

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

MARCH 2019

HIE Research and Economics Team



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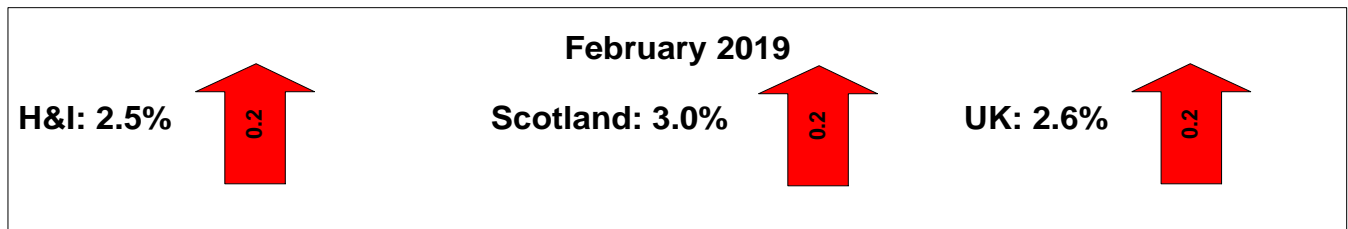
The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit figures rather than job seekers allowance.

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 is now a measure of all those in receipt of Universal Credit who are out of work, including income based JSA claimants. Contribution based JSA claimants is 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 February 2019 claimant count figures were released on 19th March 2019.

As illustrated by the chart below, unemployment in the Highlands and Islands was lower than that for Scotland and the UK.

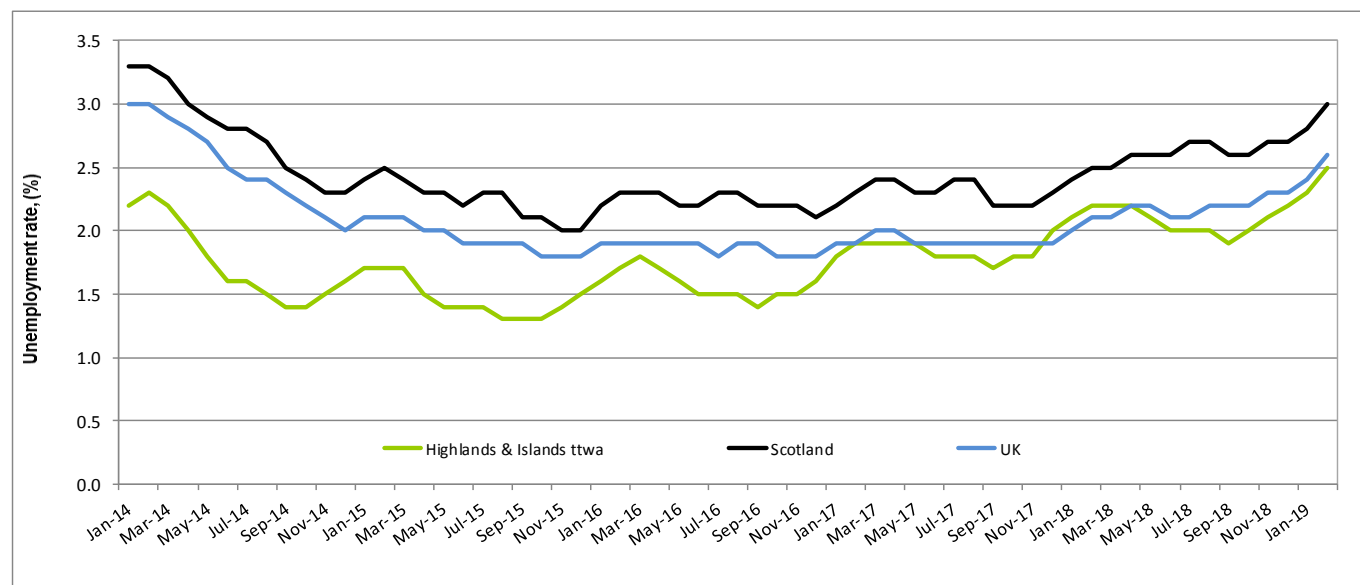


In February 2019, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **2.5%**, which was below the rate for Scotland (**3.0%**) and the UK (**2.6%**). The rate for the region was higher than that of last month (2.3% in January 2019) and that of a year earlier (2.2% in February 2018).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in February 2019 were Dunoon & Rothesay (4.2%); Wick and Alness & Invergordon (both 4.1%) and Thurso (3.4%). Nine TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in February 2019 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (2.5%) – Ullapool (2.4%); Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh (2.2%); Eilean Siar (2.1%); Oban (2.0%); Mull & Islay (1.7%); Aviemore & Grantown on Spey (1.6%); Portree (1.5%); Orkney Islands (1.4%) and Shetland Islands (1.3%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area in February 2019 was 7,230. Out of the total, 1,355 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2019)



* 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	February 2019		January 2019	February 2018	Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate		number	rate	number	rate
Dunoon & Rothesay	475	4.2	3.9	3.1	30	0.3	125	1.1
Wick	305	4.1	3.9	3.3	15	0.2	60	0.8
Aliness & Invergordon	545	4.1	3.9	4.2	35	0.2	-15	-0.1
Thurso	305	3.4	3.1	2.5	25	0.3	85	0.9
Campbeltown	125	2.9	2.7	2.2	10	0.2	30	0.7
Golpsie & Brora	150	2.8	2.9	2.8	-5	-0.1	0	0.0
Lochgilphead	155	2.8	2.2	2.0	35	0.6	45	0.8
Fort William	355	2.7	2.5	1.9	30	0.2	115	0.8
Elgin	1,610	2.6	2.3	2.0	145	0.3	325	0.6
Inverness	1,860	2.5	2.2	2.6	180	0.3	-135	-0.1
Ullapool	95	2.4	2.3	1.8	5	0.1	25	0.6
Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh	90	2.2	2.0	1.9	10	0.2	10	0.3
Eilean Siar	335	2.1	1.9	1.9	40	0.2	40	0.2
Oban	210	2.0	1.9	1.3	15	0.1	75	0.7
Mull & Islay	70	1.7	1.5	1.0	10	0.2	30	0.7
Aviemore & Grantown on spey	135	1.6	1.4	1.6	20	0.2	0	0.0
Portree	70	1.5	1.3	1.5	10	0.2	0	0.0
Orkney Islands	185	1.4	1.2	1.0	30	0.2	55	0.4
Shetland	185	1.3	1.1	0.8	30	0.2	75	0.5
Highlands and Islands TTWA	7,250	2.5	2.3	2.2	660	0.2	930	0.3
Scotland	105,545	3.0	2.8	2.5	6,585	0.2	18,850	0.5
United Kingdom	1,068,630	2.6	2.4	2.1	64,960	0.2	203,280	0.5

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 – February 2019

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number
Caithness and Sutherland	795	3.5	35	4.6	145	22.3	145
Argyll and the Islands	1,115	2.9	100	9.9	340	43.9	180
Inner Moray Firth	2,545	2.6	230	9.9	-155	-5.7	450
Moray	1,505	2.5	125	9.1	285	23.4	350
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	565	2.4	55	10.8	145	34.5	80
Innse Gall	335	2.1	40	13.6	40	13.6	55
Orkney	185	1.4	30	19.4	55	42.3	55
Shetland	185	1.3	30	19.4	75	68.2	40

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