna.mckinnon@hient.co.uk)

Tel: (01463) 244258

Further economic information and previous factsheets can be accessed on the HIE Website: <http://www.hie.co.uk>

© Please acknowledge Highlands and Islands Enterprise when using any information contained in this report.