

UNEMPLOYMENT DIGEST

MARCH 2018

HIE Research and Economics Team



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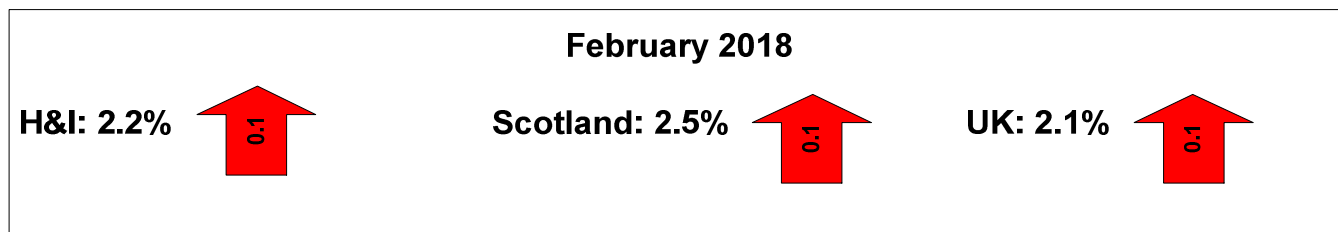
The Information contained in this report is based on Claimant Count and Universal Credit figures rather than job seekers allowance.

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 February 2018 claimant count figures were released on 21st March 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.

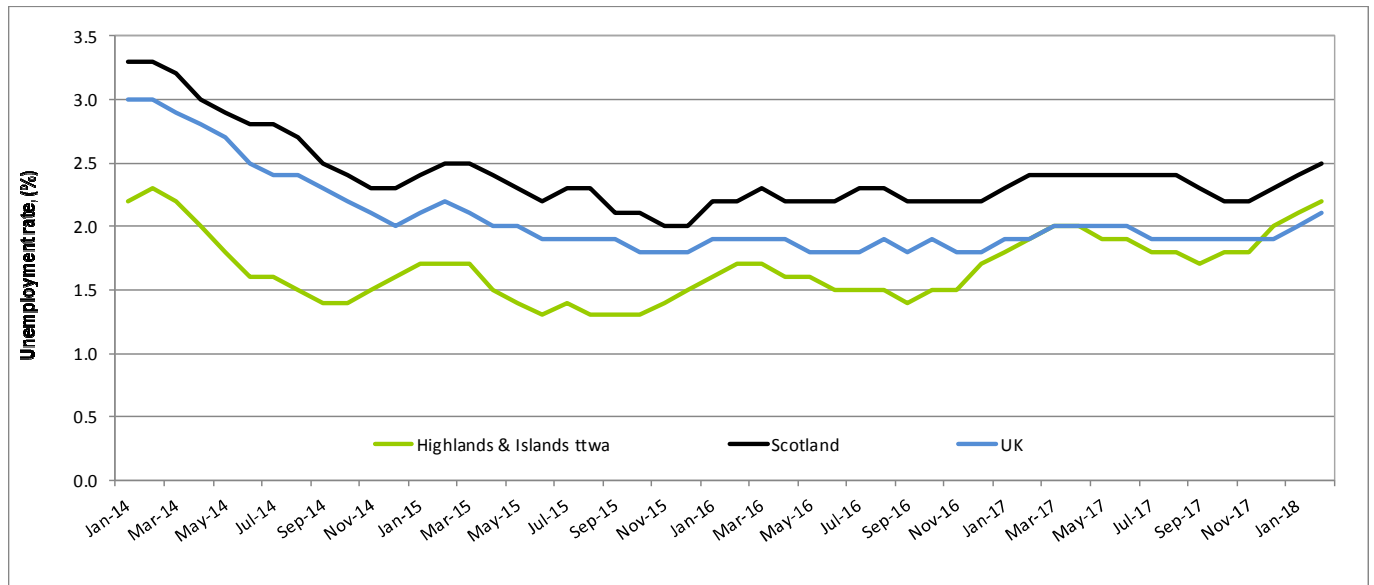


In February 2018, the average claimant count and universal credit unemployment rate for the 19 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that comprise the Highlands and Islands was **2.2%**, which was below the rate for Scotland (**2.5%**) but above that for the UK (**2.1%**). The rate was higher than that of last month (2.1%), and of that for a year earlier (1.9% in February 2017).

The TTWAs whose rates exceeded the Scottish average in February 2018 were Alness & Invergordon (4.3%); Wick and Dunoon & Rothesay (both 3.1%); Inverness and Golspie & Brora (both 2.8%). Thirteen TTWAs in the Highlands and Islands had rates in February 2018 lower than the Highlands and Islands average (2.2%) – Campbeltown (2.1%); Lochgilphead and Elgin (both 2.0%); Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh, Eilean Siar and Fort William (all 1.9%); Ullapool (1.7%); Aviemore & Grantown on Spey (1.6%); Portree (1.5%); Oban (1.3%); Mull & Islay and Orkney Islands (both 1.0%) and Shetland Islands (0.8%).

The total number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the HIE area in February 2018 was 6,425. Out of the total, 1,195 were claimants aged 18-24.

Figure 1 - Unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and the UK (2014-2018)



* 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 2018		January 2018	February 2017	Monthly change		Annual change	
	number	rate	rate	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Aliness & Invergordon	565	4.3	4.0	3.2	40	0.3	145	1.1
Wick	235	3.1	3.1	2.7	5	0.0	35	0.4
Dunoon & Rothesay	355	3.1	3.0	3.0	10	0.1	15	0.1
Inverness	2,095	2.8	2.6	1.8	115	0.2	740	1.0
Golpsie & Brora	155	2.8	2.7	2.2	10	0.1	35	0.6
Thurso	225	2.5	2.5	2.1	5	0.0	35	0.4
Campbeltown	95	2.1	2.0	2.1	10	0.1	5	0.0
Lochgilphead	110	2.0	1.9	1.8	5	0.1	10	0.2
Elgin	1,285	2.0	1.9	2.0	65	0.1	-5	0.0
Broadford & Kyle of Lochalsh	80	1.9	1.7	1.7	10	0.2	10	0.2
Eilean Siar	300	1.9	1.7	2.0	20	0.2	-20	-0.1
Fort William	250	1.9	1.7	1.5	35	0.2	55	0.4
Ullapool	70	1.7	1.7	1.6	0	0.0	5	0.1
Aviemore & Grantown on spey	140	1.6	1.6	1.2	0	0.0	35	0.4
Portree	70	1.5	1.3	1.2	5	0.2	15	0.3
Oban	135	1.3	1.3	1.5	0	0.0	-15	-0.2
Mull & Islay	40	1.0	0.9	0.8	5	0.1	10	0.2
Orkney Islands	130	1.0	0.9	1.0	10	0.1	-10	0.0
Shetland	115	0.8	0.7	0.9	10	0.1	-20	-0.1
Highlands and Islands TTWA	6,440	2.2	2.1	1.9	350	0.1	1,055	0.3
Scotland	87,370	2.5	2.4	2.3	4,090	0.1	5,400	0.2
United Kingdom	870,765	2.1	2.0	1.9	41,260	0.1	70,245	0.2

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 2018

HIE Area Office	Total Unemployment		Monthly change		Annual change		Youth Unemployment (18-24)
	number	rate*	number	%	number	%	number
Inner Moray Firth	2,810	2.9	160	6.0	920	48.7	475
Caithness and Sutherland	650	2.8	20	3.2	110	20.4	115
Argyll and the Islands	780	2.0	30	4.0	15	2.0	150
Moray	1,215	2.0	70	6.1	-5	-0.4	315
Innse Gall	300	1.9	20	7.1	-20	-6.3	40
Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross	425	1.8	50	13.3	70	19.7	55
Orkney	130	1.0	10	8.3	-10	-7.1	25
Shetland	115	0.8	10	9.5	-20	-14.8	20

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Contact us at hieresearch@hient.co.uk

