

# Unemployment digest



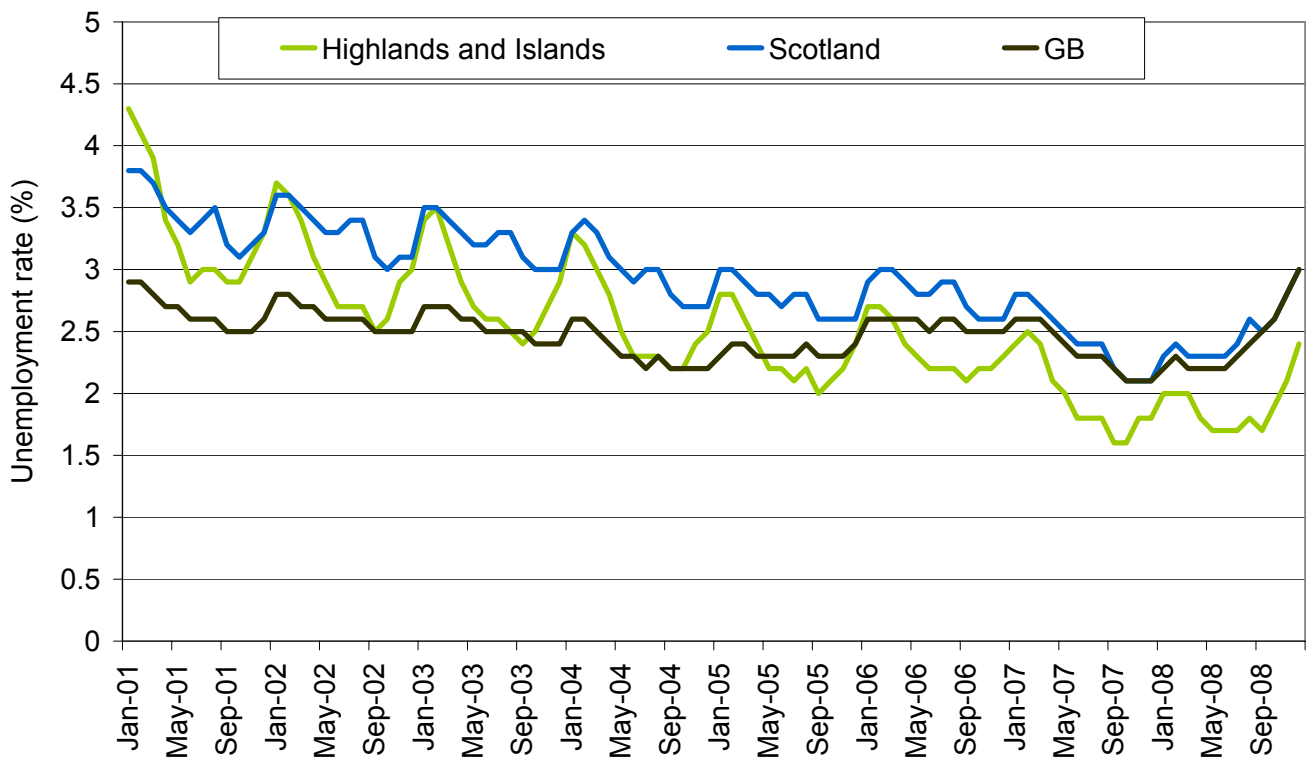
## Summary

The December 2008 unemployment figures were released on 21st January 2009. During the month, November to December 2008, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Great Britain rose by 95,031 claimants (9.3%) from 1,022,481 to 1,117,512 claimants. This figure is 45.6% higher than the same period last year, where the number of claimants stood at 767,688 an increase of 349,824 claimants.

The number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Scotland also rose during the month, rising by 7,235 claimants (8.0%) from 90,488 to 97,723 claimants. This figure is higher than the same period last year, where the number of claimants stood at 69,165, an increase of 41.3% (28,558 claimants).

The HIE area also saw an increase in the amount of people claiming unemployment benefit over the month, November to December 2008, rising by 656 claimants (11.7%) from 5,589 to 6,245 claimants. This figure is higher than the same period last year, where the total number of claimants stood at 4,782, an increase of 30.6% (1,463 claimants).

**Figure 1 - TTWA Unemployment rates (%): 2001-2008**



Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

## Table 1 – Unemployment rates by TTWA

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count rates for December 2008, using the **2004** TTWAs (Travel-To-Work-Areas). The claimant count rates are compared with November 2008 and December 2007 to highlight the monthly and annual changes. The TTWAs are ranked in descending order by the December 2008 figure. **N.B Rates are now available for the 2004 TTWA's therefore they have replaced the 1998 TTWA's.**

| Area                 | December 2008 | November 2008 | December 2007 |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Dunoon & Bute        | 4.0           | 3.7           | 3.1           |
| Skye & Lochalsh      | 4.0           | 3.1           | 2.8           |
| Campbeltown          | 3.9           | 3.8           | 2.7           |
| Wick                 | 3.6           | 3.4           | 3.3           |
| Invergordon          | 2.9           | 2.8           | 2.6           |
| Eilean Siar          | 2.9           | 2.6           | 2.5           |
| Dornoch & Lairg      | 2.7           | 2.4           | 2.5           |
| Thurso               | 2.4           | 2.3           | 2.0           |
| Lochaber             | 2.4           | 2.0           | 1.6           |
| Ullapool & Gairloch  | 2.3           | 2.4           | 2.8           |
| Oban                 | 2.2           | 2.0           | 1.8           |
| Inverness & Dingwall | 2.1           | 1.9           | 1.2           |
| Moray                | 2.1           | 1.9           | 1.8           |
| Lochgilphead         | 2.0           | 1.9           | 1.8           |
| Badenoch             | 2.0           | 1.7           | 1.3           |
| Mull & Islay         | 1.9           | 1.5           | 1.9           |
| Orkney Islands       | 1.2           | 1.0           | 1.0           |
| Shetland Islands     | 1.1           | 1.1           | 0.9           |
| HIE TTWAs            | 2.4           | 2.1           | 1.8           |
| Highland             | 2.4           | 2.2           | 1.7           |
| Scotland             | 3.0           | 2.8           | 2.1           |
| Great Britain        | 3.0           | 2.8           | 2.1           |

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

During the month, November to December 2008, the claimant count rose in 16 TTWAs, fell in 1 and was static in the remaining 1 – Shetland Islands. Skye & Lochalsh had the greatest increase over the month, rising by 0.9% from 3.1% to 4.0% (69 claimants).

Over the year to December 2008, the claimant count rose in 16, fell in 1 and was static in the remaining 1 TTWA – Mull & Islay. Campbeltown and Skye & Lochalsh shared the greatest increase over the year, both rising by 1.2%. Ullapool & Gairloch was the only TTWA to decrease over the year, falling 0.5% from 2.8% to 2.3%.

**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 Area Offices (AOs) between November and December 2008. A yearly comparison between December 2007 and December 2008 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.

| <b>Area Office</b>           | <b>Number claiming unemployment benefit (Dec 2008)</b> | <b>% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (Nov 08-Dec 08)</b> | <b>% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (Dec 07 - Dec 08)</b> |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Inner Moray Firth            | 1,901  | 10.3  | 55.4  |
| Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross | 650  | 22.0  | 33.7  |
| Argyll and the Islands       | 1,169  | 9.9   | 26.4  |
| Orkney                       | 144  | 17.1  | 23.1  |
| Shetland                     | 150  | -2.0  | 23.0  |
| Moray                        | 1,132  | 15.6  | 21.7  |
| Innse Gall                   | 452  | 12.2  | 15.3  |
| Caithness and Sutherland     | 647  | 5.9   | 10.2  |
| HIE Area                     | 6,245  | 11.7  | 30.6  |
| Highland                     | 3,198  | 11.5  | 39.3  |
| Scotland                     | 97,723   | 8.0   | 41.3  |
| Great Britain                | 1,117,512  | 9.3   | 45.6  |

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Over the month, November to December 2008, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit rose 7 and fell in the remaining 1 area office. Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross had the greatest increase over the month, rising 22.0% from 533 to 650 claimants. Shetland was the only area office to decrease over the month, falling 2.0% from 153 to 150 claimants.

Over the year to December 2008, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit rose in all 8 area offices. Inner Moray Firth had the greatest increase over the year, rising 55.4% from 1,223 to 1,901 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 2008 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 to December 2008) and over the year (December 2007 to December 2008). 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 2008             | (Nov 08 - Dec 08) |
| Shetland                     | 35                        | 16.7              |
| Inner Moray Firth            | 265                       | 6.0               |
| Argyll and the Islands       | 295                       | 9.3               |
| Innse Gall                   | 105                       | 5.0               |
| Caithness and Sutherland     | 185                       | 5.7               |
| Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross | 90                        | -10.0             |
| Moray                        | 170                       | -2.9              |
| Orkney                       | 20                        | 0.0               |
| HIE Area                     | 1,165                     | 4.0               |
| Highland                     | 545                       | 4.8               |
| Scotland                     | 21,615                    | 7.0               |
| Great Britain                | 251,140                   | 5.2               |

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

During the month, the number of long term unemployment benefit claimants rose in 5, fell in 2 and was static in the remaining 1 area office – Orkney. Shetland had the greatest increase over the month, rising 16.7% from 30 to 35 claimants. Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross had the greatest decrease over the month, falling 10% from 100 to 90 claimants.

Over the year to December 2008, there was an increase in 2, a decrease in 5 area offices, with the remaining area office static – Argyll & the Islands. Shetland had the greatest increase over the year, rising 75.0% from 20 to 35 claimants. Orkney had the greatest decrease over the year, falling 20.0% from 25 to 20 claimants.

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