

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

JANUARY 2018

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 2017 claimant count figures were released on 24th January 2018.

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

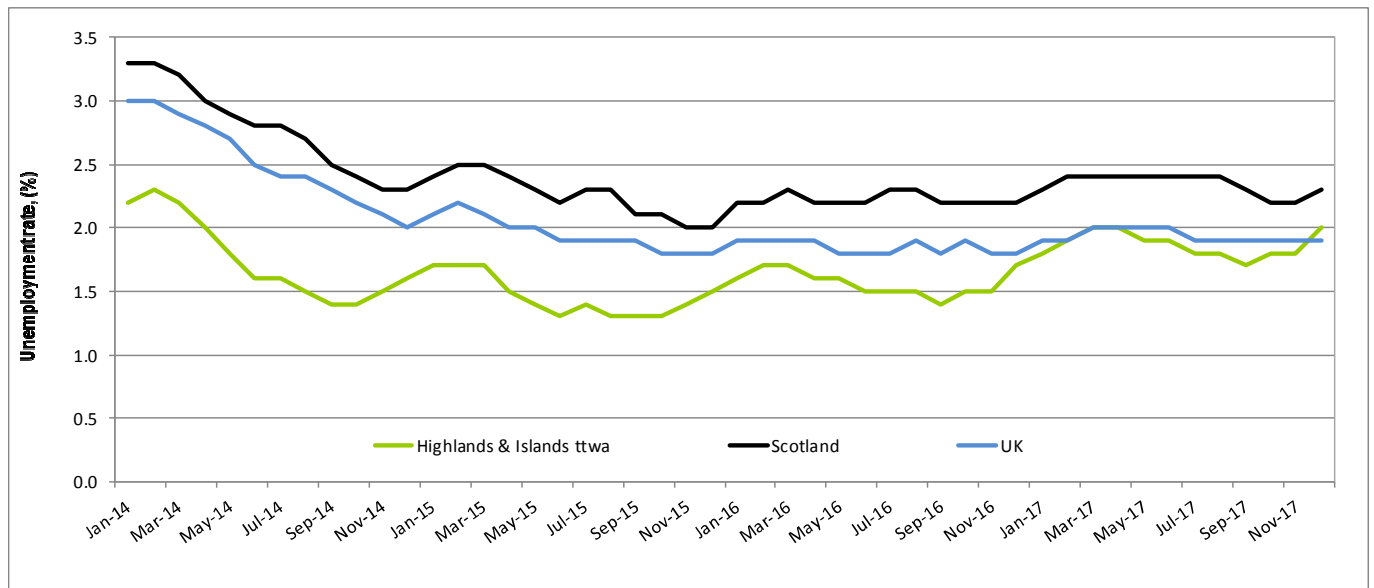


In December 2017, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **2.0%**, which was below the rate for Scotland (**2.3%**) but above that for the UK (**1.9%**). The rate was higher than that of last month (1.9%), and of that for a year earlier (1.6% in December 2016).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in December 2017 were Alness & Invergordon (3.8%); Dunoon & Rothesay and Wick (both 2.9%) and Inverness (2.5%). Twelve TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in December 2017 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (2.0%) – Lochgilphead (1.9%); Aviemore & Grantown on Spey (1.8%); Elgin, Eilean Siar and Ullapool (all with 1.7%); Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh (1.6%); Fort William (1.4%); Oban and Portree (both 1.2%); Mull & Islay (0.9%); Orkney Islands (0.8%) and Shetland Islands (0.7%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area in December 2017 was 5,690. Out of the total, 1,030 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2017)



* 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 2017		November 2017		December 2016		Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate	
Aliness & Invergordon	500	3.8	3.4	3.0	3.0	45	0.4	110	0.8	
Dunoon & Rothesay	330	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.6	15	0.1	35	0.3	
Wick	220	2.9	2.9	2.1	2.1	5	0.0	60	0.8	
Inverness	1,895	2.5	2.4	1.5	1.5	50	0.1	775	1.0	
Golpsie & Brora	125	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.0	15	0.3	15	0.3	
Thurso	195	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.1	20	0.2	5	0.1	
Campbeltown	85	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.1	5	0.1	-5	-0.1	
Lochgilphead	100	1.9	1.8	1.5	1.5	0	0.1	15	0.4	
Aviemore & Grantown on spey	150	1.8	1.7	1.1	1.1	5	0.1	55	0.7	
Elgin	1,085	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	85	0.1	60	0.1	
Eilean Siar	275	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	10	0.0	-30	-0.2	
Ullapool	70	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	15	0.4	15	0.4	
Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh	70	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.5	15	0.3	5	0.1	
Fort William	185	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.4	25	0.2	5	0.0	
Oban	125	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.2	20	0.2	0	0.0	
Portree	55	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.9	5	0.2	10	0.3	
Mull & Islay	40	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.8	10	0.2	5	0.1	
Orkney Islands	110	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.0	-5	0.0	-25	-0.2	
Shetland	95	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.8	10	0.1	-25	-0.1	
Highlands and Islands TTWA	5,710	2.0	1.9	1.6	1.6	350	0.1	1,085	0.4	
Scotland	79,540	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.1	1,530	0.1	4,540	0.2	
United Kingdom	798,350	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	6,310	0.0	49,690	0.1	

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 2017

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number
Inner Moray Firth	2,550	2.6	100	4.1	940	58.4	435
Caithness and Sutherland	570	2.5	50	9.6	90	18.8	90
Argyll and the Islands	730	1.9	50	7.4	45	6.6	135
Innse Gall	275	1.7	10	3.8	-30	-9.8	40
Moray	1,020	1.7	80	8.5	55	5.7	240
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	340	1.4	50	17.2	25	7.9	45
Orkney	110	0.8	-5	-4.3	-25	-18.5	20
Shetland	95	0.7	10	11.8	-25	-20.8	25

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