

Unemployment digest



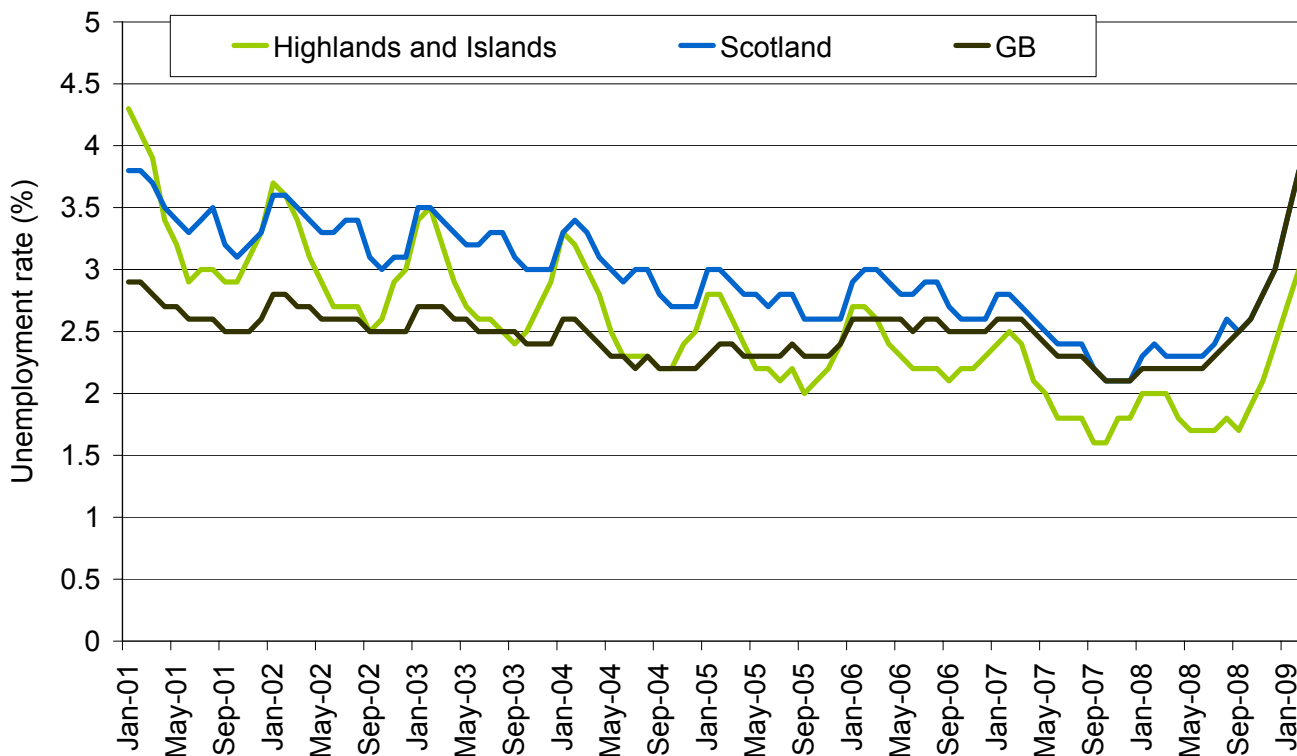
Summary

The February 2009 unemployment figures were released on 18th March 2009. During the month, January to February 2009, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Great Britain rose by 13.9% from 1,243,064 to 1,416,213 claimants. This figure is 71.8% higher than the same period last year, where the number of claimants stood at 824,298 an increase of 591,915 claimants.

The number of people claiming unemployment benefit in Scotland also rose during the month, rising by 12.0% (13,024 claimants) from 108,906 to 121,930 claimants. This figure is higher than the same period last year, where the number of claimants stood at 76,111, an increase of 60.2% (45,819 claimants).

The HIE area also saw an increase in the amount of people claiming unemployment benefit over the month, January to February 2009, rising by 11.8% (840 claimants) from 7,140 to 7,980 claimants. This figure is higher than the same period last year, where the total number of claimants stood at 5,285, an increase of 51.0% (2,695 claimants).

Figure 1 - TTWA Unemployment rates (%): 2001-2009



Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Table 1 – Unemployment rates by TTWA

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count rates for February 2009, using the **2004** TTWAs (Travel-To-Work-Areas). The claimant count rates are compared with January 2009 and February 2008 to highlight the monthly and annual changes. The TTWAs are ranked in descending order by the February 2009 figure. **N.B Rates are now available for the 2004 TTWA's therefore they have replaced the 1998 TTWA's.**

Area	February 2009	January 2009	February 2008
Dunoon & Bute	5.0	4.6	3.3
Invergordon	4.4	3.7	3.0
Wick	4.2	4.0	3.1
Campbeltown	4.1	4.0	3.7
Eilean Siar	4.1	3.7	2.6
Skye & Lochalsh	3.9	3.6	3.0
Dornoch & Lairg	3.2	3.1	2.5
Thurso	3.1	2.7	2.2
Lochaber	3.0	2.6	1.7
Inverness & Dingwall	3.0	2.5	1.5
Moray	2.8	2.5	2.1
Oban	2.6	2.6	1.9
Ullapool & Gairloch	2.5	2.6	2.5
Lochgilphead	2.2	2.2	1.9
Badenoch	2.1	2.0	1.3
Mull & Islay	2.0	1.8	2.0
Orkney Islands	1.4	1.3	1.0
Shetland Islands	1.3	1.2	0.8
HIE TTWAs	3.0	2.7	2.0
Highland	3.1	2.8	1.9
Scotland	3.8	3.4	2.4
Great Britain	3.8	3.4	2.2

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Over the month, January to February 2009, the claimant count rose in 15 TTWAs, fell in 1 and was static in the remaining 2 – Lochgilphead and Oban. Invergordon had the greatest increase over the month, rising by 0.7% from 3.7% to 4.4%. Ullapool & Gairloch was the only TTWA to decrease over the month, falling 0.1% from 2.6% to 2.5%.

Over the year to February 2009, the claimant count rose in 16, and was static in the remaining 2 TTWAs – Mull & Islay and Ullapool & Gairloch. Dunoon & Bute had the greatest increase over the year, rising by 1.7% from 3.3% to 5.0%.

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 January 2009 and February 2009. A yearly comparison between February 2008 and February 2009 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 (Feb 2009)	% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (Jan 09-Feb 09)	% change in number claiming unemployment benefit (Feb 08 - Feb 09)
Inner Moray Firth	2,660	17.9	82.4
Innse Gall	640	10.7	61.2
Shetland	175	9.4	60.6
Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross	716	8.6	40.9
Argyll and the Islands	1,397	8.0	36.8
Moray	1,455	10.5	33.7
Caithness and Sutherland	774	7.1	33.4
Orkney	163	6.5	31.5
HIE Area	7,980	11.8	51.0
Highland	4,150	14.0	63.0
Scotland	121,930	12.0	60.2
Great Britain	1,416,213	13.9	71.8

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

Over the month, January to February 2009, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit rose in all 8 area offices. Inner Moray Firth had the greatest increase over the month, rising 17.9% from 2,257 to 2,660 claimants.

Over the year to February 2009, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit rose in all 8 area offices. Inner Moray Firth had the greatest increase over the year, rising 82.4% from 1,458 to 2,660 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 February 2009 in each of the AOs. It also highlights the percentage change in the number of those claiming long term unemployment benefit over the month (January 2009 to February 2009) and over the year (February 2008 to February 2009). The AOs are ranked by the right hand column, which contains the size of the annual percentage change in numbers of LTU.

Area Office	February 2009	% Change in number of LTU (Jan 09 - Feb 09)	% Change in number of LTU (Feb 08 - Feb 09)
Shetland	35	-12.5	133.3
Inner Moray Firth	345	15.0	60.5
Argyll and the Islands	360	10.8	22.0
Innse Gall	135	17.4	17.4
Moray	240	14.3	17.1
Lochaber, Skye & Wester Ross	115	9.5	15.0
Caithness and Sutherland	200	-4.8	14.3
Orkney	25	0.0	0.0
HIE Area	1,455	9.4	27.1
Highland	660	7.3	34.7
Scotland	26,125	7.3	33.7
Great Britain	301,270	8.5	30.1

Source: Claimant Count (NOMIS)

During the month, the number of long term unemployment benefit claimants rose in 5 area offices, fell in 2 and was static in the remaining 1 - Orkney. Innse Gall had the greatest increase over the month, rising 17.4% from 115 to 135 claimants. Shetland had the greatest decrease over the month, falling 12.5% from 40 to 35 claimants.

Over the year to February 2009, there was an increase in 7 and the remaining area static - Orkney. Shetland had the greatest increase over the year, rising 133.3% from 15 to 35 claimants.

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

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