

# UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

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HIE Research and Economics Team



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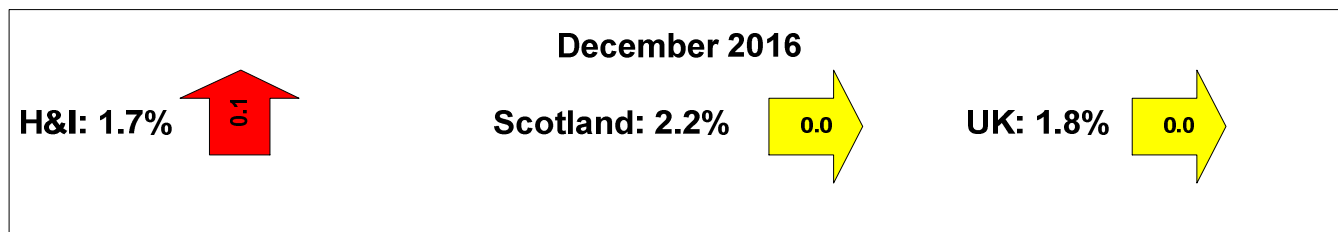
The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit figures rather than job seekers allowance.

Since 1996, unemployment has been measured as a count of the number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). However, the UK Government introduced a new benefit, Universal Credit, in May 2013 which has had a phased introduction across the country. The Claimant Count will now be a measure of all those in receipt of Universal Credit who are out of work, including income based JSA claimants. Contribution based JSA claimants will be measured separately.

JSA figures continue to be published, although they now form a subset of the new Claimant Count data, which the ONS believe to be the best measure of the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits.

The December 2016 claimant count figures were released on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

As illustrated by the chart below, the Highlands and Islands continues to have lower unemployment than either Scotland or the UK - a trend which has been fairly constant since the recession.

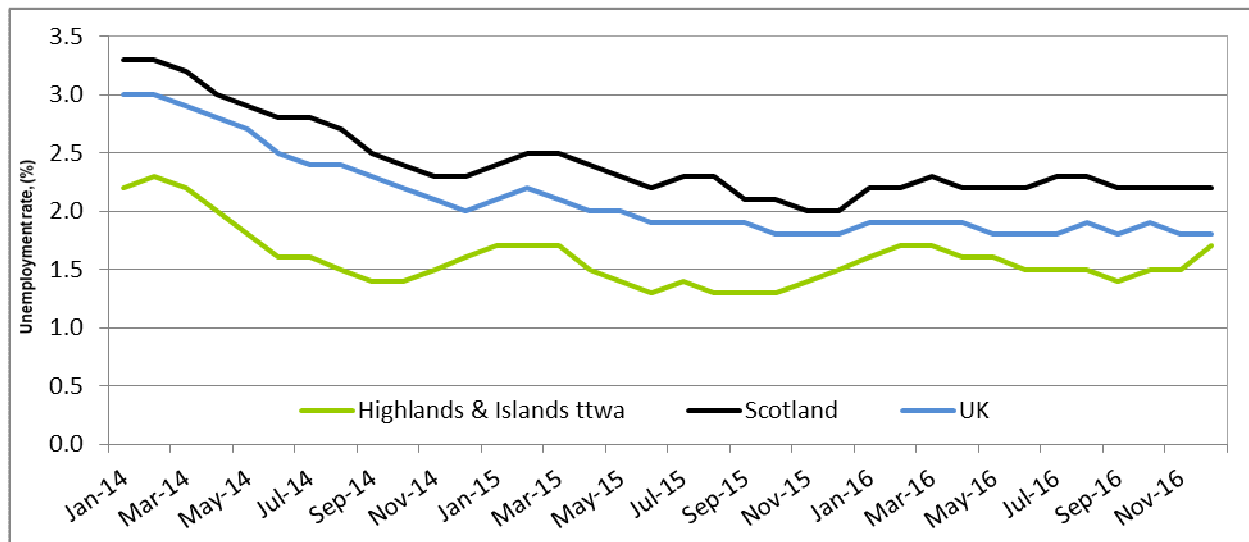


In December 2016, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **1.7%**, which was below the rates for both Scotland (**2.2%**) and the UK (**1.8%**). The region's rate was higher than that of the previous month (1.6% in November 2016), and that of a year earlier (1.5% in December 2015).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in December 2016 were Alness & Invergordon (3.0%) and Dunoon & Rothesay (2.5%). Eleven TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in December 2016 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (1.7%) – Elgin and Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh (both with 1.6%); Lochgilphead (1.5%); Fort William (1.4%); Aviemore & Grantown on Spey (1.3%); Oban and Ullapool (both with 1.2%); Orkney Islands (1.0%); Portree (0.9%); Shetland and Mull & Islay (both with 0.8%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area in December 2016 was 4,760. Out of the total, 920 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2016)



\* Based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit and, produced monthly by ONS.

^ As defined by Scottish datazones.

Table 1 below illustrates the claimant count and universal credit allowance rates for each of the 19 TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands.

Table 1 - Unemployment by TTWA

Travel to Work Area	December 2016		November 2016		December 2015		Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate		
Alness & Invergordon	395	3.0	2.6	2.6	45	0.4	45	0.4		
Dunoon & Rothesay	290	2.5	2.6	3.0	-15	-0.1	-60	-0.5		
Wick	160	2.1	2.2	2.3	-10	-0.1	-15	-0.2		
Campbeltown	90	2.1	2.0	2.1	0	0.1	0	0.0		
Thurso	190	2.1	1.9	2.2	20	0.2	-5	-0.1		
Golpsie & Brora	105	1.9	1.9	1.4	0	0.0	30	0.5		
Eilean Siar	315	1.9	1.9	2.1	0	0.0	-15	-0.2		
Inverness	1,245	1.7	1.6	1.3	65	0.1	280	0.4		
Elgin	1,025	1.6	1.5	1.3	80	0.1	225	0.3		
Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh	70	1.6	1.3	1.7	15	0.3	0	-0.1		
Lochgilphead	80	1.5	1.4	1.3	0	0.1	5	0.2		
Fort William	180	1.4	1.2	1.6	25	0.2	-25	-0.2		
Aviemore & Grantown on spey	110	1.3	1.2	0.9	10	0.1	40	0.4		
Oban	125	1.2	1.2	1.2	5	0.0	5	0.0		
Ullapool	50	1.2	1.2	1.5	0	0.0	-10	-0.3		
Orkney Islands	130	1.0	0.9	0.6	10	0.1	45	0.4		
Portree	45	0.9	1.0	1.3	0	-0.1	-15	-0.4		
Shetland	125	0.8	0.8	0.9	10	0.0	0	-0.1		
Mull & Islay	35	0.8	0.7	0.7	5	0.1	5	0.1		
Highlands and Islands TTWA	4,765	1.7	1.6	1.5	265	0.1	535	0.2		
Scotland	75,445	2.2	2.2	2.0	-520	0.0	4,275	0.2		
United Kingdom	753,185	1.8	1.8	1.8	-6,735	0.0	19,240	0.0		

Table 2 shows the total claimant count and universal credit unemployment, by number and rate over the month and year and youth unemployment by HIE area office.

Table 2 - Unemployment by Area Office - December 2016

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number
Caithness and Sutherland	475	2.0	15	3.3	5	1.1	95
Innse Gall	315	1.9	0	0.0	-15	-4.5	55
Inner Moray Firth	1,755	1.8	120	7.3	360	25.8	335
Argyll and the Islands	680	1.7	-5	-0.7	-55	-7.5	125
Moray	965	1.6	80	9.0	215	28.7	215
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	315	1.3	40	14.5	-45	-12.5	35
Orkney	130	1.0	10	8.3	45	52.9	30
Shetland	125	0.9	10	8.7	0	0.0	30

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